

**REGION**

**2**



**INTELLIGENT TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WILL BE A GAME CHANGER FOR INDIAN ROADS SAYS DELHI TRAFFIC COMMISSIONER**

## Rs 1,57,090 cr gross GST revenue collected for May 2023; clocks 12% Year-on-Year growth

FW CORRESPONDENT  
New Delhi

GST collection in May rose 12 per cent to Rs 1.57 lakh crore, the finance ministry said on Thursday.

The gross Good & Services Tax (GST) revenue collected in the month of May, 2023 is Rs 1,57,090 crore of which Central GST is Rs 28,411 crore, State GST is Rs 35,828 crore, Integrated GST is Rs 81,363 crore (including Rs 41,772 crore collected on import of goods) and cess is Rs 11,489 crore (including Rs 1,057 crore collected on import of goods).

The government has settled Rs 35,369 crore to CGST and Rs 29,769 crore to SGST from IGST. The total revenue of Centre and the States in the month of May 2023 after regular settlement is Rs 63,780 crore for CGST and Rs 65,597

crore for the SGST. The revenues for the month of May 2023 are 12% higher than the GST revenues in the same month last year. During the month, revenue from import of goods was 12% higher and the revenues from domestic transactions (including

import of services) are 11% higher than the revenues from these sources during the same month last year.

The chart below shows trends in monthly gross GST revenues during the current year. The table shows the state-wise figures of GST collected in each State during the month of May 2023 as compared to May 2022.



**BANKING & FINANCE**

**6**



**SBI LIFE TO TAKEOVER LIABILITIES OF 2 LAKH POLICIES, ASSETS OF SAHARA INDIA LIFE INSURANCE: IRDAI**

**POTPOURRI**

**8**



**ANUSHKA SHARMA AND VIRAT KOHLI HAVE BEEN INVITED TO THE FA CUP FINAL**

## India's economic growth increases to 6.1% in Q4FY23 beats estimates

**NEWDELHI:** Beating all estimates the Indian economy grew 6.1 per cent in the fourth quarter of the last fiscal, as per the government data released on Wednesday. This took the growth rate for 2022-23 to 7.2 per cent, lower than the 9.1 per cent expansion in the previous fiscal. The growth was boosted by a 5.5 per cent expansion in agriculture and a 4.5 per cent growth in manufacturing. Other sectors of the economy — construction, services and mining — also saw good growth rates. During the March 2023 quarter, the economic expansion was recorded at 6.1 per cent. While it was 4.5 per cent in October-December and 6.2 per cent in July-September 2022. The growth was 13.1 per cent in April-June 2022. High-frequency indicators showed the economy gaining momentum in April thanks to higher tax collections and a booming services sector. But exports and imports declined, smudging the outlook. Barring the monsoon and geo-political risks, the economy may exceed the initial estimate of 6.5 per cent for the current fiscal (April 2023 to March 2024).



## Preserve CCTV footage of "misbehaviour" with Manish Sisodia, says Delhi Court

FW DESK  
New Delhi

Delhi's Rouse Avenue Court on Thursday directed officials to preserve the May 23 CCTV footage of the court premises after former deputy minister Manish Sisodia alleged that he was misbehaved by security personnel that day during his production in a case related to the alleged excise policy scam.

The Delhi Police on Thursday also moved an application in Court seeking its permission to produce Sisodia only via video-conferencing, after allegations that he was manhandled. Delhi Police said that video conferencing should be done as producing him physically "creates chaos" with AAP supporters and mediapersons gathering in the corridors of the court. Noting the fact, Special Judge MK Nagpal made clear that till a decision is not taken on the applica-



tion, Sisodia will be produced in court only through video conferencing and there will be no personal production in the court.

Manish Sisodia was also produced in court today through video conference from the court's lockup. Earlier, the Court took cognisance of the supplementary charge sheet filed against former Delhi Deputy CM Sisodia in

the Money Laundering case related to the Delhi Excise policy case. The supplementary charge sheet filed by ED alleged that a proceed of the crime of around Rs 622 crore has been generated due to activities of the present accused Manish Sisodia. The supplementary charge sheet was filed by special public prosecutor Naveen Kumar Matta.

The supplementary charge sheet has more than 2100 pages. The operating part has 271 pages. The charge has been filed within the stipulated period of 60 days. Mr Sisodia was arrested by the ED in this case on March 9. Earlier he was arrested by the CBI on February 26. He is the 29th accused arrested in this case. The CBI has already filed the charge sheet in the matter. His bail in the CBI case was dismissed by the High Court last week. His bail in the money laundering case is pending before the High Court.

Earlier, the trial court had dismissed the bail plea of Mr Sisodia in a money laundering case. While dismissing his bail Rouse Avenue Court had stated that "this case of economic offences having serious repercussions upon the general public and society at large as the evidence collected during investigation speaks volumes of his involvement in the commission of the said offence"

## Wrestlers issue has dented India's image abroad: Akhilesh Yadav

**NEW DELHI:** Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav has said that the country's image has been severely dented by the ruling BJP's blatant display of disrespect towards women wrestlers. He said that this was a clear indicator of the party's feudal mindset which has come as a blot to the image of the democratic India in the world.

News reports of exploitation, harassment and forcefully silencing voices of dissent are being published at the international level and are bringing a bad name to India before the world community. The BJP basically nurtures a feudal mindset where neither women are respected nor the common man. BJP has embarrassed democracy," he stated on Thursday. Akhilesh

quoted news reports about how the women wrestlers have accused a powerful official of sexual harassment and went to throw away their Olympic medals into Ganga and start a hunger strike after they were evicted from the protest site in New Delhi. Earlier Akhilesh, who is the leader of the opposition in the state Assembly, had attacked the BJP over the handling of allegations of sexual harassment levelled by women wrestlers against outgoing Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, who is a BJP MP.

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## Pak repatriates three Indians

JAGMOHAN SINGH  
Attari (Amritsar)

Pakistan Government today repatriated three Indians who were arrested by the Pakistan Rangers when they were caught in the Pakistan territory. On being caught they were arrested at an illegal border crossing in Pakistan.

Official posted at Indo-Pak Attari/Wagah border confirming the releasing of three Indians in the evening said that the released Indians were Bablu Ram resident of Uttar Pradesh, Balwinder Singh resident of village Ajnala of Amritsar district and third one Harjinder Singh of village Kalanor of Gurdaspur district. Official said that on their return to India, Balwinder Singh and Harjinder Singh stated that they had crossed the Indo-Pak border inadvertently when they were badly drunk during night time in the year of 2020.

Official said that as per the information received from the Pakistan immigration Authority, today late night Pakistan Government would release around Indian Indian 200 fishermen.

## NCERT drops references to 'Khalistan' in Class 12 political science textbook

**SGPC has alleged historical details about Sikhs misrepresented in textbook**

**NEW DELHI:** The NCERT has dropped references to the demand for a separate Sikh nation Khalistan from the class 12 political science textbook following objections from the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), according to top education ministry officials.

The SGPC had last month alleged that the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) misrepresented historical details about Sikhs in its Class 12 political science textbook. The Sikh body's objection pertained to the mention of the Anandpur Sahib resolution in the book



"Politics In India Since Independence". The dropped sentences are—"the resolution was a plea for strengthening federalism but it could also be interpreted as a plea for a separate Sikh nation" and "the more extreme elements started advocating secession from India and the creation of 'Khalistan'". The statements have been rewritten as "the resolution was a plea for strengthening federalism".

"Representation from SGPC was received regarding withdrawing objectionable content against Sikh community by misrepresenting Sri Anandpur Sahib resolution. A committee of experts was constituted by NCERT to examine the issue and the decision was taken on basis of the recommendations of the panel," said Sanjay Kumar, School Education Secretary, Ministry of Education.

## Court approves supplementary charge sheet filed against Jagdish Tytler in 1984 anti-Sikh riots case

**NEW DELHI:** A Delhi court on Friday approved a supplementary charge sheet filed by the CBI against Congress leader Jagdish Tytler in the 39-year-old anti-Sikh riots case.

The Rouse Avenue Court also transferred the case to the Special MP-MLA Court for trial. The hearing has been fixed for June 8. The Congress leader was named in the charge sheet following fresh evidence against him. In April, the central probe agency had collected Tytler's voice samples in connection with the violence in the national

capital's Pul Bangash area in 1984, where three people were killed. He is accused of inciting a mob that murdered the victims. On November 22, 2005, the CBI had registered the case on an incident wherein Gurdwara Pul Bangash at Azad Market, Bara Hindu Rao, Delhi was set on fire by a mob and three persons namely Sardar Thakur Singh, Badal Singh and

Gurcharan Singh were burnt to death on November 1, 1984 near Gurdwara Pul Bangash.

"Justice Nanavati Commission of Inquiry was set up in the year 2000 by the Centre Government to enquire into the incidents of anti-Sikh riots of the year 1984 in Delhi. After consideration of the Commission's report, Ministry of Home Affairs (Government of India) issued directions to CBI to investigate the case against then Member of Parliament and others," a CBI official had said.

## Delhi HC issues notice to Yasin Malik on NIA's appeal for death penalty

FW DESK  
New Delhi

The Delhi High Court has issued a notice to Kashmir separatist leader Yasin Malik in response to the National Investigation Agency's (NIA) appeal seeking the death penalty for him in a terror funding case. The NIA approached the High Court after a trial court had sentenced Malik to life imprisonment last year in the same case.

Malik had previously informed the trial court that he was not contesting the charges against him, which included acts of terrorism and sedition under Section 121 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Section 121 carries the maximum punishment of a death sentence.

The High Court, on Monday, stated that since Malik had pleaded guilty to a charge under Section 121, which allows for the death penalty, a notice would be served to him through the jail



superintendent regarding both the application for condonation of delay and the appeal.

The next hearing in the case has been scheduled for 9 August. In May 2022, the trial court rejected the NIA's request for capital punishment but found the chief of the Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) guilty of various offenses under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and IPC.

## Delhi government challenges NGT order on LG-led panel to monitor solid waste management

FW CORRESPONDENT  
New Delhi

The Delhi government has filed a petition with the Supreme Court to contest a decision made by the National Green Tribunal (NGT). The NGT had established a high-level committee, led by Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena, to oversee solid waste management in the national capital.

The AAP-led Delhi government, which has been at loggerheads with the LG over several administrative issues, filed the appeal against the February 16 order of the NGT, saying its effect is to "bypass the elected government completely" and hand over the power with regard to the management of solid waste to the



LG and the central government which is in violation of the constitutional scheme. Amid a lingering conflict between the Centre and the AAP dispensation, the Delhi government had filed a separate plea a few days ago assailing another order of the NGT naming the LG as the chairman of a High-Level Committee (HLC) on Yamuna pollution.

The fresh plea, filed through

lawyer Shadan Farasat on Tuesday, sought setting aside of the final order of February 16 passed by the NGT, saying the Delhi government was "aggrieved by the executive powers conferred on the Lt. Governor vice the Impugned Order over areas in which only the elected government of the NCT of Delhi enjoys competence." "The NGT has appointed the Lt. Governor

as the chairman of a committee when there was absolutely no statutory or constitutional power conferred upon the Lt. Governor to chair such a committee," it said. The panel set up by the NGT comprises the chief secretary, and secretaries of the Irrigation, Forest and Environment, Agriculture, and Finance Departments of the Delhi government. Besides these officers, the panel includes the Chief Executive Officer, Delhi Jal Board, Vice Chairman of the Delhi Development Authority, Secretary or his nominee in Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, D. G. Forest or his nominee, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, and some other officials.

## Rahul Hits out on Modi and BJP from US

KAVITA SHARMA  
New Delhi

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi today attacked the BJP government and Prime Minister Modi for misusing the government agencies in India. He blamed PM Modi for keeping mum on corruption in India, and accused him of knowing more than God.

Speaking at an event in Santa Clara, California, Mr Gandhi said there are people in India who believe that PM Modi is supreme, he knows more than God. These people can explain



to everyone, History to Historians, Science to Scientists and warfare to Armyman. They think they know even more than God. "And of course Our Prime Minister is one such specimen" If Modi ji sits with God, he will tell him how he should run this

Universe and even God will get confused about What I have Created" leaving all his American Supporters in a laughter mode. He was interacting with activists, academicians and Civil society people at the University of California on May 31.

Mr Gandhi is on a 10 day visit to the United States. He is set to cover three cities San Francisco, Washington DC and New York during this tour. He would visit with Indian Diaspora and American lawmakers. "The purpose of this visit is to connect, interact institutions, Media, and Indian Diaspora that is growing

in the United States and abroad to promote democracy with a vision of freedom, peace, justice, sustainability and opportunities." He will also address the National press Club, focusing on topics of future of Indian democracy, Freedom of speech, and Economic Growth, Indian Overseas Congress Chairperson Sam Pitroda said in a statement.

Talking about the Bharat Jodo Yatra, senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said he started this yatra to connect with the people as all the political instruments were being controlled by the RSS and BJP.

## Rahul Gandhi reiterates caste census demand, accuses BJP-RSS of attacking Constitution



believed in hatred, anger and arrogance then you would not be sitting here but in the BJP meeting and I would be doing 'Mann Ki Baat'. So thanks to everyone for holding our culture, allowing them to learn from our culture and allowing us to be proud as you all are our ambassadors. If the US says that Indians are intelligent, masters in IT, it is because of you all because you are holding the idea of respect and culture of India." To a question about the central government

trying to impose the idea of one language, the former Wayanad Lok Sabha MP said, "The definition of India in the Constitution is a union of states. And within our Constitution the idea of language, culture, history and each one of them has to be protected." Slamming the BJP and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), he said, "The BJP and the RSS are attacking that idea and the Constitution. For me Tamil is more than a language to Tamil people. It is not just

a language, but it is their history, culture and their way of life. And I will never ever allow the Tamil language to be threatened because for me threatening the Tamil language is threatening the idea of India. Threatening Bengali, Punjabi, Kannada and Hindi all are attacks on India. Our strength comes from our diversity. Our strength comes from accepting that we are all different but we can work together." The former Congress chief once again reiterated his party's push for the caste census.

"When we were in the system, we had carried out a caste census. The idea behind the caste census was to have an X-ray of Indian society to find out what are the exact demographics of the society, how many people of different communities, and different castes are there. So without knowing the demographics and who is who, it is difficult to distribute wealth and power effectively.

## Decision on supporting AAP on ordinance issue to be taken soon: Congress

**NEWDELHI:** As the Congress top leadership on Monday met its Delhi and Punjab leaders to discuss issues including supporting the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) over ordinance row and if an alliance with it for 2024 is needed, party General Secretary K.C. Venugopal said that a decision will be announced in coming days.

Earlier in the day, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge, along with former party chief Rahul Gandhi met party leaders from Delhi and Punjab separately over the issue of alliance with the AAP for 2024 Lok Sabha polls and for supporting Kejriwal on Centre's ordinance issue.

As per party sources, many party leaders from Delhi unit, including former state chief Ajay Maken have opposed on having any alliance with the AAP for 2024 and also on supporting it over ordinance row.

# Manish Sisodia generated Rs 622.67 crore POC in Excise Policy scam: ED

**NEW DELHI:** The Enforcement Directorate's (ED) ongoing probe into the Delhi's Excise Policy scam has revealed that former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia had allegedly generated Rs 622.67 crore Proceeds of Crime (POC) through different modus operandi, sources said.

The ED sources said the POC was generated through credit notes, hawala channel and direct kickbacks. This latest allegation has been mentioned in the charge sheet. The ED further alleged that Sisodia facilitated the formation a special purpose vehicle to create a recoupment apparatus. "Rs 100 crore kickbacks were paid by the South Group to Vijay Nair. Indospirits acquired an L1 License with the help of Sisodia and Nair, it made a profit of Rs 192.8 crore which is



POC. The outstanding payments of three entities controlled by Sarath Reddy, Trident Chemphar, Avantika Contractors and Organomix Ecosystems towards Indospirits is Rs 60 crore. This outstanding payment is POC. Excess Credit Notes of Rs 4.35 crore were issued by Indospirits, profits of Rs 163.5 crore were

accrued by Pernod Ricard, this firm formed a super cartel with the South Group and further accrued a profit of Rs 45.77 crore, these are all deemed as POC," the sources said. They said the ED further learned that the South Group infused excess cash Rs 41.13 crore into the account of entities belonging to

Sarath Reddy. It was nothing but an illegal way to recouping the kickbacks.

When questioned, the finance team failed to provide any satisfactory reason to the ED.

The ED has alleged that apart from this through misuse of Punjab government's machinery and arm-twisting Mahadev Liquors, two firms — Shiv Associates and Diwan Spirits — accrued a profit of Rs 8.02 crore, accused Amit Arora paid a bribe of Rs 2 crore to Sisodia through Dinesh Arora and bribe of Rs 4.9 crore given by Aman Dhall through an excess credit note, which it nothing but POC.

"If we add up all the POC, it will turn out to be 622.67 crore. We have termed the whole amount as POC," said the sources.

# Intelligent Traffic Management System will be a game changer for Indian roads says Delhi Traffic Commissioner



**FW DESK**  
New Delhi

The AI-based traffic system or the Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS) will be a game changer once it is fully implemented on the Delhi roads stated Surrender Singh Yadav, IPS Special Commissioner Traffic Delhi Police at the ASSOCHAM 7th Road Safety Conference on 'Responsible Behavior & Smart Mobility - A roadmap to safe road-safe life'.

Speaking at the event where he was the chief guest, Yadav mentioned that the ITMS would take another 1-1.5 year to be fully implemented and is being done

at the cost of around Rs 1400 crores. Yadav who is a part of a special committee on road safety constituted by the Supreme Court informed that they are working on technology initiatives to make the traffic much more smooth at the national capital. "We are working on ways to see how technology can improve the commute at emergency corridors and emergency services. We are also looking at how we can improve upon our traffic control rooms and their communication with the ambulance networks," he said.

He added that the government is putting a lot of emphasis on road safety due to the rising num-

ber of fatalities. "Around 2300 crashes were reported in Delhi region which accounted for 40% pedestrian mishappenings. With 3.5 lakh violations per month for red light & speeding, responsible behavior is crucial for all vehicle owners," he informed. He explained that there is a need for more collaboration between the public and private sectors to improve road safety ensuring safety measures to prevent fatalities, economic burden with major road accidents, sustainable development, public health, and strict enforcement of traffic laws. "Government is working constantly to work on infrastructure development to improve the quality of the roads and sustainable safer roads," he added. Talking of the 4Es (Education, Enforcement, Engineering, Emergency care), K. K. Kapila, President (Emeritus) of the International Road Federation (IRF) focused to meet road safety challenges and sustainable solutions. Road safety education is an essential life skill. It is a collective responsibility to prioritize road safety and work towards creating safer roads for everyone.

# NIA raids three locations in Jammu and Kashmir's Budgam



**FW DESK**  
Srinagar

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) carried out raids at three locations in Budgam district of central Kashmir as part of its ongoing crackdown. The raids were conducted in connection with a case registered by the NIA. The NIA teams, along with the assistance of the Jammu and Kashmir police and CRPF, searched the residences of Farooq Ahmad Bhat and Zubair Ahmad Dar in Aripa-then village. Another team raided the house of Ali Mohammad Dar in the same village. The NIA officials have not provided detailed information about the case at this time. The NIA has been carrying out sustained raids in Jammu and Kashmir over the last four years to investigate cases filed against people allegedly funding terror in the union territory.

# Over 150 females cheated worth crores rupees by Nigerian gang



**SATISH HANDA**

Manesar police station registered a case against a gang of cheaters by two Nigerian youths cheated more than 150 females amount worth crores of rupees offering attractive gifts. Cyber police Gurugram arrested both Nigerians identified as Abube Feliski and Chukwaka Evar both residing at Nilothi in Delhi and allegedly duping large number of women including most of them even in upper mid age residing at Faridabad, Gurugram, Sonapat and other towns in Haryana as well as rest part of the country seeking friendship on internet as well as other sites on social media introducing them as living at UK, USA and other European countries working in senior positions. The gang members also used to contact women on matrimony sites offering attractive gifts from abroad after gaining faith in them and assuring them to marry.

Cyber police started investigation on the complaint lodged on April 10 this year by one of the female from Gurugram duped of Rs 1.80 crore recently when police arrested both Nigerians from Delhi and seized a cheque book, 16 bank passbooks, 25 ATM cards, 7 mobile phones, SIM cards, one laptop and Rs 10,000 cash from their possession. Both the accused were produced in the court and remanded to police custody for four days. Police sent all seized mobile phones and laptop to IT cell to find out detailed data in them which indicated that Abube Feliski was in touch with the woman posing himself as a British Airways pilot seeking friendship with her when he told her to send a gift parcel consisting of an I. Phone, jewellery and other valuable products and a parcel arrived in her name for which she was asked to deposit Rs 35,000 as tax. Subsequently, she was duped of Rs 1.80 on the pretext of various other fees and clearances as indicated in the complainant by her.

# 1280 private firms suspected involved in about Rs 1181 crore GST fraud in Haryana

**SATISH HANDA**

According to a recent report, nearly 1280 private firms in Haryana state registered by the excise taxation department for GST has been suspected involved in fraud for amount worth Rs 1181 crore. In a recent seminar held by the state government decision was taken for physical verification of all suspected registered organizations in the state and all District Excise & Taxation Commissioners (DETC) were directed to submit detail of all registered firms in their district by July 26 this year to take stern action against fake firms cheating government by earning input credit tax illegally.

It was detected that large number of fake firms were registered in Haryana state on-line when GST was introduced in the country without physical verifica-



tion in 2017 and there is a long list of fakenly registered firms in every district across the state, suspected involved in embezzlements most of them allegedly collecting input credit tax fakly which would now be physically checked by the excise & taxation department officials in every district and very sern action will be taken against those running fake firms registered on fake documents functioning in the state earning huge amount in past years as input credit tax collected from customers as told by a spokespersons of the department. It has been detected that countless fake firms in the state

having GST number, filing GST return, despatching goods from one state to another through fake e-bills in sale and purchase of goods shown in their record, thus earned huge amount towards input credit tax as observed during preliminary investigation by the vigilance team will not be spared at any cost.

Meanwhile, recently Special Investigation Team at Sirsa has arrested two Excise & Taxation Department officials identified as a retired DETC G.C. Choudhary and Ashok Sukhija a ETO allegedly involved in benefitting fake firms, both were found involved in as many as 15 cases if irregularities and fraud by SIT in which three fake firms alleged registered in 2011-12 including a firm in the name of JC Enterprises shown owned by Madan Lal purchasing cement tiles and cigarettes from Rajasthan.

# After Brain pacemaker implant, patient back to normal life after 9 yrs

**YOGESH KANT**  
New Delhi

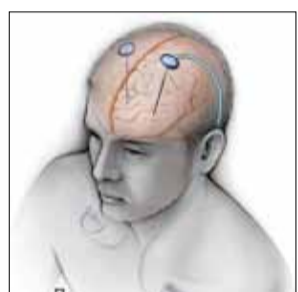
A 51-year-old lady from Ghaziabad, suffering from Parkinson's disease, shaky movements, stiffness and bradykinesia or tardy movements for the past several years, underwent an advanced neurological procedure — deep brain stimulation surgery — at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in the city.

After nearly two months of follow-up treatment at the hospital, the patient after the surgery improved quite well and is able to lead a normal life with no side effects from the medication. "She underwent through a popularly called a

"brain pacemaker," deep brain stimulation involves a surgical procedure under which electrodes (or fine wires) are fixed under the scalp and then inserted deep into the brain through the skull of a patient," said the doctor.

A pacemaker-like device, known as a pulse generator, is then used to send weak electrical signals or impulses along these electrodes to specific areas of the brain. These signals, which travel along brain circuits, help influence muscle activity.

"When the patients had come to the neurosurgery department of Sir Gangaram Hospital about a month back after a long and continue treatment of Parkin-



son, her condition was progressively getting worse though she was being managed with the medicines but her body had started developing side effects from the medicines, she was taking," said the doctor.

Though she was on medications, she was not able to control

her hands and legs and they would move without her control. She tried taking treatment at various hospitals but her condition was improving and her symptoms kept getting worse. She finally came to us where she was thoroughly evaluated and we gave her an option of Deep Brain Stimulation," doctor added.

"Deep Brain Stimulation is a new surgery where you stimulate particular areas of the brain. It acts just like a Pacemaker of the brain. In this case, we planned to stimulate the Subthalamic nucleus of the brain. The purpose of the surgery is to help control the disease and improve the patient's lifestyle.

# Farmers burn effigy of Brijbhushan Sharan Singh



**JAGMOHAN SINGH**  
Amritsar

A sizable gathering of farmers led by SKM (Sanyukt Kissan Morcha) today during protest burnt the effigy of Member of Parliament, President- Wrestling Federation Of India Brijbhushan Sharan Singh while extending support to wrestler girls who were recently roughed up by Delhi Police. The protest was organized in the premises of Deputy Commissioner Amritsar. Farmers during protest demanded immediate arrest

of Brijbhushan and asked the Government to do the needful to deliver justice to the struggling wrestler girls.

Farmers also raised voice in favour of Jallandar based vernacular Newspaper editor who was recently summoned by the state vigilance bureau.

Protesting farmers expressing solidarity for the former Punjab Minister Dr. Inderbir Singh Nijjar who recently resigned from the cabinet said that it was a condemnable act of the Punjab Government for forcing the Nijjar to resign.

# Congress raises 9 questions on BJP-JJP government rule in Haryana in 'Pol Kholo Abhiyan'

**SATISH HANDA**  
Chandigarh

It cannot be denied recent Congress victory in Karnataka has injected energy in the arms of Congress and would affect party's strength in coming Haryana Vidhan Sabha and Lok Sabha polls in 2024 as well as polls in other states including Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh in which a tough fight between Congress and BJP is suspected.

Recently, prominent Congress MLAs in Haryana had a meeting presided by Bhupinder Singh Hooda former Haryana Chief Minister at Chandigarh having 'Pol Kholo Abhiyan' on past nine years performance as well as lapses by BJP-JJP government in Haryana state and strongly condemned ruling government over critical condition of roads as a result large number of passengers



travelling on roads in the state died in frequent road mishaps every day for which BJP government claims having released amount worth Rs 25 crore to every MLA for repairs of roads in their Vidhan Sabha area.. Congress MLAs demanded to release white paper in this regard expressing deep concern over ruling government took no stern action against corrupt officers involved in large scale corruption responsible for rob-

bing public money.

Congress leaders raised nine question over the performance of ruling government in the state since past nine years in 'Pol Kholo Abhiyan' accusing ruling government in Haryana responsible for lapses and fast increasing corruption among government officers in the state which include PWD department in the state alleged involved in several cases as a result people in Haryana state have lost faith in BJP-JJP

government ruling in the state and looking for a change in 2024 polls. However, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has cautioned voters in the state not to believe in false allegations against ruling government made by Congress MLAs since people in the state are well aware of corruption in government offices in the state during 10 years Congress rule in Haryana and pushed state in property dealing. He said, youths in the state are being offered employment under Kaushal Rozgar Yozna and work for the construction and repairs of roads in the state are going on all over int state as wrongly quoted by Congress leaders.

Among nine questions raised by Congress MLAs in the state includes ruling government's attitude towards farmers in the state failed to get relief as assured by the ruling government including minimum support prices of their crops.

# Army man killed in bull attack in UP, family critical



An Indian Army soldier was killed while his wife and two children were critically injured when a stray bull hit their two-wheeler on the Hasanpur Atrasi road near Navankhedhi village in Uttar Pradesh's Amroha district.

The incident happened on Monday. The soldier, Ankit Kumar, 28, was posted at 507 ASC Battalion in Punjab's Ferozepur. He had come to Amroha on leave on Sunday to attend a friend's wedding scheduled on Tuesday. Police said Kumar died on the spot as the bull's horn pierced his stomach, while his wife, Sonam (25), and their two children also suffered injuries.

# Sindhi society is an integral part of the Sikh religion-Jathedar Sri Akal Takht Sahib

**AMRITSAR:** A large number of devotees participated in the Gurmata Samagam (religious congregation) organized by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) at Indore, Madhya Pradesh with the support of Amrit Vela Trust. Jathedar of Sri Akal Takht Sahib Giani Harpreet Singh, chairman of SGPC's Dharam Prachar Committee (DPC) Bhai Rajinder Singh Mehta, and DPC secretary Balwinder Singh Kahlwan and other prominent personalities specially attended the congregation.

Addressing the congregation, Jathedar of Sri Akal Takht Sahib Giani Harpreet Singh said that Sindhi society is an integral part of the Sikh religion. It has great respect in the community that will always remain so.

He said that the Gurbani (holy writings) of the Gurus teaches universal communion, but efforts were made



by some people to create differences between the Sindhis and Sikhs, which will not be allowed to succeed.

Meanwhile, Bhai Rajinder Singh Mehta and Balwinder Singh Kahlwan said in their address that the tactics of mischievous people to divide society will not succeed. They said that the SGPC will continue to organize such events to keep Sindhi society connected with the Sikh religion.

Bhai Gurpreet Singh Kirtaniya, a prominent member of the congregation to follow the

path shown by the Sikh Gurus while performing Gurbani Kirtan. A large number of Sangat from the Sindhi community participated in the congregation. Bhai Tejinderpal Singh managed the stage. Present in the congregation included Baba Ghola Singh Kar Sewa Sarhali Sahib, President of Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Indore Manjot Singh Bhatia, President of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh Kendri Sri Guru Singh Sabha Harpal Singh, Balwinder Singh Timma, Naresh Makhija.

# 30000 intocated tablets, 1 kig 280 gm opium % 91 gm heroine seized in three cases within 24 hours

**SATISH HANDA**  
Ambala

Ambala police nabbed four drug smugglers including a supplier within 24 hours. On a information Inspector Narinder Singh during a raid arrested Surinder Kumar alias Kaka a resident of village Meera Pur near Shahabad running a chemist shop at village Kalsani in the name of Juneja Medical Store near Mangat Singh Ahata Ambala City and was arrested by police team while moving under suspicious manner' During search police recovered a bag kept on his Activa scooter containing 30000 intoxicated tablets. During police remand, the arrested accused admitted that he was supplying intoxicated drugs including tablets, capsules and injections since a long time and selling at thr prices four times higher than his purchased price.

In another case, CIA Staff-1 Inspector Harjinder Singh on a



clue arrested a youth identified as Mohinder Singh a resident of village Sarakpur in district Badaun in U.P carrying 1 kg 150 gm opium who had arrived under the bridge on the National Highway no. 44 for supply of opium. A case was registered against him at Parao police station Ambala City. The accused was remanded to police custody for three days.

In third case, Sub Inspector Balkar Singh of CIA Staff Shahabad police while searching vehicles at a police barrier at Naragarh near Saha police station arrested two youths

identified as Sonu Singh a resident of village Nalwai (Shahabad) in Kurukshetra district and another youth identified as Rohit a resident of village Ghasitpur during checking recovered nearly 91 gm heroine. Both arrested accused were remanded to police custody for two days. Rohit was found having criminal background with four cases of serious nature registered against him under sections 148/149.323/324.452/ 506/34/ 353/332/353.186 IPC registered at different police stations

# Only legalized immigration centres to function in Haryana

**SATISH HANDA**  
Ambala

Talking to media persons here Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij said that in view of fast increasing cheating cases in the state by mushrooming immigration agents since past few years, state government Haryana has decided to legalize this business and only those immigration centres registered by the government will be liable to function in the state and provide assistance to youths willing to settle abroad for which the immigration agency will have to get themselves registered with the government and deposit bank guarantee for amount worth Rs 25 lakh. Vij said that this step is being taken in view of large number of cheating cases by immigration agents reported in the state frequently in which youths were provided fake Visa, work permits, air tickets and in many cases youths were sent to other countries unwillingly and there are few cases in which

large number of youths having fake documents were lodged in jails in other countries or were left in the jungles with no where about to their families.

Home Minister told media persons that a Special Investigation Team (SIT) has been constituted in the state led by Additional Deputy General Police Ambala Sibas Kabiraj which arrested as many as 23 immigration agents registering 138 cases within a short period and STF has constituted full proof plan to wipe out this illegal business completely from the state and push all such criminals playing with the career and money behind bars. Vij warned that those running immigration centres without registration and depositing bank guarantee will be dealt strictly. He said, proposal has already been forwarded to the state home department for approval.

All decisions by govt guided by desire to improve people's lives: PM Modi

## New Parliament is a reflection of aspirations of 140 cr Indians: Modi

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that the new Parliament building is a reflection of the aspirations and dreams of 140 crore Indians and this temple of democracy gives the message of India's determination to the world.

He also said that democracy is not just a system for us, it is a culture, an idea, a tradition.

Making his first speech in the new Parliament, which he inaugurated earlier in the day, Modi said: "In every country's development, there are moments like these which become historic. And when India is celebrating 'Azadi Ka Amrit Kaal', the people of India have gifted its democracy a new Parliament House."

The Prime Minister also released a stamp and Rs 75 coin in the new Parliament.

Modi said: "This is not just a building. It is a reflection of the aspirations and dreams of 140 crore Indians. This is the temple of our democracy giving the message of India's determination to the world. The new Parliament building will be a testament to the dawn of Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India). It will be a witness to our journey towards a Viksit Bharat



(developed India)."

The event was also attended by former president Ram Nath Kovind, Chief Ministers Y.S. Jagan Reddy, Yogi Adityanath, Eknath Shinde and many others. Even foreign envoys, Parliamentarians and people from different walks of life attended the inauguration ceremony.

The Prime Minister underlined that India is not only a democratic country but also the mother of democracy. "India is also a big base of global democracy today. Democracy is not just a system for us, it is a culture, an idea, a tradition," Modi said.

The Prime Minister said that when India moves forward, then

the world moves forward. "This new Parliament will also lead to the development of the world through the development of India. It is our good fortune that we have been able to restore the pride of the holy 'Sengol'. Whenever proceedings start in this House, the 'Sengol' will inspire us," Modi said.

Commenting on the installation of 'Sengol' in the Lok Sabha chamber, Modi said, "On this historic day, in this new building of Parliament, pious 'Sengol' has been established. In the Chola empire, it was considered a symbol of the Kartavya path, Seva Path and Rashtra path," he said.

Modi also said that our de-

mocracy is our inspiration, our Constitution is our resolve. "The best representative of this inspiration, this resolution, is our Parliament," he said.

The Prime Minister further said that this new building will become a means of realising the dreams of our freedom fighters. "This new building will witness the sunrise of a self-reliant India. This new building will see the fulfilment of the resolutions of a developed India. This new building is also a perfect example of the coexistence of the new and the old," he said.

The Prime Minister in his address also pointed out how several years of foreign rule stole our pride from us and said that today, India has left behind that colonial mindset.

"There was a need for new Parliament. We also have to see that the number of seats and MPs will increase in the coming time. That's why it was need of the hour that a new Parliament is made," Modi said.

He said that it was difficult to fulfil work in the old Parliament building and everyone is aware of it. "There was a scarcity of seating space and there were also technology is-

suces. Therefore, for over two decades, discussions were going on for building a new Parliament building...It was the need of the hour to build the new building of the Parliament. I'm happy that this new grand building is replete with modern facilities," he said.

Modi further said that after 25 years from today, India will complete 100 years of its Independence. "We also have the nectar period of 25 years. Together we have to make India a developed nation in these 25 years. It is the time of immortality to fulfil infinite dreams and innumerable aspirations," he remarked.

He also said that this building is equipped with modern facilities and equipped with the latest gadgets. "It has given employment to over 60, 000 labourers. We have created a digital gallery to honour their hard work," Modi said.

He further added that new India today is setting new goals, forging new paths. "There is new enthusiasm, there is new enthusiasm. New journey, new thinking. The direction is new, the vision is new. The resolution is new, the faith is new," Modi added.

## G20 meeting a lesson to people who created unrest in Kashmir: J&K LG



Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday said that the successful conclusion of the third tourism working group meeting of the G20 countries in Jammu and Kashmir served as a lesson for those who have consistently attempted to create unrest in the region.

"The tourism meeting of the G20 countries concluded on May 25. The successful G20 meeting in J-K is not only a matter of happiness for the country, but a huge lesson for those who have frequently tried to create trouble in J-K," Sinha said, addressing a function at the Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre in Srinagar.

Speaking about the participation of a large number of individuals in the meeting, Sinha attributed it to the positive changes that have taken place in the union territory

since Prime Minister Narendra Modi assumed leadership in 2019, particularly with the abrogation of Article 370.

"Jammu and Kashmir has come a long way, and places like Shopian or Pulwama districts in south Kashmir, which the country knew for other reasons, saw the participation of more than 10,000 youths in the Tiranga yatra," the LG said while highlighting the progress Jammu and Kashmir has made, citing the example of Shopian and Pulwama districts in south Kashmir. "These youths chanted 'Bharat mata ki ai' carrying Tiranga in their hands. This is the change Jammu and Kashmir has witnessed in the last three years," he added while emphasizing that Jammu and Kashmir will not only integrate further with India but also make significant contributions to India's development.

## Lokayukta raids against govt officials underway in K'taka



**BENGALURU:** The Lokayukta raids are underway in different locations across Karnataka against government officials who have allegedly amassed assets disproportionate to their known sources of income.

The raids were underway at their residences, offices and private properties in Bengaluru, Tumakuru, Haveri, Mysuru and Bidar districts.

The sleuths were verifying the property documents, bank account details.

According to sources, the residence of BESCOM technical Director Ramesh at Basaveshwaranagar in Bengaluru has been raided. The details of raids at another location were yet to come out.

The raids were being conducted on residence of KIADB officer Narasimhamurthy in Tumakuru district. In Haveri district, raids were underway at the residence of Nirmithi Centre Engineer Vagesh Shetkar at Ranebenur town and office of Nirmithi located in the premises of District Commissioner's office of Haveri city.

The residence of Mahesh Kumar, an officer attached to the Mysuru City Corporation at Nivedithanagar in Mysuru was raided. A team of 13 officers were conducting raids on various locations including his farm house.

Sources said that the Lokayukta sleuths have also conducted raids in Chitraguppa taluk of Bidar district.

## Congress attacks PM Modi on Adani issue again, demand JPC probe

**KAVITA SHARMA**  
New Delhi

Congress party is all set to attack PM Modi and BJP government on Adani issue again. Launching a book related to 100 questions ("Hum Adani ke hain Kaun") asked by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, AICC General Secretary Incharge Jairam Ramesh said "we have demanded the JPC probe on Adani issue earlier also and when the Monsoon session will start in the New Parliament building we will demand the same thing again and that is JPC probe." Congress party, since February has been asking Prime Minister Narendra Modi about his alleged involvement with businessman Gautam Adani.

Addressing the mediapersons in New Delhi, senior con-



gress leader Jairam Ramesh said that conclusions drawn in the Supreme Court appointed expert committee report to look into the Adani-Hidenburg row were predictable. Jairam Ramesh has also tweeted that the Expert Committee has extremely limited terms of reference and will simply be unable to unravel Modani

Scam. The answer is clearly a Joint Parliamentary Committee to examine all relevant aspects of this scam, as both INC and BJP led government have in the past agreed on to investigate major cases of stock market manipulation. So we are demanding JPC probe now and BJP should not be afraid of it, Jairam added.

In the ongoing investigations in the Adani Group, market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India SEBI has proposed more stringent disclosure requirements regarding the ownership structures of Foreign investors in Indian Companies. SEBI is into investigating the Adani Group companies in the wake of allegations raised by Hidenburg research of engaging in accounting fraud and stock manipulations.

## BJP polarises society, not inclusive & is damaging India: Rahul

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has once again launched a blistering attack on the BJP-led Central government, saying that the ruling party polarises society and are not inclusive and that is damaging India.

Addressing the media here on Thursday, the former MP said: "They sought to generate a certain amount of hate, polarise society and they are not inclusive." Criticising the BJP, he alleged: "They brace everybody and divide society and that's damaging India." He said that India has a tradition of conversation of openness.

Citing examples of great leaders, spiritual and political personalities, he added that the Congress promoted peace, harmony and conversation. "So its in our culture, tradition and history to bring people together and have these dialogues and I think it is the difference between us (Con-



gress) and them (BJP). We feel that India should be allowed to express and we feel that political leaders should be comfortable when questioned and should learn from that question. It's just the difference," Gandhi said. The Congress leader was responding to a query when asked that the BJP engages in hatred and violence.

To another query about the press freedom in India and the arrest of a senior journalist on charges of espionage, Gandhi said, "I think there is a weakening of press freedom and it is not hidden and it is apparent in India, the rest of the world can see it."

Asserting that press freedom is very important for India, he said, "One should be open to criticism and one should listen to criticism and that's the feedback that builds democracy. On multiple access there is a clampdown on institutions that allowed the Indian people to talk and negotiate. I view India as a negotiation between people, different languages, different cultures etc. and architectures that Mahatma Gandhi set up was to allow that negotiation to be carried out fairly and freely." "And that structure that allows the negotiation between India's

people is going under pressure," he added. To another query on the Opposition unity, the Congress leader, who is on a six-day visit to the US, said, "The opposition is pretty well united, and its getting more and more united." He noted that "we are having conversations with all the opposition".

"I think quite a lot of good work is happening there. Its a complicated discussion because there are spaces where we are competing with the opposition. So a bit of give and take is required. But I am confident it will happen," Gandhi said on the Opposition unity. Asked about the Citizenship law, the former Congress Chief added that he thinks that all Indian people have a right to expression, religious freedom. "All should feel free to express themselves. I don't differentiate between any community and any caste.

## Lynching of Sikh youths in Maharashtra is blot in the name of humanity: SGPC President

**JAGMOHAN SINGH**  
Amritsar

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President Harjinder Singh Dhani has strongly condemned the mob lynching three minor Sikhs in Ukhlad village of Parbhani district of Maharashtra.

In a statement issued here today, Dhani said that as per the information received, a Sikh youth named Kirpal Singh has been killed in this incident, while two other Sikhs Avtar Singh and Arun Singh have been seriously injured. This incident has deeply hurt the Sikh psyche and there is a wave of resentment in the entire Sikh world. He said this heinous crime is a blot in the name of humanity, the culprits of which



deserve strict punishment. He said that the Maharashtra Police should identify all the culprits of this crime and arrest them besides ensuring strict and exemplary punishment.

## Indian rocket carries country's 2nd Gen navigation satellite

**NEW DELHI:** Indian rocket Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) on Monday morning blasted off successfully with the first of the second generation navigation satellite code named NVS-01 from the rocket port here.

The three staged GSLV rocket standing 51.7 metre tall and weighing 420 ton rose up into the skies at 10.42 a.m. breaking free of the earth's gravitational pull.

The rocket carried India's first of India's second generation navigation satellites NVS-01 weighing 2, 232kg. Interestingly, for the first time, an indigenous rubidium atomic clock developed by Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) Space Applications Centre (SAC), Ahmedabad is being flown in NVS-01. As the GSLV rocket ascended, its engine roar reverberated over the rocket port like a rolling thunder much to the thrill of the people there.

Simply put, the NavIC an acronym for Navigation with Indian Constellation (formerly with a long winding name Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS) is similar to the GPS (Global Positioning System) of the US, Glonass of Russia and Galileo of Europe as well as China's Beidou. A fully developed NavIC system consists of seven satellites in Geosynchronous/Inclined Geosynchronous orbits. It will provide real time positioning and timing services over India and a region extending approximately 1, 500km around the Indian mainland.

About 19 minutes into the flight, the GSLV rocket will deliver the satellite into a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO) from where it will be



further taken up by firing the onboard motors.

The satellite with a mission life of 12 years is powered by two solar arrays capable of generating power upto 2.4kW and a lithium-ion battery during the eclipse.

NVS series of satellites will sustain and augment the NavIC with enhanced features. This series has payloads that operate on L1, L5 and S bands thereby widening its services.

The L1 navigation band is popular for providing Position, Navigation and Timing (PNT) services for civilian users and for interoperability with other Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) signals, ISRO said. "In addition to L1 band, we have a highly secured code for strategic signals in L5 and S bands," a senior ISRO official told to media. Currently there are eight first generation NavIC satellites in orbit. India had already launched nine first generation NavIC satellites including the two standby satellites.

The first standby satellite was lost in the sky as the heat-shield of the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) did not open which necessitated the orbiting of the second standby.

The standby satellites were used as the country's first navigation satellite IRNSS-1A was not performing to the mark owing to the failure of its imported rubidium atomic clocks. The atomic clocks are important to give accurate positional data. According to the ISRO official, out of the eight NavIC satellites in orbit four are functional for navigation services and four others are messaging services. Be that as it may, ISRO had used imported atomic clocks on all the nine navigation satellites it had launched earlier.

It was said the NavIC satellites were performing well till the atomic clocks in IRNSS-1A failed. Sources in ISRO had earlier told to media some of the atomic clocks in a couple of other satellites too were not functioning properly. The clocks are used for precise time and location. Each NavIC satellite had three atomic clocks. The outlay for the IRNSS/first generation NavIC systems was said to be about Rs 1, 420 crore. The eight NavIC satellites that are in orbit now are: -IRNSS-1A, IRNSS-1B, IRNSS-1C, IRNSS-1D, IRNSS-1E, IRNSS-1F, IRNSS-1G and IRNSS-1I.

## SGPC condemns govt's forcible action on Olympian wrestlers



**JAGMOHAN SINGH**  
Amritsar

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) has strongly condemned the government's forcible action on women Olympian wrestlers protesting for justice at Jantar Mantar in Delhi.

SGPC general secretary Gurcharan Singh Grewal said that coercive action by the government against those who raise voices for human rights is a stain on democracy. He said that on the one hand, the newly developed Parliament was being inaugurated and on the other hand, the women wrestlers who brightened the country's name were being tortured, which has shamed the entire country. Grewal said that as per the directions of the SGPC President Harjinder Singh Dhani, a delegation of the SGPC was supposed to join the wrestlers' protest for justice in their support at Jantar Mantar, but due to the forced action of removing the protest by the government yesterday, this program was postponed for now. He said that the SGPC stands firmly with these women wrestlers who are fighting for their rights and will give them full support in whatever program is made. Grewal also objected to this point that whenever the Sikh community stands with those who fight for human rights following its history and traditions, a negative narrative is created by some people. He said that Sikhs have always made sacrifices to protect the country and Sikhs do not need to learn patriotism from anyone.

Meanwhile, SGPC's executive member Bibi Gurinder Kaur Bhulwal said that it is unfortunate that the girls who shined the name of the country by winning medals in sports are being harassed today. She said that instead of listening to these girls, they are being dragged on the streets by the government. She said that the SGPC will always stand firm with these girls against any injustice.

## Farmers' dharna at Ghazipur ends, Rakesh Tikait announces mahapanchayat on June 11

**NEW DELHI:** The farmers' protest, taking place at Delhi's Ghazipur border in support of the protesting wrestlers, ended on Sunday evening with Bhartiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait announcing that a khap mahapanchayat would be held in Bajju village of Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar district on June 11 to take further decisions.

"We have added the issue of the women wrestlers on the agenda of panchayats and other gatherings. We will discuss the issue in every meeting. We will accept whatever the decision the khap panchayat takes. For now, we are returning to our homes," Tikait said.

The farmers were heading to Delhi's Jantar Mantar to



support the wrestlers protesting there. However, as police stopped them, the farmers began a sit-in at the border, creating chaos. Police faced a tough time in controlling the situation.

Tikait, who reached the area, had said that the protesting farmers would not leave until the protesting

wrestlers, who were taken into custody by the Delhi Police as they tried to march towards the new Parliament building, are released.

As some wrestlers were released, the dharna was called off, and Tikait announced that a mahapanchayat would be held in Muzaffarnagar next month.

## Is Indian economy robust amidst global slowdown?

Despite formidable challenges, the National Statistical Office's recent data reveals a resilient Indian economy. Projections reveal a promising 6.1% GDP growth in Q1 2023, contributing to an annual expansion rate of 7.2%—exceeding earlier forecasts. This impressive performance, even in the face of adversity, demonstrates the economy's innate vigor. The economy's strength was broad-based, with only two of the eight Gross Value Added (GVA) sectors showing a deceleration in growth. The construction industry led the pack with a solid 10.4% expansion, but it was the collective strength of the services sectors that propelled the GVA. Although the trade, hotels, and transport sector experienced a slight deceleration, it still posted a robust 9.1% growth. Additionally, the manufacturing industry bounced back, marking a 4.5% expansion—a testament to the sector's resilience. The surge in manufacturing orders in May, the highest since January 2021, provides a buffer to potential headwinds in the form of a global economic slowdown and escalating financial sector risks. This uptick, highlighted in the S&P Global's Purchasing Managers' Index, bodes well for the economy's future. Meanwhile, Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF)—an indicator of investment activity—showed renewed vigor in the fourth quarter. Capital spending by the government on infrastructure and other high-profile public works contributed to a strong 8.9% year-on-year and 20.8% sequential GFCF growth. Given its job creation potential and multiplier effect, this improvement in investment spending indicates a promising outlook for the upcoming year. However, the data also exposes the shaky ground upon which private consumption spending—crucial for driving demand—stands, as it contracted by 3.2% from the previous period. Furthermore, with a likely El Niño on the horizon threatening agricultural output and rural spending, policymakers must be prepared to bolster growth with apt fiscal and monetary measures in the upcoming quarters.

### LETTERBOX

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## THE FINANCIAL WORLD

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FURQAN QAMAR EXPLAINS WHY MUSLIM STUDENTS MUST BE ENABLED TO ACCESS ANY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION OF QUALITY AND CHOICE

## The discourse on education



India is home to about 213 million Muslims, the third largest Muslim population in the world. Over 11% of Muslims in the world live in India. They constitute 14.2% of the country's population. It is a national loss that such a sizeable section of society suffers from severe marginalisation, excessive exclusion, and deep deprivation.

In no sphere of social and economic life, including education, are they represented in the ratio of their population. In higher education, for example, Muslims account for just about 5.5% of total enrollment as well as faculty.

Muslims constitute around 72% of the religious minorities in India, but account for only 22.75% of minority educational institutions. In absolute terms, the number of educational institutions established, run, managed and maintained by the Muslim community would be substantially large. A statement, in 2019, by the Minister of Minority Affairs claimed that 13,000 educational institutions were granted minority status.

The actual number of schools, colleges and universities established, run, managed and maintained would run into several thousand, even after excluding madrasahs and makhtabs. The community ought to owe a great deal to philanthropist forefathers who had the foresight to set up these institutions. Not wanting to rely on the colonial masters, they thought it their bounden duty to provide for the education of their children. They sought to become self-sufficient or 'Atma Nirbhar', to use the contemporary lingua. The tradition has continued, though not with as much fervour and the zeal as before.

### An aspiration for quality education

Muslims aspire to access quality education for their children irrespective of the kind and type of schools, colleges and universities (government, government-aided and self-financed private). They do not necessarily want to study in educational institutions

run by Muslims. Restrained by their socio-economic conditions and circumstances, a vast majority of them are unable to afford them. Therefore, the community must establish many more schools, colleges and universities to provide educational opportunities not only to Muslim minorities but also to all segments of society.

At the same time, Muslim students must be enabled to access any educational institution of quality and choice. Critically, it appears imminent to improve the quality of educational institutions established and run by the community either as minority or non-minority institutions. Of late, there has been some development in this regard and some schools, colleges and universities have come to be reckoned to be among the best and the most sought-after. Learning from best practices, all-out efforts must be made to raise the standards of all schools to a level where all segments of society long to get their children educated in them.

### Resources and support

The task is onerous and the path arduous. It may be easier said than done but will have to be done, sooner rather than later. Most Muslim minority educational institutions,

particularly those established in the distant past, are resource starved. The aided ones suffer from a shortage of funds as grants in aid have not kept pace with the expansion in demand. The self-financed ones are constrained by the lack of affordability in the community that they intend to serve, and hence cannot charge adequate fees to cover the cost of maintenance and teachers.

Could the community come forward to support these institutions? Could these institutions attempt full cost recovery with cross-subsidisation and community members agreeing to bear the cost of education of as many students as they can bear? Could the Ulema come together to find the ways and the means of mobilising and utilising zakat for this purpose?

Adequacy of funds for physical facilities, teaching and research infrastructure and human resources may be a necessary condition for promoting excellence. However, it would not be sufficient in itself. Leadership, management and governance need special attention. Leadership, management and governance play a critical role in ensuring that the teaching-learning processes go on smoothly and that excellence in all spheres of the institution becomes a habit.

It is important that managers, managing committees, heads of institutions and their teachers work in tandem towards common institutional objectives as a cohesive team with goal congruence. This can go a long way in improving the teaching-learning process, reputation and brand building. It is a sad reality of our times that the appointment of teachers has been seriously compromised across all educational institutions throughout the country. Para-teachers, part-time appointments and guest faculty engagements on paltry sums have marred the system. Muslim-managed educational institutions have been no exception. Resource constraints may not be the only reason behind such practices.

### Issue of corruption

Corruption and unethical practices in the selection and recruitment of teachers are no more exceptions. Allegations and accusations of demand for payments for permanent appointments have surfaced time and again, and too frequently. It would be naive to expect such teachers to deliver quality education. They may also be least expected to be ethical in the discharge of responsibilities assigned to them. In-service training and professionals too are important and can help teachers stay up-to-date with the latest research, trends, and best practices in education. However, no amount of training is likely to work unless institutions ensure the appointment of the most meritorious teachers by shunning all compulsions, considerations and pressures.

Fostering a positive school culture that promotes student engagement, motivation, and achievement too is a sine qua non. Can our institutions put in place restorative justice practices, encourage student-led initiatives, and support positive behaviour? These must involve families and the community in the educational process to promote student success using closer parent-teacher interaction, family engagement events, and community partnerships. The focus should be on fostering a culture of continuous improvement and encouraging stakeholders to seek out opportunities to improve their practice.

Essentially, the discourse on Muslim education must move from mainstreaming of madrasahs and their modernisation. The focus must shift to mainstream schools, colleges and universities, which cater to 96% of Muslim children.

*Furqan Qamar, a former adviser for education in the Planning Commission, is a Professor in the Faculty of Management Studies of Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Views are personal*



TATIANA BELOUSOVA ELUCIDATES CENTRAL ASIAN NATIONS' MULTI-FACETED FOREIGN POLICY BEYOND RUSSIA-CHINA DYNAMICS

## Multi-vectorism pays off in balancing international relations

Between May 18 and 19, China hosted what was called the "C+C5 summit", in the city of Xi'an (the first of its kind), which saw the participation of the leaders of five Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan). The six countries then jointly signed the 'Xi'an Declaration' and issued a blueprint for the future development of China-Central Asia relations. In their discussions, the six countries focused on the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road cooperation to be a 'new starting point'. In focus also were people-to-people exchanges, a 'Cultural Silk Road' programme, and issues of regional terrorism and extremism.

Importantly, the China-Central Asia Summit mechanism was officially inaugurated, which paves the way for future biennial summits between these countries. The next summit will be held in Kazakhstan in 2025.

Some may view this summit as testament to an ever-expanding Chinese influence in the region, which poses a challenge to Russia's ambitions. Despite being a valid argument, it only partly reflects regional complexities and shifting dynamics. In 2022, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace said that in the same year, Russian President Vladimir Putin had held more than 50 meetings (both online and in person) with Central Asian leaders. The fact that all five Central Asian Presidents visited Moscow for the May 9 Victory Day parade indicates that these former Soviet republics intend to maintain balanced regional and international engagements.



### A successful implementation

To their credit, the Central Asian countries have been able to successfully implement a multi-vectored foreign policy that stretches beyond the Russia-China axis. In the context of the post-Soviet states, this policy has been traditionally associated with their sovereignty vis-à-vis Russia, since it implies stronger economic and political ties with other centres of power.

Notably, in October last year, the European Council President Charles Michel visited Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, 'sending a strong political signal of the EU's commitment to the region and of the EU's wish to strengthen ties and bolster interregional cooperation'. In the same month, Mr. Michel also attended the first high-level meeting with the Central Asian leaders, that was held in Astana.

The basic parameter of Turkmenistan's foreign policy since its independence in 1991 has been the country's official status of 'neutrality'. After succeeding his father in 2022, Turkmenistan's new President, Serdar Berdimuhamedov, issued a statement, saying his country 'will continue the policy of neutrality based on good

neighbourliness, equality and mutually beneficial cooperation with all the countries of the world'.

In the case of Uzbekistan, the main priority of its foreign policy is regional security in Central Asia, which includes the precarious environment in Afghanistan. Other priority directions cover relations with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) member-states, Russia, China, the United States, the European Union (EU), Turkey, South Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, and Vietnam.

Economic and security concerns have been the decisive factor in formulating the foreign policy strategies of Kyrgyzstan in the post-independence era. After his election in 2021, Sadyr Japarov chose Russia for his first official visit as a new Kyrgyz President, an indication that Russia remains the main security partner for Bishkek, which hosts Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) troops at the Kant military airbase. In terms of multilateral engagement, Kyrgyzstan is a member of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, CSTO, and the Organization of Turkic States.

The foreign policy of Tajikistan is 'open doors' and a peace-seeking policy, indicating the 'country's readiness to build friendly relations with all countries and recognize shared interests based on reciprocal respect and equality'.

### Lessons for broader post-Soviet space

The brief overview of the foreign policy trajectories in Central Asia highlights their common characteristics, i.e., multi-

vectorism. This pragmatic approach certainly pays off, as it provides the benefits of maintaining friendly ties with multiple players, including Russia.

In this sense, the Central Asian republics could serve as a relevant example for other post-Soviet countries, e.g., Georgia and Moldova. Their long-term aspirations for EU/North Atlantic Treaty Organization membership should not be fulfilled at the expense of workable relations with Russia. If anything, this prospective membership would hardly guarantee absolute security due to the spread of unconventional warfare, which is more difficult to detect and counter.

On May 21, tens of thousands of Moldovans rallied in the capital Chisinau to support the pro-western government policy. Moldova intends joining the EU by 2030 — which its President, Maia Sandu, describes as 'the chance for our people to live in peace and prosperity'.

Regardless of this 'pivot to West', 'belligerent' Russia will geographically remain where it is. Though Georgia and Moldova have legitimate reasons not to trust their neighbour, a multi-vectored foreign policy should be viewed as the only optimum solution for a lasting peace in the region. Anything short of this would perpetuate an unstable environment, with the constant threat of escalation and a greater sense of insecurity.

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### BOOKS: REVIEW

## Memoir decodes complexities of India-Pakistan relations

In the extensive genre of Indian literature on living in Pakistan post-partition, Kesava Menon's memoir 'Never Tell Them We Are the Same People: Notes on Pakistan' comes as a distinguished contribution. Although many Indian diplomats and journalists have earlier penned their personal encounters in Pakistan, Menon's memoir, written thirty years after his tenure as The Hindu's correspondent in Pakistan, stands apart due to its retrospective analysis and profound reflection on the changes in both nations.

The backdrop to Menon's tenure in Islamabad, starting July 1990, was the volatile political climate in post-Zia Pakistan. The tug-of-war between the Pakistan People's Party and the Pakistan Muslim League, instigated by the army, the rise of new leadership in the form of Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto, and the

lingering impact of post-Soviet Afghanistan that gave birth to a mix of sectarianism, militancy, and drugs, are well etched in the memoir.

What adds gravity to Menon's account is his coverage of the strained India-Pakistan relationship due to the ongoing Khalistan issue, the escalating Kashmir insurgency, and the demolition of the Babri Masjid. These factors culminated in a hostile environment and eliminated any chances of an amiable bilateral relationship during his tenure.

Menon successfully captures the quintessential experience of Indians living in Pakistan: a constant subconscious dread. His vivid description of a sense of liberation upon setting foot on Indian soil after his tenure, reflects the weight of the challenges he faced as an Indian journalist in Pakistan. Despite the hazardous environment, he acknowledges the pockets of support

**What adds gravity to Menon's account is his coverage of the strained India-Pakistan relationship due to the ongoing Khalistan issue, the escalating Kashmir insurgency, and the demolition of the Babri Masjid**

he found, thereby spotlighting the tenacity of human spirit amidst adversity. The memoir takes the reader on a deeper journey into Menon's personal battles with the contradictory interpretations of history, opposing stances on Kashmir, and the ongoing debate on



**Never Tell Them We Are the Same People: Notes on Pakistan** By Kesava Menon; Speaking Tiger Books; 256 pages; Rs 399

whether partition was a tragedy or liberation. He throws light on the ever-pervasive influence of the Pakistan army, pondering whether they view themselves as an intellectual warrior elite.

What makes "Never Tell Them We Are the Same People: Notes on Pakistan" a compelling read is its blend of personal experiences and insightful observations, interwoven with a historical narrative that offers a nuanced understanding of Pakistan's evolution over the past three decades. Menon's memoir, enriched with a wealth of anecdotes from his eventful tenure in Pakistan, presents a nuanced, balanced, and personal account that navigates the reader through

the complexities of Indo-Pak relations and life in Pakistan from an Indian perspective. This is not just a memoir, but a mirror reflecting the socio-political transformation in the subcontinent, making it an invaluable addition to the genre.

In the pages of Menon's memoir, the reader is given a front-row seat to the complexities of the Indo-Pak relationship and the internal socio-political turmoil within Pakistan. Menon does not shy away from presenting an unfiltered view of Pakistan's leadership, the army's domineering presence, and the societal struggles arising from sectarianism, militancy, and the drug menace. The picture he paints is neither pretty nor simple; it's a truthful representation of a nation grappling with its internal and external conflicts.

The narrative of "Never Tell Them We Are the Same People" also extends to the broader context of subcontinental politics. Menon successfully weaves together the threads of his personal experiences in Islamabad with the tapestry of larger historical events unfolding concurrently.

## India plans to set up smaller refineries, says Petroleum Minister



**NEW DELHI** : The government plans to set up smaller refineries, Petroleum Minister Hardeep Puri said on Tuesday. Addressing an industry event, Puri said that this would help in achieving the target of 450 million metric tonne per annum (MMTPA) refining capacity in the country.

"We need to take few more policy decisions to take it up to 450 MMTPA," he said. Currently India has a refining capacity of 252 MMTPA. Smaller refineries, Puri said, are easier to install as they face lesser hurdles like land acquisition.

This statement comes against the backdrop of stuck plans of IndianOil, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum to set up a 60 million metric tonne per annum (MMTPA) capacity refinery at Ratanagiri in Maharashtra.

## Online food delivery platforms log just 7% spike in orders during IPL 2023



**NEW DELHI** : Online food delivery platforms saw a modest 7 per cent spike in orders during the just-concluded Indian Premier League (IPL) season, a report showed on Friday.

In comparison, the online food delivery platforms dominated by the likes of Zomato and Swiggy garnered 50 per cent food order growth during IPL-2020. The online food delivery platforms (OFD) took a softened approach during IPL-2023, leading to a modest spike in the business, according to the report by Redseer Strategy Consultants. During the IPL seasons from 2017 to 2020, OFD giants made a significant presence on prime-time television through their advertisements.

"They enticed viewers with attractive discounts ranging from 50-60 per cent at a wide array of restaurants. Additionally, they integrated their offerings with OTT platforms and created customised advertisements for maximum impact," said Kushal Bhatnagar, Associate Partner, Redseer Strategy Consultants. These efforts even led to a spike of more than 50 per cent in the IPL 2020 season. However, in the 2023 IPL season, there was a noticeable change in the approach. Despite the limited action by OFD platforms, IPL-2023 generated online food ordering use-cases among tier 2 and beyond consumers, wherein the spike was almost 2.5 times of mature consumers in the metro/tier 1 markets. "This hints towards the ability of spike events to drive habit formation among not-so-mature-users in India," said the report.

# Personal Data Protection Bill to be tabled during monsoon session: Lt General (Dr) Rajesh Pant

**NEW DELHI**: Time has come for all of us to understand the nuances of data protection. The government of India is working on 3 major bills namely the Digital India Act which will supersede IT Act 2000 as amended in 2008, The Personal Data Protection Bill which is long due will now be tabled in the monsoon session of the parliament and the Telecom bill which will supersede the Telegraph Act, 1885. As a nation we should start thinking about the importance of data which is also called the new oil or a treasure but it is only after you open the box that you realize the true worth, said Lt General (Dr) Rajesh Pant, National Cyber Security Coordinator, Government of India at the Global Privacy & Data-Protection Leadership Meet 2023 organised by ASSOCHAM.

"According to Gartner, 75% of the global population will have its personal data covered under privacy regulation by 2024. The five top trends in privacy are data localisation, privacy enhancing computation techniques, AI Govern-



nance, from remote to Hybrid and centralized privacy user experience. Some of the key challenges being faced are increased use of AI, globalisation of economy, increasing incidence of cyber-attacks and growing public awareness on privacy issues and the industry has to be more transparent on how they collect and use customer data, give customers more control over their personal data, protect customers personal data from unauthorised access and comply with applicable laws and regulations" he added.

Earlier, welcoming the delegates, Dr. Lovneesh Chanana,

Sr. VP & Regional Head of Government Affairs for Asia Pacific & Japan, SAP said, "The why part of data privacy has been debated for some time now, we have seen some of the biggest initiatives in the use of digital for improving lives like UPI, ONDC and GEM which other nations are looking to replicate. The geopolitical developments, changing landscape and technology development for data and the need for building user trust has necessitated some regulatory and legislative control to protect users. We should move from the what to the how of operationalizing data

protection in India especially around emerging technologies like generative AI."

Dr. Subi Chaturvedi, Global SVP, Chief Corporate Affairs and Public Policy Officer, InMobi Group, said "Government framework in data protection as an opportunity. Multi-stakeholder conversations at global forums are now happening at national and regional forums. Privacy as a right is a battle that not just stop with industries, academia, civil societies and government. Every stakeholder is an equal partner and must participate in the process of producing evidence based policy. There is a new approach of creating technology for technology and our digital capacity building is taking place from India to Bharat."

Rahul Jain, Head-Digital Public Policy, Amazon said, "Information overloading in the digital world necessitates easy and intuitive interaction with privacy features that products offer. It is also important for users to understand how their data is utilized by the entities and organizations.

Countries are looking to overhaul their privacy laws or introduce new ones. India is at an advanced stage in enacting a Digital Personal Data Protection law. Conversations around the need for cross border data flows are being picked up at multilateral forums. The governments interest and investments in technology to enhance privacy is shaping privacy landscapes globally."

Delivering an Industry address, Rajesh Ranjan, Director, Government Affairs & Public Policy, Microsoft said, "Privacy today is one of the most challenging topics for Industry, Government and Academia. There are essentially three types of people when it comes to data being generated for privacy protection of the concerned. There are the informed ones, the middle grounders and those that are unaware. All these users are equally entitled to right to privacy and personal data protection. There must be a mechanism in place which protects the interest of trade and business where there is cross-border data involved."

## Toyota Kirloskar Motor Records Highest-ever Monthly Sales of 20,410 units In May 2023

**ARUNKUMAR RAO**  
Bangalore

Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) achieves the highest-ever monthly cumulative sales of 20,410 units for May 2023 thus reporting growth of 110% over 10,216 units in May 2022. The company registered domestic sales of 1,9379 units and export sales of 1031 units of The Urban Cruiser Hyryder this month. TKM also witnessed a jump of 32% over April 2023 where the company had sold 15,510 units a company statement said.

The positive trend continues as the company reported strong performance with a growth of 42% in the first five months of the Calendar year 2023 (January-May) by selling 82,763 units as compared to of 58,505 units achieved in the same period last year.

Commenting on the sales Atul Sood, Vice President of Sales and Strategic Marketing at Toyota Kirloskar Motor said, "TOYOTA Kirloskar Motors has scaled a new high by reporting the highest monthly sales performance of 20,410 units. As we look forward given



the sustained momentum, we continue to be optimistic for the rest of the year by prioritising the customers needs. The popularity of Hilux in particular, continues to grow and exhilarate customers all over India thanks to its versatility and robust performance" he added.

In line with its commitment to building lasting connections with customers, TKM recently announced the highly anticipated «Great 4X4 X-pedition», designed to engage with the 4x4 SUV enthusiasts across India, by offering exciting and thrilling off-roading experiences. This flagship initiative aspires to connect participants with their sense of adventure and inspire more people to pursue their passion for adventure & motorsports.

## Vikraman N takes charge as Director (HR) of BEL

**ARUNKUMAR RAO**  
Bengaluru

Vikraman N took charge as the Director (HR) of Navratna Defence PSU Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) today. He was serving as Executive Director (Radar) and Unit Head of BEL's Ghaziabad Unit prior to his elevation to the Board, the company statement said.

Vikraman has 35 years of vast, experience in handling various facets of HR and diverse functions such as Testing, Marketing and Customer Support in the field of Radars and Missile Systems. He is a recipient of the prestigious Raksha Mantri's Award for 'Innovation'. He is also a certified Project Management Professional from Project Management Institute, USA. As ED (Radar) and Unit Head, BEL-Ghaziabad, he steered the second biggest Unit



of BEL to its highest ever turnover and profitability and was presented 'Achiever' Award at the annual Roll-on-Plan Business Meet of BEL.

In his previous assignment at BEL's Missile Systems SBU, Vikraman developed multidisciplinary competencies in his team to handle system integration

projects. He nurtured the culture change required for the organisation to migrate from the role of a Radar manufacturer to that of a Weapon System Integrator. During his tenure as Head of Testing, Marketing & Customer Support, the Missile Systems SBU achieved a record turnover of Rs. 1,000 Crores for four consecutive years.

## Renault Nissan Automotive India Pvt Ltd Accelerates Progress Towards 2045 Carbon Neutrality goal

**FW DESK**  
New Delhi

Ahead of World Environment Day 2023, Renault Nissan Automotive Pvt Ltd (RNAIPL) has announced that it is making strong progress towards its 2045 Carbon Neutrality goal unveiled in February this year and that it will be crossing several important sustainability milestones by the year 2030.

RNAIPL's carbon neutrality roadmap encompasses three key pathways: Increasing the share of green energy in the overall mix, aggressively improving efficiencies in energy usage and continuous adoption of energy efficient technology at its Oragadam, plant. The strategy has already allowed the automaker to cut down the equivalent of 87,500 tons of CO2 emissions every year as



of FY 2022-23.

Keerthi Prakash, Managing Director of RNAIPL, commented: "At RNAIPL, our unwavering commitment to environmental responsibility is imprinted in everything we do. We have set ourselves on an ambitious roadmap to Carbon Neutrality by 2045 and this goal underlies our drive towards utilization of more green energy, optimization of energy consumption and upgrading our technology.

## Foxconn to start manufacturing by April 2024 in Karnataka



**ARUNKUMAR RAO**  
Bengaluru

Karnataka Minister for large and medium industries M B Patil on Thursday said that the Foxconn company has plans to start manufacturing iPhone units by 2024 April at its proposed Devanahalli plant and the state government would hand over the required land for the company by July 1 to facilitate the same.

He stated this while the representatives of the company led by George Chu met him as part of the courtesy visit. IT/BT minister Priyanka Kharge was also present. With this, the new government has speeded up the process of the Rs. 13,600 crore project, which is expected to create 50,000 jobs.

«The identified 300 acres of land at ITR of Devanahalli would be handed over by July

1, 2023. Along with this, the government would ensure providing 5 MLD of water, quality power supply, road connectivity, and other infrastructure facilities, « Patil explained.

«The company has been asked to provide the details of the skill sets it seeks in employees.

Accordingly, steps will be taken to facilitate training programmes for eligible candidates to make them employable,» Patil elaborated.

The Taiwan-based global company has already paid 30% of the cost towards the land (Rs. 90 crores) to KIADB. It has set the goal to complete the project in three faces and has set a target of manufacturing 20 million units (2 crore units) annually from the plant after the completion of three phases.

## Application Deadline for the National Startup Awards 2023 extended till 15th June 2023

**NEW DELHI**: The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry introduced the National Startup Awards (NSA) in 2020. The applications for National Startup Awards 2023 have been made live from 1st April 2023 and the deadline for submissions is now extended to 15th June 2023.

The extension of the National Startup Awards 2023 application deadline allows aspiring entrepreneurs and enablers additional time to showcase their innovative solutions and profound societal impact. The National Startup Awards 2023 will commemorate innovations from all corners of the country, aligning with the vision of 'Vi-



sion India @2047, which charts the path for India's transformation into a developed economy, driven by the spirit of Amrit Kaal across key themes.

DPIIT will award a cash prize of INR 10 lakhs to one winning startup in each category. Furthermore, the winners

valuable resources.

Through three successful editions, these prestigious awards have highlighted the invaluable contributions made by visionaries who have revolutionized the Indian startup ecosystem. NSA was started with the aim of bestowing recognition and rewards upon exceptional startups and enablers within the startup ecosystem. These entities have been instrumental in fostering innovation, creating groundbreaking products, and exhibiting tangible social impact.

Interested participants are encouraged to visit the official National Startup Awards website and submit their applications before the revised deadline of 15th June 2023.

## Bridge Health and Primus Senior Living Form Strategic Alliance to Transform Elder Care Landscape in the country



**ARUNKUMAR RAO**  
Bengaluru

Bridge Health, a Proactive care healthcare company funded by Krish Gopalkrishnan, (Co-founder and former co-chairman, Infosys) has formed a strategic alliance with Primus Senior Living, a pioneer in conceptualizing and creating luxury communities for seniors in India. Together, they announced the first-of-its-kind managed eldercare service, called 'One Care'. This year-long, customized health plan will bring the best of both worlds under one roof - proactive care and emergency services, to revolutionize geriatric care in the country. The plan is designed to help improve not just the lifespan but also the health span of India's growing elderly population. The first plan is being rolled out by Bridge Health, at Primus Reflections, Kanakapura Road, Bengaluru and it will soon be expanding across India.

Kris Gopalkrishnan, Chairman of Bridge Health, said during press conference, "Bridge Health's primary mission is to facilitate crucial transition in India's healthcare segment from curative to proactive care. As the Chairman, I am personally dedicated to fuelling Bridge Health in fulfilling this mission and raising awareness about the importance of being proactive in maintaining one's health."

care initiative, Karan Verma, CEO of Bridge Health said, "Around 10% of India's current population is geriatric and that number is expected to grow significantly. Additionally, There is an increasing number of nuclear families and children living away from their parents. Hence there is a need to provide holistic care that is proactive in its scope and convenient in its service delivery. Through our strategic association with Primus Senior Living, We are committed to achieving this goal by announcing the launch of the 'One Care' plan for elders, he added.

Adarsh Narahari, Managing Director Primus Senior Living, said, "Through extensive research on senior living facilities, I have realized that addressing the health challenges faced by the elderly requires a multifaceted approach. Through our partnership with Bridge Health, we aid to address these challenges for the senior citizens residing in Primus facilities and in India at large, Bridge Health's holistic, proactive and managed care services, coupled with relevant technology and a commitment to clinical and operational excellence, will significantly enhance the quality of life of our senior citizens. With our aim to construct 2500 residential homes across six cities in the next few years, we are looking forward to a long-term association with Bridge Health."

## Talking Points

### Narvijay Yadav



Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav wants that by the year 2030, Indian Railways should be completely transformed into 'green railways'. Giving a green rating to the hospitality sector is another bright idea.

Efforts are going on around the world to protect the environment and minimize the effects of climate change. In this direction, the Himachal Pradesh State Pollution Control Board was thinking of giving a green rating to the hotels and resorts in the hill state. This rating will be given on the basis of environment-friendly measures taken by the hotels to reduce pollution. Generally, hotels are rated in three and five-star categories as per the facilities provided

to the guests, but it will be perhaps the first time that the green rating will be given to the hospitality units.

It is also important to take such small measures in the direction of controlling pollution and reducing the impact of environmental degradation. In order to provide luxurious facilities to the guests, big hotels sometimes indulge in such activities which cause decay. Replacing diesel-powered electric generators with solar energy panels to deal with the

## High time to go for green options

power outage or failure, and provision of natural light and ventilation to the buildings may be such good measures. Similarly, there is a lot of pollution from airplanes also. More than 50 percent of the world's air travelers want less air pollution from flights and they are willing to pay a little more for this measure.

Management consulting firm McKinsey & Company conducted a survey in 13 countries in which most air travelers expressed concern about air pollution caused by airplanes. About 5,500 people were consulted in the survey, of which 40 percent agreed to pay two percent additional money if the carbon emissions are reduced. In Spain, 60 percent of air passengers expressed their desire to opt for carbon-neutral flights. Not only aircraft, but some trains also add to the



air pollution, primarily diesel engine-driven trains.

In India, 37 percent of trains are still dependent on diesel engines. They cause a lot of pollution, and to reduce this, the railway is working towards using biodiesel in fossil fuel-based engines. The Ministry of Railways plans to completely electrify the railways by the end of this year,

that is, the above 37 percent of diesel locomotives should also be replaced by electric locomotives. Diesel engines of freight trains may need a little longer time.

Union Railway Minister, Ashwini Vaishnav wants that by the year 2030, Indian Railways should be completely transformed into 'green railways'. Railways set up a solar

power plant in Bina, Madhya Pradesh to generate the power it needs. Similarly, wind power plants are being planned in Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Gujarat.

There is a plan to illuminate railway buildings and premises with LED bulbs for lighting, so as to save electricity and contribute towards environmental protection. The trend of electric vehicles has already begun, which will help in controlling pollution. Japanese companies like Honda have been the world leaders in automobiles, but over the years they have been facing stiff competition from automakers in the US and Europe, especially from companies like Tesla.

The writer is a senior journalist and columnist. Views are personal. Twitter @narvijayyadav

## U.S. Chamber of Commerce welcomes appointment of Anjay Singh Banga as the new World Bank President

WASHINGTON, D.C.: U.S. Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Suzanne Clark welcomes Mr. Anjay Singh Banga assuming the helm of the World Bank Group.

"The solutions to the greatest challenges facing our nation—and the world—will be enabled by business-led innovation and empowered by strong collaboration between the public and private sectors," said Suzanne Clark. "More than ever, strong World Bank leadership is needed to ensure the private sector remains an indispensable partner in ensuring widespread economic growth around the world.

"We are especially encouraged by the strong support



that Mr. Banga's nomination received from global policymakers, reflecting confidence in his ability to lead the World Bank at this critical moment.

We look forward to working with Mr. Banga and the World Bank Group in enhancing the Bank's engagement with the American business community

and our overseas partners."

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world's largest business organization representing companies of all sizes across every sector of the economy. Our members range from the small businesses and local chambers of commerce that line the Main Streets of America to leading industry associations and large corporations. They all share one thing: They count on the U.S. Chamber to be their voice in Washington, across the country, and around the world. For more than 100 years, we have advocated for pro-business policies that help businesses create jobs and grow our economy.

## SBI Life to takeover liabilities of 2 lakh policies, assets of Sahara India Life Insurance: Irdai



NEW DELHI: Regulator Irdai on Friday directed SBI Life Insurance Company to takeover the policy liabilities of around two lakh policies along with assets of Sahara India Life Insurance Co Ltd (SILIC) with immediate effect. The decision was taken at the meeting of the Insurance Regulatory and Development

Authority of India (Irdai) in view of deteriorating financial health of the SILIC.

"The Authority has identified SBI Life Insurance Company Limited (SBI Life), which is one of the largest life insurers in the country with satisfactory financials, as the acquirer insurer of the life insurance business of SILIC.

## Commercial LPG cylinder prices slashed



NEW DELHI: The Oil marketing companies on Thursday slashed prices of commercial LPG cylinder, however prices of domestic LPG cylinder have been left unchanged.

After the latest revision, the price of a 19 kg commercial LPG cylinder in New Delhi has come down by Rs 83.50

to Rs 1,773 per cylinder. The prices for both commercial and domestic LPG cylinders are revised on the first day of every month. The new rates for commercial cylinders will be applicable from Thursday. The price of a 14.2 kg domestic cooking gas cylinder costs Rs 1,003 in New Delhi.

## Elon Musk loses world's richest person tag in a jiffy

Twitter CEO Elon Musk surpassed Bernard Arnault, CEO of luxury brand Louis Vuitton's parent company LVMH, to regain the title of the world's richest person only for a brief period before losing the tag again.

According to Forbes Real-Time Billionaires List, Arnault is now worth \$216 billion, while Musk is worth \$200 billion.

Musk, who saw his net worth tumble by more than \$100 billion in 2022, had been replaced by Arnault as the world's richest man in December last year as well.

As of December 2022, Musk's worth was \$168.5 billion, less than the \$172.9 billion net worth of Arnault.

In January 2021, Musk became the richest person in the world for the first time, with a net worth of more than \$185 billion.

Meanwhile, as of last month, Musk-owned Twitter is worth



only about \$15 billion, a massive 33 per cent lower than the \$44 billion Musk and his co-investors paid to acquire the platform.

Twitter has struggled financially since Musk took over.

Financial services giant Fidelity had estimated in its monthly report of portfolio valuations that Twitter is now worth just one-third worth of what Musk paid for the micro-blogging platform.

## Govt's fiscal deficit moderates to 6.4% of GDP in 2022-23

NEW DELHI: The government's fiscal deficit moderated slightly to 6.4 per cent of the GDP in 2022-23 from 6.71 per cent in the corresponding period, according to the revenue-expenditure data released on Wednesday.

The Controller General of Accounts (CGA) said that the fiscal deficit in absolute terms was Rs 17,33,131 crore (provisional), which was marginally down from the amount projected in the revised estimates (RE) in the budget.

The CGA added that the government received Rs 24.56 lakh crore (101 per cent of corresponding RE 2022-23 of total receipts) during 2022-23.

This comprised Rs 20.97 lakh crore tax revenue (Net to Centre), Rs 2.86 lakh crore of non-tax revenue and Rs 72,187 crore of non-debt capital receipts.

Non-debt capital receipts consist of the recovery of loans



and miscellaneous capital receipts.

About Rs 9.48 lakh crore has been transferred to state governments as devolution of taxes by the Central government, which is Rs 50, 015 crore higher than the previous year (2021-22).

## Centre to approve several chip packaging, fab plant proposals soon: MoS IT

NEW DELHI: The government will approve multiple semiconductor packaging and fabrication plant proposals in the coming weeks, Union Minister of State for Electronics and IT, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, said on Thursday as the Centre reopened the window for fresh fab applications for leading and mature nodes.

The window to reapply for government incentives under the modified semiconductor scheme opened on June 1. "@GoI\_MeITy has reopened the window for fresh fab applications for leading and mature nodes. This is being done since the January 2022 window was closed before the policy was improved to encourage mature nodes with equal incentives," the Minister said in a tweet.

The government, said Chandrasekhar, has already approved many semiconductor design companies and received packaging and mature node fab proposals. "In coming



weeks, we expect to approve multiple semiconductor packaging and fab proposals," he informed.

The first window for 28-nanometer fabrication plants was kept open for 45 days in January 2022. The Minister said that current and new players may apply afresh in various nodes. "We are now reopening the window for semiconductors, open indefinitely. We are allowing existing applicants to re-apply for more mature nodes," said

Chandrasekhar. The country recently launched a Rs 76,000 crore production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for semiconductors and display manufacturing units. Last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi allocated a budget of Rs 1,200 crore to invest in the Indian semiconductor design startups. The government is aiming to create 100 semiconductor design startups in the near future that will develop innovative designs and solutions not only for the domestic market but also for the world, according to Chandrasekhar.

The country will soon have a talent pool of 85,000 highly-skilled professionals in the semiconductor space, according to the minister. India's semiconductor market was valued at \$22.7 billion in 2019, according to a recent report by Counterpoint Research and the India Electronics and Semiconductor Association (IESA).

## India's transformation took place in less than a decade from 2013: Morgan Stanley



NEW DELHI: According to a latest Morgan Stanley Research, India gained positions in the world order in a short span of 10 years with significant positive consequences for the macro and market outlook. The report titled India Equity Strategy and Economics: How India Has Transformed in Less than a Decade, highlights the 10 big changes, mostly because of India's policy choices, and their implications for its economy and market. Calling the current India different from what it was in 2023, the report said, "In a short span of 10 years, India has gained positions in the world order with significant positive consequences for the macro and market outlook. We present a snapshot of these changes and their implications." "We run into significant skepticism about India, particularly with overseas investors, who say that India has not delivered its potential (despite its being the second-fastest-growing economy and among the top-performing stock markets over the past 25 years) and that equity valuations are too rich." It added, "However, such a view ignores the significant changes that have taken place in India, especially since 2014," it said. While filing the report Morgan Stanley's Research had taken these 10 big changes namely, supply-side policy reforms, formalisation of the economy, Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, digitalizing social transfers, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, flexible inflation targeting, focus on FDI, India's 401(k) moment, government support for corporate profits and MNC sentiment at multiyear high. It gathered the figures related to India's corporate tax at par with peers and infrastructure while drawing the data for supply-side policy reforms.

## Central Bank of India signs MSME co-lending pact with ISFCL

NEW DELHI: Central Bank of India and India Shelter Finance Corporation Limited (ISFCL) have entered into a co-lending agreement to provide competitive Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) loans.

This initiative is expected to drive portfolio expansion for both the public lender

and ISFCL, benefiting a wider range of borrowers. Under the co-lending arrangement, ISFCL will originate and process MSME loan proposals according to jointly formulated credit parameters and eligibility criteria. Central

Bank of India will then assume 80 per cent of the MSME loans on agreed terms. ISFCL will continue to service the loan accounts throughout the loan's life cycle. This collaboration is expected to provide a seamless and customer-centric experience, while enabling both entities to expand their market presence across India.

## Uber to offer cashback as it drops ride discounts for subscribers

Ride-hailing platform Uber has discontinued the 5 per cent discounts on eligible rides that it previously provided to Uber One subscribers.

According to an email sent out to customers, beginning with the next billing cycle, subscribers will earn 6 per cent 'Uber Cash' on eligible rides, which they will be able to spend on Uber and Uber Eats, reports TechCrunch. Since the company launched Uber One in 2021 for \$9.99 per month and \$99.99 per year, discounts on rides have been a major adop-

tion driver. According to Uber's full-year earnings report, Uber One memberships increased by 100 per cent to approximately 12 million members in 2022. While switching to a cashback offer allows Uber to increase its profit margins, it also risks losing customers who are only inter-

ested in the discounts, the report said. Moreover, the ride-hailing platform stated in the email that other member benefits such as the \$0 delivery fee and up to 10 per cent off eligible Uber Eats orders will not be affected, the report added. Meanwhile, Uber has announced a new feature, which will allow users to book flights directly in the app for customers in the UK. Uber partnered with Canada-based travel agency Hopper to sell national and international flights through the ride-sharing app.

## Financial Inclusion of MSMEs – whither way?

DEBASHIS BANDYOPADHYAY

Financial Inclusion or spreading of formal Banking in India is one of the avowed objectives of Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and it operates a separate department to spread banking in unbanked areas.

Financial Inclusion and Development Department (FIDD) is also responsible for uptake of credit by priority sector, namely, Agriculture and MSME sector.

However, the recently released Annual Report of RBI for 2022-23 indicates a different trend. The report shows while the credit release to MSMEs has increased by a healthy 14% during the year, (at end December, 2022) the actual number of operating MSME accounts has decreased by about 17% during the same period.

While banks may be happy



with the development, they have to deal with fewer MSME accounts with higher credit uptake, a more profitable and manageable scenario, there are surely areas of concern for both Government and RBI. If the actual number of functional Bank accounts are coming down, how the spread of Banking within India, the financial inclusion is progressing.

It may be argued that over time closure of bank accounts due to expiration or cessation in business is quite normal, but

how it is capturing the growing entrepreneurship in far flung areas, to some extent due to Government programmes and opening of large number of Bank accounts in so far unbanked areas. Is it going to be a negative sum game so far expansion of Banking is concerned?

The issue of more concern is the trend of reduction in number of operational MSME bank accounts. The number is continuously decreasing for three consecutive years, as per

the latest RBI Annual Report. And as expected, the biggest drop is in the number of functional micro enterprise accounts, from 3.87 crore in 2020-21 to 2.39 crore in 2021-22 and the trend is continuing in 2022-23, although the gross credit offtake by these micro enterprises increased by about 8 - 10% during the same period. The purpose of raising the issue vis à vis growth in MSME credit is to draw the attention of Government and RBI to a dark area of the picture which probably shows that a large number of micro enterprises are withdrawing from the formal banking. If so, an in depth study need to be conducted by the authorities to find out where the evil is?

Debashis Bandyopadhyay is a retired industrial advisor to Government of India. Views are personal.

## America is not on the verge of bankruptcy



DR. P.S. VOHRA

Recently, when the American Treasury Secretary sent a letter to Congress requesting more financial borrowing power for the economy, speculation that the American economy might not be in the best shape quickly spread across the globe. According to reports, the US economy has a financial debt of 31.46 trillion these days. The Treasury Secretary has given the US Congress a deadline of June 1 in this regard and has said very clearly that if the limit and capacity of the US to take financial debt are not increased, then after June 1, it will be unable to pay the country's financial expenses. This shows that America is rapidly moving towards a financial liquidity or cash crisis. This is creating more trouble because politics on this issue is also at its peak in the US, and there

are deep differences between both Democrats and Republicans regarding increasing debt ceiling.

During World War I, a law was passed in the US that required financial debt in the economy to not exceed a certain value. Even today, the American economy is governed by the same law that is more than a century old. It is also evident that raising the limit on financial debt is not new in the US. Since 1960, the limit on financial debt has been increased about 78 times. Last time this limit was set at \$ 31.40 trillion in the year 2021, the US economy reached this limit in January this year. Of course, this time also, the capacity of financial debt in America will increase, but this situation is certainly very worrying for the world's largest economic superpower. The intention of increasing the capacity of financial credit is very clear to all. This leads to higher financial expenses



than financial income in the economy, resulting in a state of strong financial discipline and potentially having worrying consequences in the future.

It is very surprising that America, the world's largest economic superpower, is trapped in a huge financial debt these days. Compared to statistics, America's current financial debt is more than 10 times India's GDP, while India is the fifth largest economy in the world. By the year 2000, the debt of the US economy was \$9.7 trillion, which almost doubled in 2010 after 10 years.

Then, in the next 10 years, it increased by more than 70 percent to \$30.73 trillion in the year 2020. Why does the capacity for financial debt in the US continue to grow? If research is conducted on this matter, it becomes evident that America has experienced economic crises at the domestic level in every decade. The slowdown caused by the real estate sector in 2005 was one of the reasons that put the US on the verge of bankruptcy around 2011. The Corona epidemic in the year 2020 has put America in this economic

crisis today. It should be noted that during the corona, the amount of financial liquidity was kept at a very high level to maintain per capita purchasing capacity in the US, whose consequences are now being seen in the American economy. On the other hand, the soaring inflation that has persisted for some time has severely impacted the United States. Furthermore, the frequent changes in interest rate policies implemented by the US Federal Reserve have had a highly adverse impact on the US economy at a global level.

It is certain that the US economy will be heading towards recession due to the adverse effects of financial debt. The Treasury Secretary has also warned that if the capacity of financial debt is not increased, 6 to 8 million people will lose their jobs, GDP will fall by 4 to 5 percent, government employees will not be given more financial facilities, etc. A survey conducted by

the prestigious University of Michigan in the US in May 2023 has also revealed a very worrying situation. At the domestic level, economic transactions of American consumers saw a decline of 9 percent, the general public had a negative view of the country's economy by 5 percent, and consumers had a negative growth of 11 percent compared to what was expected of the economy. This report makes it clear that there is a lot of turmoil in the minds of American citizens and consumers these days regarding the economy. On this side, it is also necessary to mention that in the past, the central banks of all major countries suddenly increased the purchase of gold, which also clearly means that gold can be used as an alternative to the US dollar in emergency situations in global transactions.

The current economic situation in the US will certainly have a huge impact on India,

as it is the second-largest trading partner in international trade after the European Union. India's IT sector exports the majority to the US, and statistics show that India's IT exports have seen a decline of more than 10 percent in the last few years. Apart from this, India's economy in the fields of textiles, chemicals, and jewelry will also be greatly affected by American transactions in the coming time. It is also feared that the control of US interest policies will continue in the coming time, as a result of which the Indian rupee will weaken against the US dollar, due to which imports will also be affected, and consequently inflation in the domestic market will also increase. Its side effects can also be seen in India's stock market.

Dr. P.S. Vohra, Academician, Financial Thinker & Newspaper Columnist, Views are personal

# INTERNATIONAL

## Biden falls on stage during Air Force Academy event, WH says 'he's fine'

**COLORADO:** After handing out diplomas during a graduation event at the US Air Force Academy in Colorado, President Joe Biden tripped on a sandbag and fell on stage, but the White House says "he's fine".

At the event on Thursday, Biden, who is the country's oldest serving President at 80, had been standing for about an hour and a half to shake hands with each of the 921 graduating cadets, reports the BBC. The stumble began as Biden was jogging away from centre stage. As he was moving toward his seat, he tripped, falling to the ground.

The president landed on his right hip before lifting himself up on his right hand, CNN reported.

A group of men, including an official with the Air Force Academy and two Secret



Service agents, grasped onto Biden's arms to help him back to his feet.

Footage of the incident showed the President appearing to point at one of two sandbags used to prop up his teleprompter as he was helped up by an Air Force official and two members of his Secret Service detail.

He was seen walking back to his seat unassisted and later

jogging back to his motorcade when the ceremony ended shortly after the accident.

Addressing reporters after stepping off Marine One Thursday evening, the President joked and said, "I got sandbagged".

"He's fine. There was a sandbag on stage while he was shaking hands," White House Communications Director Ben LaBolt wrote on Twitter.

At a regular press conference later in the day, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre further assured that Biden was feeling "totally fine" and had boarded the plane flashing "a big smile".

Meanwhile, Biden's predecessor Donald Trump reacted to the incident said that "the whole thing is crazy".

"I hope he wasn't hurt... That's not inspiring," the BBC quoted Trump as saying from a campaign event in Iowa.

"You got to be careful about that because you don't -- you don't want that. Even if you have to tip toe down the ramp," Trump said, apparently referring to his own careful walk off a stage that made headlines in 2020.

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis also reacted to the fall during a campaign event in New Hampshire, saying: "We

hope and wish Joe Biden a swift recovery from any injuries he may have sustained.

"But we also wish the United States of America a swift recovery from the injuries it has sustained because of Joe Biden and his policies."

Biden has had previous stumbles in public, including falling to the ground during a bike ride last year in Delaware and he was also seen slipping on the stairs as he boards Air Force One, reports CNN.

Despite those incidents, Biden's doctor has said he is physically fit to serve in office. I

n recent physicals, Biden's doctor has examined the President's stiff gait, determining it was a result of "wear and tear" changes on Biden's spine.

The most recent physical determined the condition was unchanged, albeit with "possibly tighter hamstrings and calves".

## Canada launches category-based selection for Express Entry candidates

Canada has launched a new process to welcome skilled newcomers with work experience in priority jobs as permanent residents in an attempt to meet its labour needs and strengthen its economy.

Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Sean Fraser, announced on Wednesday the first-ever launch of category-based selection for Canada's flagship economic immigration management system, Express Entry. This year, category-based selection invitations will focus on candidates who have a strong French language proficiency, or work experience in fields like healthcare, agriculture and agri-food, STEM professions and trades, such as carpenters, plumbers and contractors transport. The move will allow Canada to issue invitations to apply to prospective permanent residents with specific skills, training or language ability.

According to the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), this approach to the Express Entry system will address labour needs and strengthen French communities across the country. "These changes to the Express Entry system will ensure that they (Canadian employers) have the skilled workers they need to grow and succeed. We can also grow our economy and help businesses with labour shortages while also increasing the number of French-proficient candidates to help ensure the vitality of French-speaking communities," Fraser said. Express Entry is Canada's flagship application management system for those seeking to immigrate permanently through the Federal Skilled Worker Program, the Federal Skilled Trades Program, the Canadian Experience Class and a portion of the Provincial Nominee Program.



In the 13th Express Entry draw of 2023, IRCC invited 4,800 candidates, according to CIC News. In June 2022, the Canadian government made changes to the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act to allow for the selection of immigrants based on key attributes that support economic priorities such as specific work experience or knowledge of French. The first category-based invitations to apply are expected to be sent this summer. Immigration accounts for nearly 100 per cent of Canada's labour force growth, helping to address labour shortages in key sectors.

## Cambodian King Sihamoni gets ceremonial welcome at Rashtrapati Bhavan



**NEW DELHI:** President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday accorded a ceremonial welcome to King Norodom Sihamoni of Cambodia at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. King Sihamoni had arrived in India on Monday on his maiden three-day state visit. He was welcomed by minister of state for external affairs Rajkumar Ranjan Singh on his arrival. "An opportunity to further deepen the civilisational relations between India and Cambodia," external affairs ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi had tweeted while informing about the Cambodian king's arrival on Monday. King Sihamoni will be in India till May 31. He will meet Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar during his stay.

## Serum Institute writes to govt, seeks in-house testing of its injection for detection of latent TB



**NEW DELHI:** The Serum Institute of India (SII) has urged the Union health ministry to allow in-house testing of its Cy-Tb injection for the detection of latent tuberculosis, saying the testing facility for this product is not available in any government lab in the country, official sources said on Wednesday. A letter in this regard was written by Prakash Kumar Singh, Director at SII, they said. The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) approved market authorisation of Cy-Tb injection on May 9, 2022, but even after a year of approval, Cy-Tb is not available in the market due to the non-availability of testing facility in any government lab in India, Singh said in the letter.

## Shanghai records highest May temperature in over 100 years

The Chinese city of Shanghai has recorded its highest temperature in May after more than 100 years, state media reported. On Monday, the maximum temperature stood at 36.1 degrees Celsius, beating the previous record of 35.7 degrees Celsius which was first recorded in May 1876 and had been reached just three other times in 1903, 1915 and 2018, CNN reported citing the state media. According to the Shanghai Meteorological Department, Monday's record-breaking heat wave for May was recorded in the city's Xuhui district.

## Thirteen Indians found guilty of money laundering, tax evasion in UAE

Thirteen Indian nationals, including seven companies owned by them, have been convicted of money laundering and tax evasion by the Abu Dhabi Criminal Court, a media report said.

The court found them guilty of laundering Dh510 million involving unlicensed provision of credit facilities through points of sale (POS), the Khaleej Times reported last week.

Four of the Indians were sentenced to jail terms ranging from five to 10 years, followed by deportation, and the court ordered them to pay fines ranging from Dh5 million to Dh10 million. The seven companies involved in the crime were each fined Dh10 million. According to investigations, the Indians had set up a "criminal organisation" and used the headquarters of a travel



agency to carry out unlicensed economic activities through which they had reportedly gained over

half a billion dirhams. They would pay customers in cash and then use their credit cards to make fake purchases through their companies' POS, the Khaleej Times reported. In some cases, they would also assist customers settle credit card debts by depositing cash into their accounts, making another fraudulent POS transaction, and then deducting an interest amount.

According to bank transaction reports and financial analysis statements issued by the Financial Information Unit (FIU), an unusually high volume of cash flow into and out of the bank accounts of the defendants and their companies was noticed in a short period of time. In December last year, six companies were fined Dh3.2 million for breaching anti-money laundering laws.

## Pakistani drone intercepted at Indo-Pak border village

**JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar**

Border Security Force (BSF) seized a drone which arrived on Indian territory at Indo-Pak border village Dhanoe Khurd having close proximity with the Pakistan border with the arrest of one accused.

In a statement issued here today, BSF officials stated that on 27th May about 2135 hours, BSF troops deployed in depth area, heard the buzzing sound of a drone, in the area near Village - Dhanoe Khurd in Amritsar.

As per the laid down drill, troops immediately reacted to intercept the drone by firing.

During subsequent search of the area, BSF troops recovered



a drone (Quadcopter, DJI Matrice RTK 300) from the farming fields of Village - Dhanoe Khurd, Distt - Amritsar.

Meanwhile, depth deployed troops near Village Dhanoe Khurd also saw three persons running towards the village, challenged them and caught hold of one suspect alongwith a bag containing narcotics consignment of three packets (Gross weight - 3.4 Kgs).

## Bill introduced in US to hire foreign health workers on H-1B visa

Two US Congresswomen have introduced a bill to make it easier for the Department of Veteran Affairs to hire foreign employees on H-1B visas when they cannot find a suitable applicant in the country.

Introduced by Congresswomen Rashida Tlaib and Delia Ramirez on the Expanding Health Care Providers for Veterans Act, will help address the healthcare provider shortage in the US by allowing immigrant health workers, who are H-1B visa holders, to offer the services that the veterans need. The bill designates the Department of Veterans Affairs and State Veterans Homes as cap exempt institutions for the purposes of the H-1B visa program. "We have a duty to uphold our commitment to our veterans, who are being affected by the health worker



shortage in our nation. We can address this shortage with the immigrants in our communities who are ready and want to work, but face so many hurdles to do so," said Congresswoman Ramirez, member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

The Expanding Health Care Providers for Veterans Act was developed after the Detroit VA Medical Center nearly had to close their clinic -- which provides life-saving care to more than 90 local veterans -- earlier this year due to hiring difficulties imposed by the H-1B visa cap. Representative Tlaib's intervention was able

to prevent the clinic's closure, and this bill is designed to ensure such a situation does not arise again in the future, a statement released by the Congresswoman's office said.

"Our veterans deserve high-quality health care, and our district knows firsthand the importance of providing access to care, especially mental health services for veterans who need it most," said Congresswoman Tlaib. "I am proud to introduce this legislation to expand healthcare providers for our veterans by welcoming healthcare professionals who are immigrants to care for them, and I will continue to ensure that our veterans are not forgotten when they return home," she said.

This legislation is endorsed by The Veterans For Peace Save Our VA National Project and The American Immigration Lawyers Association.

## Recep Tayyip Erdoğan wins Turkish presidential election

**ELECTION BOARD CONFIRMS VICTORY OF INCUMBENT OVER OPPOSITION CANDIDATE KEMAL KILIÇDAROĞLU AFTER RUN OFF**

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has extended his two decades in power, securing victory over his rival Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu after an unprecedented presidential runoff election, in a vote that reflected Turkey's stark and persistent political polarisation.

With 99.43% of the vote counted, Turkey's supreme election authority announced late on Sunday that Erdoğan had won 52.14% of the votes, while Kılıçdaroğlu received 47.86%. With a gap of more than 2m votes between candidates, the votes yet to be counted would not change the result, said Ahmet Yener, the head of the election board.

Even before the result was called, a triumphant Erdoğan stood on top of a bus near his residence in Istanbul to once again sing a campaign song to his adherents and pronounce victory.

"Look at this scene. It's magnificent," he said. "We have completed the second round of the presidential elections with the favour of our nation." He added: "Elections come and go, the flood goes away but the sand remains. The main thing is that our country does not deviate from its goals, and our nation takes care to remain united. This is the biggest message of today's elections."

Both candidates encouraged their supporters to show up and vote in a run-off election where turnout was high.

The victory for Turkey's longest-serving leader affords him both another term in office as president, and an endorsement of his populist style of politics after he emerged victorious in an election that challenged



his rule.

The Turkish leader has spent two decades reshaping the country in his own image, concentrating power on his office, detaining opponents and instituting increasingly unorthodox economic policies. Despite this, he gained support in many of the areas of Turkey worst hit by the country's financial troubles, as well as areas levelled in twin deadly earthquakes that killed more than 50,000 people in south-east Turkey.

"We are not the only ones who have won, Turkey has won... our democracy has won," Erdoğan later told his supporters from the balcony of the presidential palace.

The Turkish president went on to boast of Turkey's economic independence despite a financial crisis linked to his policies, one sparking a rising cost of living crisis among his citizens.

"We will wait for the last vote to be counted," said Ömer Çelik, the spokesperson for Erdoğan's Justice and Development party (AKP), shortly before congratulations for the incumbent president arrived from leaders in Pakistan, Vik-

tor Orbán of Hungary, and the emir of Qatar.

Further congratulations later arrived from the US president, Joe Biden; the Russian president, Vladimir Putin; the British prime minister, Rishi Sunak; the French president, Emmanuel Macron; Brazil's president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva; and even Erdoğan's former geopolitical rival the president of Egypt, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi.

At the headquarters of his Republican People's party (CHP) in the Turkish capital, Kılıçdaroğlu attempted to console his supporters, but made no suggestion he could stand down as opposition leader.

"In this election, the will of the people to change an authoritarian government has clearly emerged, despite all the pressures. We have experienced the most unfair election process of recent years," he said.

"Despite this climate of fear, I would like to thank all the leaders of our alliance and our citizens. The Republican People's party and the Nation's Alliance will continue to struggle with all of their members. We will continue to

be the pioneer in this struggle, until real democracy comes to our country. My biggest sadness is the trouble waiting for this country."

Erdoğan entered the second round in the lead, after a first round race where he received 49.5% of the overall vote compared with Kılıçdaroğlu's 44.5%, while his AKP along with their nationalist coalition partners won a majority in parliament.

The opposition had succeeded in forcing Erdoğan into a run-off vote - an unprecedented event in the presidential system that Erdoğan introduced - but was ultimately unable to clinch the majority of votes needed to secure victory.

"No one should despair over the election results. No one should feel pessimistic, or feel defeated. If you believe in democracy, we should not forget that elections are the most fundamental function of any democracy," said Meral Akşener, leader of the opposition İYİ (Good) party.

Kılıçdaroğlu and his opposition coalition campaigned on the promise of returning Turkey to parliamentary democracy, pledging to reverse many of the changes that have marked Erdoğan's two decades of rule, including concentrating power around his office and jailing opponents.

In an interview with CNN, Erdoğan laughed off the suggestion he was seeking increasing authoritarian control. "How could someone going into a runoff election, instead of completing the election in the first round, be a dictator? That is the reality," he said. "What kind of dictator is that?"

## Trump vows to end birthright citizenship if he wins in 2024

Former US President Donald Trump has vowed to end birthright citizenship for children of unauthorised immigrants if he wins the 2024 election.



The 14th Amendment of the Constitution, adopted following the Civil War, declares that all "persons born or naturalized in the United States" are "citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside", reports CBS News. In a video message on Tuesday, Trump said that he would issue an executive order during his first day back at the White House in January 2025 instructing the federal government to deny citizenship to children with parents who are not American citizens or legal permanent residents. "My policy will choke off a major incentive for continued illegal immigration, deter more migrants from coming and encourage many of the aliens Joe Biden has unlawfully let into our country to go back to their home countries. They must go back," the former President said. Besides the US, Canada and Mexico also offer birthright citizenship. Trump had also brought up the issue while he was in office. In a 2018 interview with Axios magazine, he had said that he would end birthright citizenship through an executive order, although he did not provide a timeline for doing so, reports CNN. Again in 2019, Trump had said he was "seriously" considering ending birthright citizenship despite the fact that such a move would face immediate legal challenge and is at odds with Supreme Court precedent.

## Georgia Embassy's flagship education fair organized in Bengaluru eyed inflated demand from Indian medical students



**ARUNKUMAR RAO Bengaluru**

The Embassy of Georgia, to accelerate the study abroad journey of Indian students, organized one of the largest foreign education fairs in Bengaluru. This was the second edition of the flagship event that focused on providing strategic support to Indian students to study medical and non-medical courses at Georgian University and institutions.

The event was organized in Bengaluru, followed by Chennai. It was attended by over 1000 12th grade pass students belonging to medical and science backgrounds. Around 11 universities from Georgia featured their course offerings along with providing on-the-spot admission consultation and scholarship benefits to students.

Commenting on the announcement, Mr. Archil Dzuliasvili, the Ambassador of Georgia said, "We have got a tremendous response this time that even exceeded our expectations. The day-long fair served Indian students coming from different cities with an abundance of information. Our counsellors from participating universities provided a holistic understanding of the courses and were instrumental in defining the study abroad roadmap for students."

The fair witnessed the presence of many renowned professor to uplift the spirit of aspiring students. Dr. Ashwath Narayan C.N, MLA, Malleshwaram, Former Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka. The education fair included the participation of over 11 Georgian Universities including Alte University, Caucasus International University, David Tvildiani Medical University, Caucasus University, East European University, European University, Georgian American University, Georgian National University SEU, Kutaisi University, Teaching University Geometri, and the University of Georgia.



## Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli have been invited to the FA Cup Final

Power couple Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli, who are in London currently, have been invited to the FA Cup Final on Saturday. The couple, who are fondly called Virushka by their fans, have been invited by one of the most innovative athleisure brands of the world and the prestigious Manchester City Football Club for the FA Cup Finale 2023. Manchester City and Manchester United will lock horns in the Final on June 3 at the fabled Wembley stadium. The two clubs have been playing each other since many decades now. Given that now both the teams are regularly ranked among the best football teams in the world, their clash is seen as one of the most intense sporting rivalries in football. On the work front, Anushka will be seen in the upcoming Netflix film 'Chakda Xpress'. She will be playing the role of Indian bowler Jhulan Goswami in the film. The release date of the movie is not out yet.

## India eyes the World Test Championship

SUNIL THAPLIYAL  
New Delhi

India and Australia are all set to lock horns for the upcoming World Test Championship, which will start on June 7 at the Oval Ground in London. It will be India's second consecutive WTC final, having lost the first one against New Zealand in 2021.

Both teams are competing for their first Test Series championship. While India will strive to break their jinx of not winning an ICC trophy in the last ten years, Australia wants to win this title to demonstrate their dominance in the world of Test cricket.

However, Team India is not going to take any chances this time. The team's main batters, including Virat Kohli, Shubman Gill, and Cheteshwar Pujara, are all in excellent form. Rahane has also demonstrated his mettle. Siraj and Muhammad Shami will lead the Indian pace assault in the absence of Jasprit Bumrah, who was unable to recuperate from his injury. It is now time for them to put their best foot



forward in the last encounter. It is believed that after 2013, Team India would win their maiden ICC title.

The India-Australia rivalry dates back to the late 1990s. At the time, Australia was the undisputed number one team in both test and ODI cricket, and the Indian team was considered rather poor. However, India began to rise up against Australia and played their finest game. Team India ended Australia's 16-match winning streak in Kolkata in 2001. The key reason for India and Australia's heated rivalry is that they play a bilateral series against one other virtually every

year. In addition, it looks that Australia and India are more evenly matched teams, notably in Tests and ODIs. India also became the first Asian country to defeat Australia in a test series on their home turf twice in a row, in 2018-19 and 2020-21, demonstrating India's dominance over Australia. In addition, Australia has not beaten India in a bilateral test series since 2014.

The India-Australia match is more about the pure thrill of witnessing excellent cricket games than about national jingo. Both teams hurl everything they have on the

field. Cricket fans are hoping that this final will be a great test match that will be permanently imprinted in the memories of cricket fans across the globe.

**Australia squad:** Pat Cummins (c), Scott Boland, Alex Carey (wk), Cameron Green, Marcus Harris, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis (wk), Usman Khawaja, Marnus Labuschagne, Nathan Lyon, Todd Murphy, Steve Smith (vc), Mitchell Starc, David Warner

### Standby players

Mitch Marsh  
Matthew Renshaw  
**India squad:** Rohit Sharma (c), Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara, Virat Kohli, Ajinkya Rahane, KS Bharat (wk), Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Shardul Thakur, Mohd. Shami, Mohd. Siraj, Umesh Yadav, Jaydev Unadkat, Ishan Kishan (wk)

### Standby players

Yashasvi Jaiswal  
Mukesh Kumar  
Suryakumar Yadav

## Sidhu Moosewala's mother pays emotional tribute on his first death anniversary

**MANSA:** The mother of famed Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala, who was shot dead by a group of shooters close to his ancestral village in Punjab on this day last year, was in tears on Monday on reaching the place where he was cremated. His fiancée Amandeep Kaur pledged to never get married. In the morning, his mother Charan Kaur took part in a special prayer ceremony at Jawahar Ke village of Mansa district, attended by hundreds of the singer's followers, sympathizers and friends at the place where he was cremated and a memorial statue was raised.



Prayers were held at Jawahar Ke village of Mansa district on Sunday to commemorate the first death anniversary of Punjabi singer-turned-politician Sidhu Moosewala, who was shot dead by a group of assailants at the village on May 29 last year. A day before the death anniversary, mother Charan Kaur went down on her knees, bowed and touched the ground where her son was shot dead. "I'll the killers and conspirators of Sidhu Moosewala's murder get punishment, our fight for justice will continue. His murder is a part of a big conspiracy," an emotional Charan Kaur told the media. The singer's father Balkaur Singh is currently in Britain. "A real honour to meet Balkaur Singh, father of the

late icon Sidhu Moosewala. @SkyNews will be doing a special report on Sidhu death -- one year on. It will be airing on Monday 29 May," tweeted Preet Kaur Gill, the Labour (Co-op) MP for Birmingham.

Moosewala's fiancée Amandeep Kaur is the daughter of a prominent leader of the Akali Dal. After Moosewala's death, she swore to never marry. She reportedly moved with Moosewala's parents in their native village. In several occasions, Moosewala's parents launched an attack on the Punjab government, alleging that the masterminds behind his son's murder are still at large.

Shubhdeep Singh Sidhu, popularly known as Sidhu Moosewala, was shot dead in Mansa district on May 29, 2022.

## After 12 years, Netflix series 'Scoop' to revive journo J. Dey's chilling murder

**MUMBAI:** Ahead of the 12th anniversary of the killing of Mumbai crime journalist Jyotirmoy Dey, Netflix will stream 'Scoop' from June 2, a series that promises to revive the memories of his gory end by the omnipresent mafia.



Directed by the National Award winner filmmaker Hansal Mehta ('Shahid' and 'Scam:1992'), 'Scoop' stars Karishma Tanna, Mohammed Zeeshan Ayyub, Prosenjit Chatterjee, Harman Baweja, Tannishtha Chatterjee and Deven Bhojani in the main roles. The series is based on the biographical novel 'Behind Bars In Byculla: My Days In Prison', penned by former journalist Jigna

Vora, who was one of the prime accused in the Dey murder case. But after a harrowing seven years' ordeal, she was finally acquitted in 2018 and her acquittal was upheld by Bombay High Court in 2019.

Dey, 55, the Investigations Editor for multi-city tabloid, 'Mid-Day', was shot dead around 3 p.m. on June 11, 2011, by four sharpshooters who came on motorcycles and disappeared after executing the sensational crime.

## Indian Golf Union sanctions MATI, country's first Mid-Amateur Golf Tour



ARUNKUMAR RAO  
Bengaluru

Amateur golf in India is set for a boost with the start of the country's first structured mid-amateur tour from October this year. The Mid-Amateur Tour of India (MATI) which is sanctioned by the Indian Golf Union (IGU), the governing body of golf in India, is the brainchild of former senior sports journalist Robin Bose, Co-founder and Director of the promoting company the Golfinghub Media and Events Private Limited.

While amateur golf has always been the stepping stone for those keen to make a career in professional golf, MATI opens a window for serious golfers in the age group of 35-54 years who have chosen to strike a balance between their workspace and competing on the golf course. It is also an opportunity for those who have been restricted to club events due to lack of opportunities in this segment.

## Former Miss India and Bollywood actress Neha Dhupia inaugurates Dubai Beauty School in Delhi

FW DESK  
New Delhi

Dubai Beauty School is proud to announce its grand opening in Malviya Nagar, Delhi by Former Miss India and renowned Bollywood Actress Neha Dhupia. Youth icon Prince Narula and Celebrity Makeup Artist Bhumika Bahl also graced the occasion. The beauty school will offer state-of-the-art facilities to provide students with a top-notch education in the beauty industry. The various programs have been designed to educate learners in a wide range of beauty techniques and procedures, including makeup artistry, hairstyling, skincare, nail care, personal grooming and many more that will help them stand out in a competitive market.



Dubai Beauty School, led by professional makeup artist and former model Anubha Vashistha will take a holistic approach to training, focusing not only on cosmetics application methods but also on confidence and communication skills. The teaching methodology of the academy will emphasize on personal growth and encourage students to excel as makeup artists as well as in their personal and professional life. Dubai Beauty School will offer comprehensive makeup courses along with options of short-term grooming and beauty courses ranging from 7 days

to 45 days. The academy will also provide job assistance to all the students enrolled in the course. Dubai Beauty School also has collaboration with Dreamz Production House which will provide students with access to industry leaders and newer opportunities for growth and learning. Neha Dhupia said "Makeup is an essential part of our daily

regime and it is truly an art. People spend more now on their personal appearance and that is driving overall growth. And, here is when the role of makeup artists becomes very crucial. The makeup industry has emerged as one of the most successful and lucrative sectors worldwide. A career in beauty will definitely open up doors to opportunity and growth."

Bhaichung Bhutia Football Schools (BBFS), powered by enJogo, will conduct trials for its residential academies (boarding schools with football training) in Sports Complex Sector 46, Football Ground on 4th June 2023. BBFS aims to reach out to football aspirants across the length and breadth of the country through its latest initiative - 100 Trials. 100 Cities. Unlimited Dreams. The Technical Team has shortlisted more than 100 Indian cities to conduct trials based on football popularity and select the best young players for BBFS Residential Academy. BBFS is India's largest football academy and already provides over INR 2 Crores worth of scholarships for talented footballers under its residential program. There are opportunities to gain up to 100% scholarships covering academics, training, food, lodging, and competitive exposure.

## Bhaichung Bhutia's U-23 Residential Academy is set to organize football trials in Chandigarh



KULBIR SINGH KALSI  
Chandigarh

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## Kim Cattrall will reprise her iconic role as Samantha Jones in the Season 2 finale

Actress Kim Cattrall will reprise her iconic role as Samantha Jones in the Season 2 finale of 'And Just Like That', the revival of 'Sex and the City'.

In the scene, Samantha, who in the show has moved to London, will have a phone conversation with Parker's Carrie Bradshaw. In the first season of 'And Just Like That', Carrie engaged with an estranged Samantha over text, and in the finale, the two made a plan to see each other in order to reconcile. Famed 'Sex and the City' costume designer Patricia Field, who has not been working on 'And Just Like That', dressed Samantha for her scene.

But she will only appear in one scene. According to sources, Cattrall shot her dialogue on March 22 in New York City, without seeing or speaking with the stars of the series, including Sarah Jessica Parker, or with 'And Just Like That' showrunner Michael Patrick King, reports 'Variety'.

City' costume designer Patricia Field, who has not been working on 'And Just Like That', dressed Samantha for her scene.

## 'Zara Hatke Zara Bachke': Unique take on love, marriage & relationships

**MUMBAI:** As a director, Laxman Utekar is known for creating his own universe, which invariably seems like a messy but lovable household with needy, wanting and fun characters, who at times are muddled, chaotic and sometimes outright elementary, but just when you're about to find some sort of order, the simple actions begin to have devastating results.



Sara Ali Khan as Saumya Chawla, a coaching institute teacher, are college sweethearts. They found each other

in college, love blossomed and now the duo is married. Their life is not perfect by any stretch of the imagination, but they are in love and find peace and happiness in their banal yet binding life. They live a life of struggles in a middle-class household with parents and a nosy uncle and aunt, who refuse to leave their house depriving the couple of their privacy. That is all okay at the beginning as this is pretty much the norm in a middle-class family.

## Sanjay Dutt remembers his 'guiding light' Nargis on her birth anniversary

**MUMBAI:** Bollywood star Sanjay Dutt remembered his mother and iconic actress Nargis, whom he fondly called his "guiding light" on her 94th birth anniversary.



Taking to Instagram to pay a tribute, Sanjay posted a monochrome photograph of his mother and wrote: "To my guiding light, happy birthday, Mom. I love you and miss you always." It was in the 1980 when Nargis was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. She passed away on May 3, 1981.

One of India's finest actors, Nargis began her film career as a leading lady in the early 1940s and continued to perform until 1967. She made her screen debut in a small role at the age of five with the 1935 film 'Talash-E-Haq'. But started her journey in film with the 1942 film 'Tamanna'.

It was on the sets of 'Mother India' in 1957, when Nargis

and late actor Sunil Dutt fell in love with each other after a

fire broke out and he rescued her. They got married in 1958.

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