**CLEAN DRINKING WATER SUPPLY ROW: KEJRIWAL HOLDS REVIEW MEETING WITH JAL BOARD OFFICIALS** 

**WORLD BANK APPROVES** \$700MN TO HELP **SRI LANKA IMPLEMENT** FOUNDATIONAL REFORMS



MATRIX FIGHT NIGHT: INDIA'S STAR **MMA FIGHTER ANGAD BISHT TO DEFEND FLYWEIGHT TITLE AGAINST BRAZIL HUGO PAIVA AT MFN** 

#### **Gross NPAs in MSMEs** drop to 6.8%: RBI Report



**NEW DELHI:** All scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) have seen a decline in gross nonperforming assets (GNPA) from 9.3% in March 2022 to 6.8% in March 2023, as per Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) latest Financial Stability Report. This led into the improvement of the asset quality of the MSME portfolio of all SCBs. It is to note that the improvement in the MSME asset quality profile coincided with the expiry of regulatory forbearance and restructuring schemes introduced since 2018.

Quarter-on-quarter, the GNPA ratio improved from 7.4% in December 2022 and 7.7% in September 2022 and 9.8% in June 2022. The GNPA ratio for MSME loans below Rs 25 crore, which are particularly vulnerable to slippage, also declined sequentially from 7.2% in March last year to 6.7% in March this year, the report noted. In terms of special mention accounts (SMAs), the share of SMAs in the MSME portfolio of SCBs also dropped from 11% in March 2022 to 8.6% in March 2023. SMAs are accounts that show signs of incipient stress leading to the borrower defaulting in

#### SGPC setting up its own studio for live broadcast

**JAGMOHAN SINGH** Amritsar

servicing the debt.

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) General Secretary Gurcharan Singh Grewal here today informed that SGPC is set to to broadcast live Gurbani from the Golden Temple and Rs. 60 lac budget was already earmarked in the SGPC budget for

pose. All

this be-

pened

the con-

over the



ister Bhagwant Mann passed the Sikh Gurdwaras (Amendment) Bill, 2023, to allow freefor-all telecast. However, the agreement between SGPC and PTC network for live broadcast of Gurbani from the Golden Temple is going to expire in

#### Congress questions AAP's move to back Uniform Civil Code **NEW DELHI:** A day after the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) announced to support the Uniform Civil Code (UCC), the Congress hit back saying it was surprised

with the speed at which it supported the BJP-led central government's move even as other responsible parties want the draft proposal and asked if it has exclusive access to the draft. In a tweet, Pawan Khera, who is chairman of the Congress

media and publicity department said, "I am truly surprised at the speed with which AAP has extended support to the Uniform Civil Code. Even as other responsible parties wait for the draft proposal from the govt, does AAP have exclusive access to the draft of the UCC proposal?

Ĥis remarks came a day after the AAP announced to support the UCC, and said also said that these set of laws should be implemented only after wider person, can that house function?'

consultations. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday while addressing BJP booth workers in Madhya Pradesh said that Muslims were being misled in the name of UCC. "These days, people are being provoked by the UCC. You tell me, if there is one law for one person in a home, and another law for another

he asked. The Congress and AAP has been engaged in bitter war of words in last few weeks over the Centre's ordinance in Delhi. During the opposition parties meeting in Bihar's Patna Delhi Chief Minister and AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal asked Congress to clear its stand on

These days, people are being provoked by the UCC. You tell me, if there is one law for one person in a home, and another law for another person, can that house function?"

the ordinance row. After the opposition meeting, the AAP also said that its hesitation and refusal to act as a team player on an important issue would make it very difficult for the party to be a part of any alliance that

# AAP govt challenges Centre's Delhi services ordinance in Supreme Court



Three 'garbage mountains' will be cleared in next 18 months: Delhi LG

**FW CORRESPONDENT** New Delhi

The Delhi government on Friday moved the Supreme Court against the Centre's ordinance over control of services in the national capital, officials said.

Earlier in the day, the AAP had announced that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal will burn copies of the Centre's ordinance at the party office

in central Delhi on July 3. The party had on June 11 organised a maha-rally against the ordinance

The Centre had on May 19 promulgated the ordinance to create an authority for the transfer and posting of IAS and DANICS officers in Delhi, with the AAP government calling the move a circumvention of the Supreme Court verdict

#### **Fake Currency Notes: RBI lodges FIR against** bank managers in Karnataka



**BENGALURU**: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has lodged an FIR against bank managers after detecting counterfeit notes in the money remitted to it by these banks, police said on Friday. According to police, 30 fake currency notes of the denomination of Rs 100 have been found and four FIRs lodged in this regard with Halasuru Gate police station. Found in Udupi, Manipal, Hubballi bank branches and Malleshwaram Branch of Bengaluru, the counterfeit currencies were detected in the money remitted to the RBI by these banks. RBI Manager Anand had lodged a complaint in this regard against managers of the Bank of Baroda, Canara Bank, UBI Bank.

# **Congress alleges corruption in Predator Drones Deal**

**KAVITA SHARMA** New Delhi

Congress party today alleged that India is paying more price for the 31 Predator drones deal with the US. A deal that was welcomed by PM Modi and US president Joe Biden during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the US.

Addressing media persons in Delhi, AICC spokesperson Pawan Khera said That the Indian Government is paying 3.072 billion deal for 31 MQ-9B predator drones manufactured by General Atomics." Why is India paying more than actual price of the drone, as compared to other countries? Why are we paying highest price for the drone, which does not even have AI integration?, he said.

The party also asked Modi Govt drones were bought by Spain at Bharat" in Defence.

า US

of number of drones being purchased. In April 2023, the Indian Armed Forces informed the Modi Govt that the requirement for predator drones is just 18 and not 31, then why the BJP govt buying

31 drones now? Giving examples of some similar variants, Congress leader Pawan Khera said the US Air Force bought MQ-9 drone, a superior version, at USD 56.5 million per drone. The UK Air Force bought MQ-9B at USD12.5 million per MQ-9B drone in spain. These

USD 46.75 million per drone.. and Germany bought it for USD 17 Million per drone, he added. The Congress also said that

when Rustom II Unmanned Aerial Vehicle is already available in India, what is the need of an alternative, and it is developed on the lines of the Predator drones of the US. It is designed for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) missions. It is capable of staying at a maximum flight altitude of over 22,000 feet for more than 24 hrs. Congress have also asked why cabinet Committee on security (CCS) not approve the drone deal. Alleging that Air Force had reservations about skyrocketing prices of these drones, why was the deal brokered in a hurry? The party also asked questions on "Make in India" and "Atmanirbhar

#### FW CORRESPONDENT New Delhi

Delhi Lt Governor V K Saxena on Wednesday assured that the three landfill sites in the na-

tional capital will be cleared in

the "next 18 months" while the Najafgarh drain will be cleaned in the "next few months". Speaking at an event here on 'Delhi 2041 – New Master Plan', Saxena cited various initiatives undertaken in the development of Yamuna flood plains, revamping of roads, and removal of garbage dumps in

He called upon Delhi citizens to participate in the beautifica-

the city, under his tenure in

tion and grooming of the city. The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) issued a statement after the event which was no said the Master Plan of Delhi 2041 (MPD-2041) would ensure sustainable development and will be notified soon.

capital at an "unprecedented pace", Saxena assured that the three "garbage mountains' will be cleared in the next 18 months, and the Najafgarh Drain, spread over 57 km, will also be completely cleaned

"Out of the 57-km stretch of the Najafgarh Drain, 30 km also attended by Subhasish Pan- of it has been cleaned and the da, vice chairman of the author- rest will be cleaned in the next few months," he was quoted as saying in the statement.

very soon.

The interactive session on MPD-2041 was organised by Highlighting the cleanli- the PHD Chamber of Comness work done in the national merce and Industry (PHDCCI). society, by ensuring equitable

Flattening of garbage dumps at Okhla, Bhalswa, and Ghazipur was being done on a "war footing", the PHDCCI said in

He emphasised that coordination among departments can help achieve the targets, saying that public participation can accomplish a lot of things. The LG said inclusivity lay at

another statement.

Drafting of the Master Plan. lously took into account the importance of providing equal

opportunities to all segments of

tured, contributing to the overall economic development of the city, the LG added. He also said that like never before, this year thousands of

access to resources, services,

and economic opportunities,

The plan aims to foster in-

clusive growth and prosperity.

Entrepreneurship, innovation,

and job creation will be nur-

Saxena said.

residents of Delhi performed yoga at eight locations on the occasion of the International Day of Yoga, along the cleaned stretch of the Najafgarh Drain. The LG asked citizens of

Delhi to remain vigilant and raise their voices for better roads, other basic facilities, and also against encroachment. "People have the right to ask

for a clean environment," he

On an emotional note, he the heart of the this Master Plan. stressed that it is our duty to which is almost ready, meticu- Yamuna river for future generations. He said in the endeavour, an 11 km patch of Yamuna from Signature Bridge to the ITO Barrage has been cleaned.

# NESO demands PM to break silence, quell violence in Manipur

**ARIBAM BISHWAJIT** 

The North East Students' Organization (NESO) has called upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi to address the unceasing unrest in Manipur, which has persisted for around two months. NESO, an alliance comprising seven student organizations from the northeastern states, expressed deep concern over the prolonged silence of the Prime Minister and emphasized the urgent need for his intervention to restore peace and normalcy in the region.

As part of their ongoing efforts, NESO organized a candlelight vigil for peace at the western gate of the iconic Kangla in Imphal. Similar programs were simultaneously held in the capitals of all eight northeastern states. The vigil aimed to bring together the



NESO orchestrated a poignant candlelight vigil, followed by the symbolic act of affixing the candles in front of the revered Kangla's western gate on PHOTO: ARIBAM BISHWAJIT

34 affected communities, mourn the loss of over 120 lives, and condemn the destruction of numerous properties, which has resulted in the displacement of over 50,000 individuals across Manipur. NESO advisor Sinam

Prakash, speaking on behalf of the organization, raised questions regarding the Prime Minister's silence and its impact."PM Modi's prolonged silence, even after 50 days of violence in the state, deeply concerns us," he stated.

# BJP, Congress lock horns after Bishnupur cops halt Rahul Gandhi's convoy ARIBAM BISHWAJIT

Congress senior leader Rahul Gandhi, faced a significant obstacle during his visit to Manipur on Thursday as he sought to assess the ongoing conflict in the region. To his surprise and frustration, Gandhi was abruptly prevented from entering the Churachandpur district by road. Manipur authorities, citing safety concerns, informed his convoy that it would not be safe to



continue traveling by road near the town of Bishnupur, which lay roughly 20 kilometers away from their intended

destination. Consequently, the scion of the Gandhi dynasty had no choice but to retrace his steps and return to Imphal International Airport, where he boarded a helicopter to reach his planned location.

Attempting to shed light on the reason behind their decision, Heisnam Balram Singh, the Superintendent of Police in Bishnupur, emphasized the prevailing ground situation. Singh asserted, "Given the volatile circumstances

on the ground, we made the judgment call to halt Rahul Gandhi's progress and strongly advised him to proceed to Churachandpur via helicopter. There exists a real and credible threat of a grenade attack along the very high way that Mr. Gandhi would have traversed. Our primary responsibility is to prioritize his security and well-being, and thus we could not allow him to continue the journey

# Karnataka govt to give cash instead of extra 5kg rice, as Procurement fails

**ARUNKUMARRAO** Bengaluru

After having failed to procure the required quantity of rice to roll out its Anna Bhagya scheme, the Karnataka government decided to pay Rs 34 per kg for the addition 5kg of the food grain promised to BPL families under one of the five pre-poll guarantees issued by the congress.

KH Muniyappa, the minister for food and civl supplies, said each member in families Below the Poverty Line (BPL) will get Rs 170 by way of cash transfer at Rs 34 per kg of rice from July. If there were five members in BPL family then family will receive Rs 850 a month and the money will be deposited in the bank account of the head of the family through direct benefit transfer



ter clarified. However, about 14 lakh families to whom the to cater to these families. Prostate had provided BPL cards, over and above the limit set by the Centre, will not receive this additional cash benefit.

The Centre sets the limit for each state to issue Public Distribution System cards. Over and "Despite having sufficient stock, above that, the state govern- Centre has denied us rice. On

(DBT) from July 1, the minis- ment bears additional expenses. "We need 22,000 tonnes of rice curing this quantity will not be a problem for ourn government, HK Patil, law and parliamentary

affairs minister said. Chief Minister Siddarmaiah launching attack on centre said, the other hand, rice is being sold to private players through auction. This shows the Centre is trying to scuttle our scheme. Former BJP chief ministers BS Yediyurappa and Basavaraj Bommai should have asked the Centre to release rice to the state he added. At a time when the Karna-

taka government is running from pillar to post to meet the financial challenges of implementing the five pre-poll guarantees, CM Siddaramaiah, who hold the finance portfolio, is left scrambling for funds to clear mounting dues to the tune of Rs 36,784 core, including Rs 25,000 crore to civil contractors and Rs 8,584 crore to electricity supply companies (Escoms). Siddaramaiah set to present the budget on July 7, these dues pose a huge challenge for

him as he has to generate additional resources with politically significant sections such as Streeshakti self-help groups and farmers demanding that their outstanding loans be waived by the government.

The Congress government has political obligation to clear the pending dues of civil contractors since their complaint against the erstwhile BJP government over allegation of 40% kickbacks in procuring government contracts had helped the grand old party gain considerable traction with the electorate in the recent assembly polls. Congress' successful PayCM campaign was based on the contractor association complaint to Prime Minister Narendra Modi about allega-

tions of rampant corruption in

# My intention is only peace, not politics: Rahul

**ARIBAM BISHWAJIT** 

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, has said that his visit had no political agenda and his sole objective was to bring about peace in Manipur, emphasizing his intention to promote peace in the state. He was taking the opportunity to address the media and express his views following his meeting with Manipur Governor Anusuiya Uikey in front of the Raj Bhavan, Imphal.

When asked to comment on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's prolonged silence since the outbreak of violence on May 3, Gandhi stated that he would refrain from making any political remarks and reiterated his focus on achieving peace in Manipur.

Gandhi expressed his purpose in visiting Manipur by emphasizing his desire to empathize with the people and acknowledged the tragic events that had unfolded. He remarked, the BJP -led state government. "It is a horrible tragedy that has



taken place," expressing his sorrow on behalf of both the people of Manipur and India as a whole. He further elaborated on the dire situation in Manipur, having visited relief camps and interacted with individuals from various communities. Gandhi highlighted the deficiencies in these camps and urged the government to take immediate action to address them.

Drawing attention to the conditions in both Imphal and Churachandpur districts,

Gandhi stressed the need for improved basic amenities, enhanced food provisions, and the supply of essential medicines in the relief camps. He expressed that he believed that violence would vield no positive outcome and called upon everyone to actively work towards achieving peace. Gandhi assured his commitment to assist in restoring normalcy to Manipur, stating, I am here. I will help anyway, do anything I can to bring peace to the state. I love all the people of Manipur, and once again, it's a terrible time, and we need to bring peace to the state." During his two-day visit to

Manipur, Rahul Gandhi assessed the situation in both the valley and Churachandpur district, which have been severely affected by the ongoing violence. Since May 3, the violence has claimed the lives of over 125 individuals, causing significant damage to properties in both Meitei and Kuki concentrated

# Clean drinking water supply row: Kejriwal holds review meeting with Jal board officials

FW CORRESPONDENT New Delhi

city residents.

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday held a review meeting with officials of the Delhi Jal Board and asserted that there will be no dearth of funds to supply clean water to

During the meeting, it was decided that the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) will end the problem of dirty water by finding out the root cause of pipeline leakages with the help of modern technology and resolve the issue permanently.

"Arvind Kejriwal held a

incarcerated during

emergency: BJP MP

Party MP from Rajsamand,

Diya Kumari, on Sunday

said that those jailed under

the Maintenance of Internal

Security Act (MISA) during

the Emergency, are freedom

fighters of the independent

She was addressing a pro-

gramme in Degana in Nagaur

district where she felicitated

those who spent long period

in jail as MISA detainees. A

documentary on emergency was also shown during the

Recalling the experi-

ence of her own family,

Diya Kumari remembered

Gavatri Devi of Jaipur, and

her father Mahavir Chakra

awardee Bhawani Singh, who

were incarcerated during the

emergency. "They were treated

like a criminal, how can we

The Emergency was de-

clared on June 25, 1975 by

the then Prime Minister Indira

Gandhi. "There was no right

of expression, even there was

no right to life. It was all done

to serve the political purpose

of Congress party, "she said.

Diya Kumari paid rich

who suffered immensely respective fields.

tribute to MISA detainees

der to protect their consti-

tutional right against the

political tyranny.

forget that, "she said.

India.

programme.

Gayatri Devi was

Diya Kumari



and discussed the detailed plan for ending the problem helium gas and cameras to of dirty water in some of the identify the pipeline leakage

regular review meeting with areas. DJB officials said that the Delhi Jal Board today to end the problem, they will use modern technology like

to it," the Chief Minister's Office said in a tweet.

Keiriwal urged DJB chairperson and minister Saurabh Bharadwaj to resolve the problem of contaminated water at the earliest. He also directed the Board to cross-examine and verify the localities listed out under its survey as those receiving dirty water supply.

"To address pipeline defects which may include cracks that allow the entry of impure water, officials suggested the use of helium-based tracking methods. Helium-based tracking eliminates the need obstruction, making it a nondisruptive and efficient solution," a DJB official said.

During the meeting, Kejriwal noted that in the monsoon season, the low-lying areas of Delhi often face waterlogging due to incessant rains which leads to water contamination in certain areas of the city.

Earlier, in response to the severity of the situation, the chief minister had directed additional chief engineers (Maintenance) (ACE-M) from all zones to compile a comprehensive list of areas affected by

# Arvind Kejriwal again attacks Centre on its ordinance Al system used by I-T officials for raids on UP ieweller, realtor

Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday once again attacked the Centre over its ordinance on controlling the administrative services in the national capital.

Sharing the write-up of retired Supreme Court Justice Madan B. Lokur, he said that the justice has exposed the unconstitutionality of the Centre's ordinance.

"The ordinance comes out as a constitutional fraud on the people of Delhi, its elected representatives, and the Constitution, "Supreme Court Justice (retired) Madan B. Lokur writes, exposing the unconstitutionality of the Centre's ordinance, " Kejriwal wrote on Twitter while

ing an

excerpt from the article. Notably

Kejriwal has met with a number of opposition parties seeking their support against the Central government on the ordinance issue. He has also said that, as of now, only the Congress is not coming out clean on its stance against the Centre

The entire Opposition, except Congress, has supported him in voting against the Centre's government ordinance in Parliament, the CM has stated

ficial intelligence (AI)-backed system was used for income tax (I-T) raids at the premises of top Kanpur jeweller and a big realtor, who have been found involved in super heavy transactions in cash with each other

KANPUR: In a first, an arti-

**UP** jeweller, realtor

The AI tracked the suspicious transactions between the two entities and alerted the department, I-T officials

The raid has been continuing at the places of the jeweller and the realtor that developed two biggest townships in Kanpur.

Many units were sold in cash in these two townships and the cash generated was invested in bullion and others through the jewellery company," sources said.

These investments and the transactions could not escape the AI-backed system and it instantly sent out alerts. The screening of these alerts led to raids and this could possibly be one of the biggest cases of tax evasion.

The raids, which were conucted at 17 locations initially, later stretched to 55 locations in Uttar Pradesh,

that was hidden in the floor of a BMW car. In total, 70 kg gold and silver has been  ${
m recovered}.$ The teams seized docu-

Many people into the bullion trade and employees of the jeweller who was raided were eing questioned. "Several people have been summoned for questioning

likely to be increased further by 24 to 48 hours," said the I-T department officials. The raids started on June 22. Apart from the owners of a

ewellery firm, the raids were also continuing at the offices and houses of two bullion

According to the officials, Magistrate issued an order to the I-T teams recovered cash of investment into real estate from the office of one bullion

# Delhi records 24.5 degrees as minimum temp after light rain

capital witnessed light rainfall, which dipped the minimum temperature to 24.5 degrees Celsius, three notches below the season's average, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said

The IMD has predicted a generally cloudy sky with moderate rain in Delhi-NCR and and the maximum temperature is likely to hover around 34 degrees Celsius. The relative humidity at 8.30 a.m. was recorded at 96 per cent. Meanwhile, the IMD has also issued a yellow alert for the city as light to moderate

showers are likely to occur. As of 5.30 a.m. on Tuesday



morning, the national capital recieved 5.6 mm of rainfall in last 24 hours, according to the IMD. The monsoon season arrived in the national capital on Sunday, two days earlier than the anticipated onset date.

This brought relief to the residents of Delhi from the intense heat.

southwest monsoon covered both Delhi and Mumbai simultaneously on Sunday for the first time since June 21, 1961.

from them and they fled seeing

The police said that the four

accused have been charged with

violating sections of the IPC,

including 148 (assembling or

rioting with lethal weapons),

149 (unlawful assembly), 427

(causing damage to property),

353 (assaulting on-duty public

the police.'

As per reports, the month of June has been recorded coolest in last 13 years with minimum Delhi and Kolkata. temperature hovering around On Sunday, the I-T offi-25 degrees Celsius.

cials, said to be 250 in number, recovered 12 kg of gold "The police officials saved me

ments related to properties in large numbers, said sources.

also and the period of raid is

#### Delhi University's 12 colleges receive Rs 100 cr from govt **FW CORRESPONDENT**

New Delhi

**FW DESK** 

The Delhi government has released Rs 100 crore for 12 Delhi University colleges that are fully funded by it, considering the administration's financial mismanagement, said Delhi Education Minister Atishi.

There has been certain financial mismanagement in the government colleges in the last few years. We think teachers and students shouldn't suffer because of this. Keeping their welfare in mind, a fund of Rs 100 crore is being released to these 12 colleges," Atishi said. She said that even though some colleges are currently undergoing audits, the Delhi government is ensuring that teachers continue to get their salaries, medical benefits and pen- also added four new colleges to

Lexicon Management Institute of

Leadership and Excellence (Lexi-

con MILE), situated in Pune, has

established the Institution In-

novation Council (IIC), that is

committed to fostering a culture

of innovation, igniting the pas-

sion for entrepreneurship, and

nurturing excellence among the

student community. With a range

of carefully curated initiatives,

the IIC aims to equip students

with the necessary skills and

resources to become successful

entrepreneurs and leaders in their

introduced an exciting three-day

"Entrepreneurship Programme"



sion benefits that were delayed due to financial mismanagement.

"If any financial irregularities are found in any college after the audit process, strict action will be taken against the administration. However, the teachers should not worry as they will receive their salaries on time, as well as timely medical and pension benefits, she said. The Delhi Education Minister said that the budget for education in the national capital increased three-fold under the Arvind Kejriwal government, which

the state's tally since its coming One-fourth of the assembly

budget is always sanctioned for education purposes in Delhi. Four new universities have been opened and there are 12 Delhi government colleges here. Ever since the AAP government came to power, funds to these colleges have increased three-fold," she said. The AAP leader said that these 12 DU colleges play an important role in girl education, located as they are in the rural areas of the city. "In the financial year 2023-24, an amount of Rs 400 crore has been allocated by the government. Out of this, the first quarter of Rs 100 crore is being released today. It is our priority to provide access to quality higher education to every child in Delhi," she said.

their creative potential, identify

opportunities, and become leaders

of tomorrow. We aim to ignite a

sense of competition and passion

for students' foreseeable success.

Our commitment to mentorship

and collaboration facilitated

through workshops and engage-

ments with experienced entre-

preneurs and professionals, will

ensure that the students receive

valuable insights and guidance on

Institutes, MultiFit, EduCrack

towards identifying opportunities their entrepreneurial journey.",

"The Institution Innovation CEO of The Lexicon Group of

#### Lexicon MILE's Institution Innovation Council launches AIUDF MLA arrested for 'attempting to murder' BJP leader program to empower future entrepreneurs, ignite the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship among students

Nizam Uddin Chowdhury, an All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) MLA, was ar-Excellence, stands as a beacon rested in Assam's Hailakandi district over charges of "at-tempting to murder" a BJP of inspiration, that motivates students to shape their managerial and entrepreneurial skills. minority leader, officials said Through such initiatives, we emon Thursday. power our students to embrace

Chowdhury is an MLA from the Algapur Assembly seat in Hailakandi.

Ataur Rahman Laskar, a member of the BJP minority cell, alleged that he was attacked by the MLA and three other persons while he was returning nome on Tuesday.

After the incident, Laskar filed a complaint at the Panchgram Police Station against

Chowdhury was detained by noon, and he was later taken into custody after two hours of



dhury and a group of others stopped Laskar's car near Dhaleswar Point at around 11.30 p.m. on Tuesday. The complainant said: "They

tried to drag me out, broke the windows in my car, and once tried to stab me to death with four people, including the MLA. knives. I took refuge in the Katakhal police outpost after

Chowdhury and the others at-cal grounds, he was taken to a



official), and 307 (attempt to Hailakandi SP Leena Doley confirmed Chowdhury's arrest and added that a search operation is underway to nab the

three others. The AIUDF MLA was produced before a court on Wednesday evening and the him to judicial Laskar even claimed that However, on emergency medi-

# tacked him inside the police local hospital.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi visits Relief camps in Manipur. He is on a two days visit to the state, demands

# Mumbai Coastal Road project: Missed the deadline, 31 cr fine on contractors

upcoming batch. This immersive

program is designed to instil en-

trepreneurial skills and ignite a

sense of purpose in every student,

laying a strong foundation for

their future success. By nurturing

innovation and entrepreneurship,

the IIC empowers students to

embrace their creative potential

and develop a mindset geared

Council (IIC) at Lexicon Manage-

and solving real

as part of the Induction for the ment Institute of Leadership and & EasyRecruit+.

65 % of the amount paid, The work will be completed by the end of 2023

MANMOHAN SINGH NAULA Mumbai

The ambitious Mumbai Coastal Road project in Mumbai has missed the deadline and will be completed by the end of 2023. RTI activist Anil Galgali has been informed by the Mumbai Municipality that only 31 crores fine has been levied on the contractors of the Mumbai Coastal Road project. 226 crores increase in expenditure and 65 percent amount has been paid to contractors.

RTI activist Anil Galgali had asked the Mumbai Municipal Corporation for various information about the Mumbai Coastal Road project. Mumbai Coastal Road Project Department informed Anil Galgali that the work of Mumbai Coastal Road Project is divided into 3 parts.

Under Part 1, the work from Priyadarshini Park to Baroda Palace has been awarded to Rs.99.79 crores. The original on September 10, 2023. cost was expected to be 3505 crores. 2286 crore has been paid to the contractor till 20 June



2023. A fine of 8.57 crores has been levied so far in this work. The date of completion of said work was 12 October 2022. Now M/s Larsen & Toubro and the the deadline has been extended original cost has increased by and the work will be completed

Under Part 2 the work from Baroda Palace to Bandra Worli Sea Bridge South end has been awarded to M/s HCC HDC with an increase in the original cost of Rs.62.25 crores. The original cost was expected to be 2126 crores. 1193 crore has been paid to the contractor till 20 June 2023. A fine of 15.37 crores has been levied in this work. The date of completion of said work was 15 October 2022. Currently, the deadline has been extended and the work will be completed on October 7, 2023.

Under Part 4, the work from Princes Street to Privadarshini Park has been awarded to M/s Larsen & Toubro and the original cost has increased by Rs.63.83 crores. The original cost was expected to be 2798

crores. 2160 crore has been paid to the contractor till 20 June 2023. 7.25 crore fine has been levied so far in this work. The date of completion of said work was 12 October 2022. Now the deadline has been extended and the work will be completed on November 26, 2023.

According to Anil Galgali, the penalty levied is very low considering the increase in cost. Contractors strive to get such ambitious work but once they get the job, they cannot complete the project in time. In such a case, the price increases and the increased expenditure is met by the money collected from the taxes of common Mumbaikars.

# Irregularities in appointment of teachers in Delhi govt-aided school; CBI registers FIR

**FW CORRESPONDENT** New Delhi

The CBI has registered a case in the appointment of some teachers on the basis of forged documents in a school aided by the Delhi government and run by Vedic Sanskrit Agricultural Educational Society, officials said Wednesday.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has conducted searches at 13 locations in Delhi. Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh recently in connection with the case, officials said.

The agency registered the FIR 14 months after a preliminary enquiry showed that 16 candidates were recruited in V S Agriculture Senior Secondary School against 18 vacancies.

The inquiry found that six candidates — Praveen Bazad, PGT (Political Science), Chitre



Rekha, TGT (English), Sonia, TGT (SST), Pratibha, PGT (Economics), Pinki Arya, TGT (Sanskrit), and Manish Kumar. PGT (Commerce) — were allegedly selected on the basis of forged documents

It said the irregularities were committed in connivance with Krishan Rana, the then chair-

man of management committee of Vedic Sanskrit Agriculture Senior Secondary School, and Shashikant Singh, the then office-bearer of  $\overline{\text{Jim}}$  Corbett Senior Secondary School, besides unidentified others.

The CBI has registered the FIR against Rana, Singh, the six candidates and unidentified

Education of the Delhi government under IPC sections related to criminal conspiracy, cheating "All the selected candidates

were given the advantage in their selection. Almost all the experience certificates were issued after the last date of submission of forms, and it was managed by the chairman before the scrutiny of the applications," the FIR alleged. The CBI has found that, apparently, the direction was issued to the known candidates to prepare experience certificates for coming within parameters of merit and were given an advantage "deliberately and dishonestly" in the interview by awarding higher marks to the

"On the basis of these advantages, the suspect candidates were selected and appointed

selected candidates.

officials of the Directorate of as teachers in V S Agriculture Senior Secondary School. Besides, the physical handicapped certificates were also issued after the last date of submission of the application form," the FIR alleged. The CBI felt that some of the applications of selected candidates should have been rejected, but the chairman, in place of rejection of such applications, deliberately and dishonestly gave the opportunity to some of the candidates and obtained their experience certificates as part of the conspiracy.

"The marks of experience were added, and then the merit list was prepared. After that, the interview letters were issued to them. If the experience marks of these candidates were not added to the total marks, then some of the candidates could not be eligible for appearing in the interview," it said.

# **Bumper discount on police security for IPL matches**

MANMOHAN SINGH NAULA Mumbai

Maharashtra Government has granted a bumper discount on Police security to IPL matches held in Mumbai & other parts of the state. 70 lakhs per match fee charged for police security has been drastically reduced to 10 lakh. Multi billion cricket enterprise has not been regular in payment for police security with unpaid dues running into 15 crores. Govt resolution has granted this bumper discount with retrospective effect from 2011 onwards, granting another gift of 13 crores to an entity that's has been in govt arrears

for more than a decade. RTI

activist Anil Galgali has written

to the Chief minister & Deputy

CM to cancel this unwanted

rebate & at least keep the old



have been hiked since it were fixed in 2011.

According to new rates fixed by govt resolution of 26 June 2023, police security fee of T-20 & IPL matches held in Mumbai has been slashed from 70 lakhs per match to a mere 10 lakhs. One day ODI matches in Mumbai venue will now have to pay 25 lakhs instead of 75 lakhs per match. The same charge for Test matches will be 25 lakhs replacing 60 lakh per match charged earlier.

In other venues across Maharashtra like Nagpur, Pune & Navi Mumbai IPL & T-20 & test matches were charged 50 lakh per match. Test match security was provided at 40 lakh per match at these venues. Mumbai police revenues will come down as a result of this magnamity of state govt. IPL has not bothered to pay pending 15 crores, inspite it's 35 reminders. Now it may receive only about 2 crore of the arrears from IPL for millions of man hour put up by thousands of policemen year after year.

# Manipur Violence: Ibobi Singh not given sufficient Manipur Women Vendors Association Calls for time in all-party meeting, alleges Congress

ARIBAM BISHWAJIT

In the highly anticipated allparty meeting held on Saturday evening in Delhi, the Congress party has alleged that its representative, three-time Manipur Chief Minister Okram Ibobi Singh, was not given sufficient time to present the party's perspectives on the ongoing turmoil in the state. Ibobi expressed his disappointment in a press conference following the meeting, stating that he had only been allotted a meager 7-8 minutes to share his views. He further mentioned that he had requested an additional five minutes to express his opinions, but the request was denied.

The state of Manipur continues to grapple with persistent violence and unrest, as the government's efforts to restore peace have proven ineffective. Not even the visit of Home Minister Amit Shah could quell the turmoil engulfing the region. With over 50 days of continuous violence, the all-party meeting aimed to address the situation, bringing



stand watch at night, safequarding their villages and residents from malicious attackers and acts of arson in Senjam Chirang, Imphal West, Manipu

PHOTO: ARIBAM BISHWAIIT

Manipur.'

frustration with Prime Minister

in flames for 50 days, yet the

Prime Minister remained silent.

of the all-party meeting, not-

together prominent leaders from various political parties, including the BJP, Congress, Shiv Sena, Trinamool Congress, Mizo National Front, BJD, AIADMK, DMK, RJD, Samajwadi Party, and AAP.

Echoing Ibobi's sentiments, senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh criticized the meeting, dismissing it as a mere formality. Ramesh emphasized that Ibobi

was the only leader from Manipur present at the all-party meeting, and he regarded the lack of opportunity to fully express his point of view as an insult not just to the former Chief Minister and the Congress party but also to the people of Manipur.

The Congress party had previously voiced its dissatisfaction with the meeting, deeming it "too little, too late." Congress

fruitful results that could alleviate the prevailing law and order crisis in Manipur. Manipur has been gripped by

a state of turmoil and violence since May 3, following a rally organized by the All Tribal Students Union Manipur (ATSUM) sized, "After 50 days of death and destruction in Manipur, in protest against a Manipur High Court order. The court had directed the state government to the Home Minister's call for an all-party meeting is insufficient send a recommendation to the and belated. The government Centre regarding the demand to only took action after Sonia Ganinclude the Meitei community in dhi ii's address to the people of the Scheduled Tribes (STs) list. The wave of unrest has resulted Earlier, Congress leader in over 100 deaths and the de-Rahul Gandhi also expressed struction of thousands of homes.

The situation in Manipur Modi's silence on the matter. calls for immediate attention In a tweet, Gandhi pointed out and prompt action from both that Manipur had been engulfed the state and central governments. It is crucial for all stakeholders to collaborate and find He further criticized the timing a lasting solution that restores peace and stability to the region. ing that it was called while the Comprehensive and inclusive Prime Minister was out of the measures must be taken to adcountry, suggesting that it was dress the grievances and connot a priority for him. Despite cerns of all communities, paving the way for peaceful coexistence the conclusion of the meeting, no reports have indicated any in Manipur.

# Political Unity, opposes President's Rule

**ARIBAM BISHWAJIT** 

In an apparent response to the demands of some political parties seeking a change in the chief ministership, Khwairamband Keithel Nupi Marup, an association representing approximately 1000 women vendors, has called for unity among political parties, MLAs, and ministers to work towards a common goal. Laishram Memma, President of the Manipur Keithel Nupi Marup, conveyed this message during a press conference held at the Manipur Press Club, reiterating the people's opposition to President's rule in Manipur.

Memma drew attention to the ongoing attacks by armed Kuki militants since May 3, which have resulted in the tragic loss of innocent lives in the outskirts of the Valley areas. Stressing the urgent need for ministers, MLAs, and political parties to unite, she emphasized the importance of establishing a common goal to address this issue. Memma discouraged the culture of blame and criticism, stating that the people of Ma-



nipur are already familiar with the conduct of both past and present governments.

The representative also urged political parties, ministers, and MLAs to refrain from advocating for President's Rule or seeking a change in the state government leadership. Memma criticized the Union Home Minister for expressing administrative preferences that create divisions between the hills and valleys, demanding clarification

Raising concerns about hid-

den agendas, Memma ques tioned the motives behind the Mizoram BJP's support for President's rule in Manipur. She highlighted the Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum's stance on changing the Chief Minister, threatening non-cooperation with ongoing peace talks unless their demands are met. Emphasizing the importance of transparency, Memma called on these groups to disclose their hidden agendas to the common people, as achieving peace should be the top priority.

## **ED summons Trinamool** youth wing chief Sayani **Ghosh in Bengal job**



NEW DELHI: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) probing the multi-crore school recruitment case in West Bengal turned-politician and Trinamool Congress state youth wing president Sayani Ghosh for questioning in connection with the case.

She was summoned at ED's central government office (CGO) complex at Salt Lake in the northern outskirts of Kolkata on June 30. A notice had been served to Ghosh late Tuesday evening, sources said.

Sources said that the notice to Ghosh was issued after two clues came to the notice of ED sleuths. The first was recovery of some WhatsApp chats between Ghosh and expelled youth Congress leader Kuntal Ghosh, who is currently custod of his alleged involvement in the school recruitment case.

Secondly, sources said, some banking transactions between Sayani Ghosh and Kuntal Ghosh relating to some purchase of property were found. The WhatsApp chat history has been recovered from the mobile phone of Kuntal Ghosh.

Sayani Ghosh is not the first celebrity from the Bengali silver screen world who has been summoned and questioned by ED sleuths in connection with the school recruitment case. In March this year, actor Bonny Sengupta was similarly questioned by the central agency sleuths after it came to the notice that the investigating officials got access to clues of Sengupta receiving a huge amount of money from Kuntal

**NEW DELHI** : President Droupadi Murmu will be visiting Hyderabad on July 4 to participate in the 125th birth anniversary celebrations of legendary freedom fighter Alluri Sitarama Raju.

Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari presided over a high-level coordination meeting and reviewed the arrangements to be made in connection with the visit of the President.

She directed the officials to make elaborate arrangements as per the protocol in close coordination with all the line departments. "Repairs to roads across the route should be taken up immediately. Barricading and adequate bandobast arrangements should be made. Sanitation and cleanliness should be ensured, "



The electricity department has been asked to ensure unin $terrupted\ power\ supply\ during$ the visit. Medical team should be kept ready in case of an

DGP Anjani Kumar, Special Chief Secretaries Sunil Sharma, Arvind Kumar, Printhe Chief Secretary told the cipal Secretary Home Jitender,

DG Fire Services Nagi Reddy, Hyderabad CP Stephen Ravindra, Secretary GAD Sheshadri, Secretary R&B Srinivas Raju.

Born on July 4, 1897, Alluri Sitarama Raju is remembered for his fight against the British, to safeguard the interests of the tribal communities in the Eastern Ghats region (in Andhra Pradesh).

# President to participate in 125th birth anniversary Karnataka govt's Shakti scheme free bus travel celebrations of Alluri Sitarama Raju on July 4 for women sees 23% jump in daily travelling

**ARUNKUMAR RAO** 

Bengaluru

Karnataka Government's Shakti scheme for women, which offers free travel on state-run buses. has pushed up public transport patronage. The average number of people travelling by state buses including BMTC daily has touched 1.03 crore. A 23 percent jump according to the sources. Transport minister Ramalinga Reddy told media that "This is a significant increase. More people have started travelling by state-run buses in the last two week". In fact, the average number of people travelling by buses of all four corporations—KSRTC, BMTC, NEKRTC AND NWKRTC—was 84 lakhs per day before the shakti scheme was rolled out. He also said that the there is need to increase the



least 10,000 buses to meet the increasing patronage. According to Sources, In the last two weeks, more than 7.6 crore women passengers have travelled in state buses and the total value of tickets expended on them added to around Rs 180 crore. The daily women ridership count even crossed the 60 lakh mark from the previous average of 42 lakh. Anbukumar , Managing Di-

rector of Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) told media," once the scheme was launched, there was an overwhelming repose from the women passengers. Due to rise in demand. occupancy has increased from 70 to 90 percent in ordinary services, Interestingly, on weekends and holidays, the number of people travelling in our buses jumped significantly, The increased rid-

**FW CORRESPONDENT** 

The spurt in prices of tomato

nomenon, and rates will cool

down soon, a top government

official said, as retail prices of

the kitchen staple shot up to

It is a highly perishable com-

Rs 100 per kg in major cities.

modity. Transportation gets

affected in areas that received

sudden rains. It is a temporary

issue. Prices will cool down

soon. It happens every year dur-

ing this time," said an official at

the Department of consumer

affairs. Stating that there is a

seasonality in tomato, he said

the data on tomato prices of

the last five years shows that

the rates have risen every year

at this time. From Himachal

ership will help the corporations optimally utilise their fleet and improve revenue, Depending on demand, we are running more buses on certain routes," he added. The free bus-travel scheme

may have got an overwhelming response from women, but not all are enthused. The scheme has thrown up some new challenges for commuters, the authorities concerned as well as other stakeholders in the mobility sector as there have been multiple instances of creq facing the ire of passengers. Auto drivers in the city say the free facility has resulted in revenue loss for them , They said," it has become very difficult to earn even Rs 400 per day. We are hardly getting any passengers now. Ata time when we are facing competition from bike-taxis, this free bus travel has come as another blow".

Pradesh, the supply to Delhi

will start coming in the next

10 days and prices will soften.

According to the data main-

tained by the Department of

Consumer Affairs, the average

price of tomato on an all-India

oasis is Rs 46 per kg on June 27.

The modal price is Rs 50 per kg

while the maximum price is Rs

122 per kg. Across four metros, the retail price of tomato in

Delhi is Rs 80 per kg, Mumbai

is Rs 80-110 per kg, Kolkata is

Rs 100-150 per kg and Chennai

is Rs 50-70 per kg.

# **Gath-bandhan or Thug-bandhan? Opposition leaders neither sincere** nor have any policy: Anurag Thakur

SATISH HANDA

During 'Gauravshali Bharat Rally' organized by Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) at Panipat in Haryana, Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur while addressing media said that nearly 15 political leaders of different political parties gathered at Patna to form a 'Maha-gathbandhan' to fight jointly against BJP and defeat in coming Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha polls. Anurag Takur said, he fails to understand if it is a 'Gath-bandhan' or a 'Thug-bandhan' without having any sincere leader or any firm policy.

Pointing at thr Congress, Anurag Thakur reminded film 'Devdas' saying that people had seen this film on screen through reel and now they will whereas other prominent key unhappy due to this.



roles are being played by different artists including Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamta Banerjee, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, former UP Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav and few others involved in conspiracy against ruling Narender Modi led BJP government in the country. He said that the meeting held at Patna recently ended without any specific result regarding 'Maha Gath-bandhan', except an agenda regarding discussion see it as a real film in which over Rahul Gandhi's marriage Congress playing lead role, and his mother Sonia Gandhi

## Two crore Govt jobs every year merely a fake promise to youths: Report

**MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA** 

The promise of 2 crore Government jobs every year remained ing to the data of the Union Ministry of Finance, there is an example of the government's failure in central government iobs in the era of Modi Government. Cracking down on the prices of petrol and diesel, a new record was revealed after increasing unemployment among the youth across the country. According to the latest report of the Department of Expenditure of the Ministry of Finance, at present there are 30 lakh 13 thousand central government employees across the country. This is the lowest number of central government employees since 2010. Also, as the report states, both the number of posts and jobs sanctioned by the central government have declined significantly in the last 3 years.

Presently the number of vacant posts in central gov-



fleet size of all the RTCs by at

ernment jobs is 9 lakh 64 thousand. Union Territories are also considered as a state. How did the number of posts decrease? According to the Finance Ministry's Annual Report on 'Salaries and Allowances', as on March 1, 2021, the number of regular workers sanctioned by the Center (excluding Union Territories) in the civilian sector stood at 40 lakh 35 thousand. But on March 1, 2022, it reduced to 39 lakh 77 thousand. It appears that there has been a lot of pressure regarding recruitment to Group C posts. At the same time, there has also been a considerable decrease in the number of employees working in the posts of the Central Government.

#### NIA raids multiple locations in Kashmir in crackdown on **OGW** network



**FW DESK** 

National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted multiple raids in Kashmir valley on Monday.

A local news agency GNS reported that an NIA team with the assistance of police and CRPF conducted searches at multiple locations in Kashmir.

They said the raids were being conducted in south Kashmir's Pulwama, Kulgam and Shopian districts, and north Kashmir's Ban-

The raids are being conducted in case RC 5/22 regarding the crackdown on Overground Workers

# AIMPLB to 'strongly' oppose UCC proposal

Sudden spike in prices of vegetables

will go down soon: Officials

**LUCKNOW**: The All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) will oppose the proposed Uniform Civil Code (UCC) law, which seeks to formulate and implement a set of common personal laws for all the citizens of India regardless of their religion, caste, and creed, as per the religious body's member Maulana Khalid Rashid Farangi Mahali .

A decision to this effect was taken in an emergency online ter Narendra Modi advocated

During the online meeting -- attended by AIMPLB president Saifullah Rehmani, Maulana Khalid Rashid Farangi Mahali, chairman of Islamic Centre of India and member of AIMPLB, AIMPLB lawyers and others -- the Muslim body agreed on presenting its views

Law Commission. At the meeting, the documents to be submitted to the



by Prime Minister Modi on Tuesday were in sync with the affidavit filed by the Union ministry of law in the Supreme Court a few months ago.

The affidavit said that "citizens belonging to different religions and denominations following different property and matrimonial laws is an affront to the nation's unity".

Maulana Khalid Rashid Farangi Mahali said, "AIM-PLB will oppose the Uniform Civil Code tooth and nail. We are chalking out a strategy to counter the proposed move of the government by presenting our view in front of the law commission more powerfully. All prominent Muslim leaders of the country were present in the online meeting held on Tuesday.'

## If Modi govt stands tall, its because of UPA govt, says Chidambaram NEW DELHI: Senior Con-DBT were done by the UPA

gress leader P. Chidambaram on Monday hit out at Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman saying that she has highlighted five achievements of the Modi government, of which three are not true and that if the central government stands tall in some areas, it is because it is standing on the shoulders of the UPA government.

In a tweet, Chidambaram, a former Union Finance Minister, said, "The Finance Minister has penned an article on the achievements of the Modi government. Many examples she has cited are true as would be true of every government that has ruled for 5 or 10 years. The FM has cited 5 examples of the Opposition taking the government to Court and losing

"She is wrong at least in three: The Supreme Court had de-





clared triple talaq illegal even before Parliament passed a law. The Article 370 case has not yet been heard by the Court. Numerous cases under the GST laws are pending, "Chidam-

said that the Finance Minister claims credit for India achieving top ranks in production of milk, honey and fruit and

These ranks were achieved years ago and we retain those ranks. The FM claims credit for Direct Benefit Transfer. She forgets that Aadhaar was conceived, created and rolled out by the UPA government tioned the government on sevand the first transfers under

government. The Finance Minister boasts about the 11.72 crore toilets built. She should read her own government's reports on how many of them are unused and unusable because they lack water, "he said.

"Every government will have achievements to its credit. So does the Modi government. If the Modi government stands tall in some areas, it is because The Congress leader further it is standing on the shoulders of the UPA government, "Chidambaram said.

> The Congress has been critical of the government on several issues and has been highlighting the failures of the government which includes faulty implementation of GST, demonetisation and unemployment at 40-year.high among others. Chidambaram even has ques-

eral policy related issues.

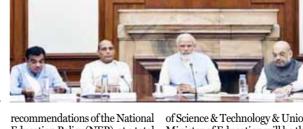
# **Cabinet approves Introduction of National** Research Foundation Bill, 2023 in Parliament

It will strengthen research eco-system in the country

**FW DESK** New Delhi

Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the introduction of the National Research Foundation (NRF) Bill, 2023 in the Parliament. The approved Bill will pave the way to establish NRF that will seed, grow and promote Research and Development (R&D) and foster a culture of research and innovation throughout India's universities, colleges, research institutions.

and R&D laboratories. The bill, after approval in the Parliament, will establish NRF, an apex body to provide high-level strategic direction of scientific research in the country as per



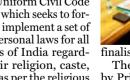
सत्यमेव जयते

Education Policy (NEP), at a total estimated cost of Rs. 50,000 crore during five years (2023-28).

The Department of Science and Technology (DST) will be the administrative Department of NRF which will be governed by a Governing Board consisting of eminent researchers and professionals across disciplines. Since the scope of the NRF is wide-ranging - impacting all ministries - the Prime Minister will be the ex-officio President of the Board and the Union Minister

of Science & Technology & Union Minister of Education will be the ex-officio Vice-Presidents. NRF's functioning will be governed by an Executive Council chaired by the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India.

NRF will forge collaborations among the industry, academia, and government departments and research institutions, and create an interface mechanism for participation and contribution of industries and State governments in addition to the scientific and line ministries.



meeting late on Tuesday evening hours after Prime Minisfor the nationwide implementation of the law.

more powerfully in front of the

Law Commission were also





# Act now as rising food prices pose inflationary risks

ndian households are grappling with soaring prices of essential kitchen staples, presenting a renewed challenge for consumers. The prices of tomatoes, onions, potatoes, tur dal, and rice have witnessed significant increases, putting a strain on household budgets. Tomato prices, in particular, have more than doubled in a month, with the average retail price reaching Rs 53.59 per kilogram on June 29, compared to Rs 24.37 on May 29. Although the rise in onion and potato prices over the same period seems relatively modest at 7.5% and 4.5% respectively, the overall trend of price gains across the food basket reflects underlying inflationary pressures in the economy. The price of tur dal, a vital protein source for vegetarian households, continues to surge, rising by 7.8% month-on-month to Rs 130.75 per kilogram on June 29. Official retail inflation data for May indicated a 31-month high of 6.56% in pulses prices, including tur dal, registering a year-on-year increase of 128 basis points. Despite the government's imposition of stock limits on urad and tur dal on June 2, price gains in lentils have remained unabated. While seasonal factors and market dynamics influence farm produce prices, the current price levels for various food items, including tomatoes, remain significantly higher compared to the same period last year. With monsoon rains currently 13% below normal levels and the uncertainty surrounding the spatial and temporal distribution of rainfall due to the El Niño phenomenon, there is a real risk of food prices triggering a further acceleration in retail inflation. Policymakers must prioritize efforts to curb inflation, as sustainable inclusive growth depends on maintaining price stability. The Reserve Bank of India's economists emphasized the importance of price stability in paving the way for highquality, inclusive economic growth. As such, it is imperative for policymakers to not only acknowledge the inflationary risks posed by rising food prices but also take appropriate measures to mitigate them.

#### **LETTERBOX**

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## THE FINANCIAL WORLD

RNI NO. DELENG/2011/38860 PRINTED & PUBLISHED BY SWINDER BAJWA ON BEHALF OF FW MEDIA PRINTED AT JAGJIT PUBLISHING CO. PVT LTD D-12, INDUSTRIAL AREA, PHASE-1, MOHALI, PUNJAB 160059

PRINTER & PUBLISHER SWINDER BAJWA **OWNER:** FW MEDIA PUBLISHED AT: BUILDING NO-23, NEHRU PLACE NEW DELHI 110019; PHONE: 9888040061

**EDITOR\* ABDUL WASEY** 

(\*RESPONSIBLE FOR SELECTION OF NEWS UNDER THE PRB ACT)

**COLONEL SHASHANK RANJAN** BELIEVES SOLUTIONS TO MILITANCY-RELATED CHALLENGES ARE NOT OBTAINED IN SILOS

# Pay heed to militancy resurgence



e Rajouri-Poonch region of Jammu and Kashmir has been in the news recently for all the wrong reasons. The border districts here have seen a relative surge in terror-related incidents over the last couple of years. Since October 2021, militants have killed at least 20 soldiers in the area between the Bhatta Durian-Chamrer forests in Poonch and Pargal-Dangri in Rajouri; in the latest incident, five special forces soldiers were lost in a blast on May 5 during a combing operation.

This region has been relatively calmer since the mid-2000s, after being a hotbed of insurgency in the late 1990s and the early 2000s. Traditional infiltration routes were through the hilly and forested terrain of Rajouri-Poonch, mainly being on the Line of Control (LoC). Terrorists infiltrating through the Poonch, Mendar and Rajouri sub-sectors of the LoC used to pass through these areas while heading for the Pir Panjal ranges to enter the Valley. An extensive network of over ground workers and an associated support base flourished in the region. Also, the forested area of Surankote (in Poonch district) on the higher ridges was used as transit camps and training grounds for terrorists.

#### Gurjar-Bakkarwals as a pillar of support

This was the context to Operation Sarp Vinash (of 2022) also known as the Hill Kaka Operations launched by the Counter Insurgency Force 'Romeo'. The operation resulted in the elimination of an estimated 65-70 terrorists. While being deployed in the region since the early 1999s, hundreds of security personnel have made great sacrifices for peace. The forces have also been strongly supported by the local population. The demography of the region is one of Muslim domination with the Gurjar-Bakkarwal community in the majority.

The support of the Gurjar-Bakkarwals to the Indian Army saw the first Muslim village

defence committee being set up in this region in December 2002, in response to atrocities on locals by Harkat-ul-Mujahideen cadres. The support of the Gurjar-Bakkarwals to the Indian state in counter-insurgency operations gained traction when in 2002, Tahir Hussain returned to Surankote from employment in Saudi Arabia to avenge the death of his brother killed by the Lashkare-Taiba. Several others from Surankote tehsil, accompanied Tahir Hussein to fight the insurgents who had consolidated themselves in the forested areas of Surankote. Since 2004-05, peace has prevailed largely because the people decided to stand up to the terrorists; the Gurjar-Bakkarwals have had a major role to play in this.

#### A revival of militancy

Having seen the sensitivity of Rajouri-Poonch, the recent revival of militancy, though not on the scale it was earlier, is a matter of concern. It is quite certain that terrorist cadres and their leadership in Pakistan will be looking to diversify in wanting to become a force to reckon with, much beyond the Kashmir Valley. The constant variable in

recent terror strikes in this region has been that militants continue to be at large, except for one 'kill' during an operation launched by security forces on June 1.

There are many attributes to the shortterm gains that terror cadres have been able to achieve. According to government sources, analysts and the media, a few of the factors in favour of the terrorists are: use of smart technology by terrorists to communicate and move around, operations in small groups and from urban pockets, a thinned down counter-insurgency grid in Jammu region due to troops being pulled out for deployment on the Line of Actual Control (LAC), reinvigoration of sleeper cells and over ground workers, a deepening drug menace and its nexus with terrorism.

Also, certain sections maintain that infiltration is not taking place in a conventional manner across the LoC any more, but is happening through the Nepal and Bangladesh borders. In a nutshell, the causes behind a revival of militancy in this region are multifarious and by re-establishing support of Gujjar-Bakkarwals, all the challenges could be overcome. In the short and mid term.

outsmarting terrorists in the use of technology or defeating them in use of rhetoric on social media has always proved to be a tall order for state agencies.

#### Relevant questions

The most crucial questions that the very few are asking are these: What has led to the drying up of hitherto local support that could have overcome all handicaps stacked against the state?' 'Has the Guriar-Bakkarwal community been alienated?' It has been established beyond reasonable doubt that terror can thrive only on the plank of support of the local population, irrespective of the technology and the methodology that the terrorists adopt.

Looking back at the socio-political landscape of the region, there could be many reasons behind the distancing of the majority population in Rajouri-Poonch, from the state. In addition to issues such as unemployment, a few of the drivers that seem to have mattered are gaps in sound implementation of the Forest Rights Act 2006 in Jammu and Kashmir that has directly affected the Gurjar-Bakkarwals, and the deepening and festering divide between Gurjar-Bakkarwals and Paharis over the reservation issue.

The proxy war by Pakistan forms a subset of a grey zone or hybrid warfare and calls for a 'whole of government' approach. Solutions to militancy-related challenges are not obtained in silos and permeate through several layers in society including governance and, most importantly, the realm of justice. The stakes are high and peace in the Rajouri-Poonch region rests on the sweat and blood of soldiers and the Gurjar-Bakkarwals. It is time the state saw the realities clearly.

Colonel Shashank Ranjan is a retired  $Infantry\ of ficer,\ currently\ an\ Adjunct\ Professor$ with OP Jindal Global University. He has served extensively in the Rajouri-Poonch region while deployed for counter insurgency



V. SURYANARAYAN EMPHASIZES COOPERATION BETWEEN STATE AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENTS TO SAFEGUARD DIASPORA'S INTERESTS.

# Outreach to diaspora and statesmanship crucial for govts



n a speech while addressing the Tamil diaspora in Tokyo in the course of his overseas tour in May 2023, to Singapore and Japan, to attract investments to the State, the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, M.K. Stalin, had said that the Government of Tamil Nadu would protect the Tamil diaspora that has spread far and wide in search of education, business, and employment. He added that protecting the Tamil language meant protecting the Tamil community. He held forth the promise that his government and the ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) would extend all support to the Tamil community.

Among the Indian diaspora, Tamils constitute a substantial number. They form the overwhelming majority of the Indian Lanka, are in good numbers in Myanmar, Mauritius, South Africa, the Seychelles, the Re-Union Islands, Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Suriname, Australia, New Zealand, the Gulf countries, the United States and Canada, Britain and the European countries.

These dynamic groups have three identities — first, the Tamil identity; second, the Indian identity, and third, the identity of the countries in which they have settled. Equally interesting is the phenomenon of the diaspora of the diaspora. From Fiji, Malaysia, and Singapore, the Indian diaspora is migrating to greener pastures such as Australia, Canada, and the U.S. Bharati Mukherjee, the well-known diasporic writer, was apt in saying: "I am a woman with a series of countries. It is necessary for me to put down roots wherever I land and wherever I choose to stay.'

It would be simplistic and naïve to assume that the hopes that they entertain and



the problems that they face are identical. It is closely related to the nature of their migration, their numerical numbers, their educational and professional attainments, their economic clout, and, above all, the countries. The Tamil diaspora has excelled in politics, economics, literature, the fine arts, sports, and science. A few names that shine include Dr. Chandrasekhar, Monty Naicker, Sambandan, Janaki Thevar, T.S. Maniam, Saumiyamoorthy Thondaman, S.R. Nathan, Muthiah Muralitharan, Nagamattoo, Indira Nooyi, Sundar Pichai, Raghuram Rajan and

#### Host country policies, their impact

Stalin's speech is a reminder of two statements made by Jawaharlal Nehru, in Malaya in March 1946 — "When India becomes free, her hands will be long and powerful to protect each and every one of her children abroad." And, "Indians abroad must remain united and guard their rights and uphold their heads proudly as Indians — children of a country with a great past and greater

But Nehru's hopes were soon shattered.

The first legislative enactment of Cevlon. soon after independence, was to render the Indian Tamils, who were taken to Ceylon under the protective umbrella of the British Government, to provide labour in the tea plantations. Nehru's principled stand was that all those who considered Ceylon to be their home and have stayed there for long should be conferred citizenship. Ceylon argued that it was its sovereign right to introduce citizenship regulations.

The Burmese government never granted citizenship to thousands of Indian Tamils and expelled them. On the eve of their departure, the Burmese currency was demonetised. The women could not even bring their mangalyasutra with them. As far as neighbouring countries are concerned, nave two dimens

The first is to improve relations with governments, politically, economically, and culturally. The second is to protect and foster the interests of Indian minority groups. An overview of India's policy towards Sri Lanka shows that to improve political relations, New Delhi, on some occasions, was willing to sacrifice the interests of the Indian diaspora. The Sirimavo-Shastri Pact of October 1964 is an example of betrayal. New Delhi adopted the policy of give and take and converted the Indian Tamil community into merchandise to be divided between the two countries. It must be highlighted that all important leaders of the Madras Presidency, Rajagopalachari, Kamaraj Nadar, C.N. Annadurai, P. Ramamurti, and Krishna Menon were opposed to the agreement.

Stalin has highlighted the necessity to protect and promote the Tamil language. But the sad fact remains is that in many countries, the Tamil community has forgotten the Tamil language, one of the key elements of Tamil culture.

### Federal camaraderie is essential

The policy towards the Indian diaspora comes under the exclusive jurisdiction of the central government. Even then, State governments can influence policies by building public opinion. What is essential, in the present context, is camaraderie and friendship between the Narendra Modi government and the DMK government.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), could have used the term 'persecuted minorities'. The CAA also does not include Sri Lanka, where ethnic fratricide has compelled many Tamils to come to Tamil Nadu as refugees. New Delhi terms Sri Lankan Tamil refugees as illegal immigrants and that they must go back to Sri Lanka.

Instead of trying to have cordial relations with the central government, a policy of confrontation by Tamil Nadu would be self-defeating. What the refugees want is Indian citizenship. All of them fulfil the residential qualifications laid down in the Indian Citizenship Act. Indian Tamil refugees, who number 29,500, are stateless. What is more, Sri Lankan Tamil refugees are willing to surrender their Sri Lankan citizenship to get Indian citizenship.

The need of the hour is for the state and central government to come together and arrive at an amicable solution. This calls for statesmanship, not political opportunism.

V. Suryanarayan is the Founding Director and Senior Professor (retired), Centre for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Madras.

Views are personal



# New novel blends fact, fiction; offers literary reflection on modern society

The idea of the experimental non-fiction novel that plays with news and meanders through the quirky alleys of journalism is an intriguing one. American writing, which has been bold and spirited particularly on the terrain of non-fiction and journalism, has blazed some striking trails here — be it the radical left critique of American culture in John Dos Passos' U.S.A. Trilogy, the imaginative New Journalism of Norman Mailer, or the searing Vietnam-era coverage by journalists such as Michael Herr.

"The Light at the End of the World" by Siddhartha Deb is a notable addition to this tradition, attempting to blend non-fiction and fiction in a thought-provoking exploration of the intersection between the two genres. Deb's novel delves into the realm of

journalism and news, challenging the conventions of storytelling and pushing the boundaries of literary experimentation.

The real challenge for such writing, when it courts the imaginative uniqueness of literature, is to do something different from what the newspaper does even as it plays with that form. Should fictional lives end up confirming media reports and their stereotypes, or should they tease them and create something recognisable yet alien?

Deb takes up this challenge by crafting a narrative that blurs the lines between reality and fiction, weaving a story that engages with contemporary issues while incorporating elements of allegory and historical events. The private lives of key characters embody the fictive stakes of such novels. "The Light at the End of the World"

The real challenge for such writing, when it courts the imaginative uniqueness of literature, is to do something different from what the newspaper does even as it plays with that form

draws the reader in with some real empathy for the protagonist, Bibi, the near-anonymous, marginal employee in a policy report-producing company in the nidst of rabid, reactionary times

that is an allegory of our present. The novel introduces us to Bibi, a character who represents the struggles and challenges faced



The Light at the End of the World Siddhartha Deb Context: 458 pages; Rs 799

by individuals in today's world. Through her experiences, the reader gains insight into the complexities of contemporary society and the impact of media and social media on individuals' lives. Bibi's journey serves as a mirror to our own realities, evoking a sense of empathy and connection.

#### Surreal times

But the allegorisation, where the private melts into the public, is where the novel falters. It embeds everything we know today from news headlines and social media storms. In sentences such as these, the allegorisation becomes see-through: "In the longest of the entries, Muktibodh ingeniously connects the Brahmastra superweapon being developed by the Indian conglomerate Ombani with a superbug resistant to every known antibiotic that has been classified as NaMo-03."

Passages like these might have packed their punch in the novel if they were not ubiquitous: "Everywhere, there are men, and some women, outing Bibi — as a Pakistani agent, as a prostitute, as a sex-crazed woman, as a lesbian, as the holder of fake university degrees, as a Naxal, as a plagiariser who stole her reporting from others. Sometimes she is a Muslim, sometimes a Christian, sometimes a Marxist, numerous versions of Bibi out there on the multiverse of the internet, living lives that are variations.

The hostility she faces is savage and brutal, but given the surreal times in which we live, such fiction fails to enrich or complicate our digitally enhanced reality in any way: "Some send videos that Bibi doesn't want to watch but that start playing automatically as soon as the message arrives, without even her touching the screen.

# MCX extends software service pact with 63 moons for one more time

ecute its project management of technology migration, the Multi Commodity Exchange of India Limited (MCX) has extended its software service support arrangement with 63 moons technologies for six months one

MCX has decided to extend the support services of its existing software provider 63 moons technologies for six months from July 1 to December 31, 2023, at a consideration of Rs 250 crore.

In its filing to BSE on Thursday, 63 moons said, "We wish to inform you that we have once again agreed to the eleventhhour request by MCX, which according to MCX is for the 'last time' for one more time. We sincerely wish that this 'last time' really happens someday,

IndiGo flight briefly

enters Pak airspace

**NEW DELHI**: Due to ad-

verse weather conditions,

a Srinagar-Jammu IndiGo

flight momentarily entered

Pakistan's airspace, accord-

ing to sources. Citing the in-

due bad weather



so that we deploy our excellent team of exchange technology engineering group in a mega promising opportunity in a new digital world

Notably, this is the third time that MCX approached 63 moons

long-term agreement with MCX ended on September 30, 2022.

MCX selected the new technology service provider TCS way back in February 2021. According to the agreement with TCS, to extend the software support MCX had to migrate to the new technology starting from April 1, 2022. However, MCX failed to get desired results from TCSwithin the specified timeline.

63 moons stated: "We have been offering MCX since August 2020 an option to purchase the software source code for self-use which is in line with the practices adopted by all best exchanges in India as well as across the globe. We also offered them long-term contracts of two years in 2022. However, for the reasons best known to them, they have not opted for it. These are missioncritical technology which is of the highest excellence in functionality and performance."

The 63 moons technology exchange engine has been at the heart of MCX since 2003, working uninterruptedly for 16 hours a day all throughout.

"As the founders and wellwishers of MCX, we wish them good luck with these new experiments and hope that they will reach the right destination one day, "63 moons added.

MCX said, "We understand the importance of providing a reliable and robust platform to our users, and we are committed to continuously improving our services. We will communicate to all our stakeholders about the roll-out plan to migrate to the new Commodity Derivatives platform.

63 moons technologies mainly provides next-generation technology ventures and solutions for creating digital markets and marketplaces that enable price discovery and transaction efficiencies across industry seg-

#### MSMEs should be the core of economic WhatsApp Business policy formulation: FISME President

**NEW DELHI:** The government needs to position Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the centre of all policy making set-up, said the Federation of Indian Micro and Small & Medium Enterprises (FISME).

On the occasion of 'World MSME Day' (June 27), Prashant Patel, President, FISME said, "The World MSME day reminds us that masses are employed with MSMEs. For instance, not more than 10% of people are employed in formal sector in India."

He emphasised that majority of people are either



self-employed or working with self-employed and suggested that MSMEs should be in the centre of our all policy making set-up up to District level.

Reflecting on the chal-lenges Patel pointed out that governance systems in cities and towns where they are located are almost

completely oblivious of their presence and importance. He called out for a change in this situation and a dire need to make policies focused on MSME sector.

The MSME sector comprises nearly 63 million enterprises, which contribute 30% to India's GDP, 45% to manufacturing, 40% to exports, and provides employment

# surpasses 200 mn monthly active users globally



Meta (formerly Facebook) announced that WhatsApp Business has surpassed 200 million monthly active users globally, up from 50 million in 2020.

Soon, businesses will be able to publish ads directly to Facebook or Instagram from the app and there will be no requirement of a Facebook account, said Meta Founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg.

Meta said it's also testing letting businesses automatically send personalized messages to multiple customers for a fee.

'Starting soon we'll begin testing a new feature within the WhatsApp Business app where small businesses will have the option to send personalised messages to their customers - like appointment reminders, birthday greetings or even

updates on a holiday sale -- in a faster and more efficient way, " the company said in a statement. This new feature will allow businesses to send personalised messages with the customer's name and customis able call-to-action buttons to specific customer lists, such as those with a select label (like 'VIP customers' or 'new customers'), schedule the day and time the messages are sent.

The company also said that it will soon make it possible for the many small businesses across the world that run their entire operation on the platform to create, purchase and publish a Facebook or Instagram ad directly within the WhatsApp

This means that no Facebook account will be required, and businesses all need to get started is an email address and form of

"When people click on an ad, opens a chat on WhatsApp so they can ask questions, browse products and make a purchase, the company said.

# Infineon and Kontrol join forces to improve the safety of autonomous vehicles

**ARUNKUMAR RAO** 

Munich, Germany, and Linz, Austria: Infineon Technolo-Kontrol are entering into a microcontroller family with its strategic partnership to make the future of mobility as both legally compliant and safe as possible. In the field of autonomous driving, clement weather, the airline legal requirements, standards, norms, and court rulings still necessary and subsequently, flight 6e-2124 was redirected pose major challenges for all market players. to Amritsar. "Before the flight

For authorities and entered Pakistani airspace, the airline promptly informed the vehicle registration services, relevant authorities in both the challenge is to find a safe countries, "said an airline offiand cost-efficient approach to cial. Consequently, the Jammu autonomous driving licensing and Lahore Air Traffic Conin public transport, typically trol (ATC) centres worked in in the form of laws and techcoordination to facilitate the nologies, company statement smooth diversion of the flight.

Kontrol translates and digitalizes complex legal regula-

machine-readable language. The company's KoPilot technology checks whether the integrated driver assistance gies AG (FSE: IFX / OTCQX: functions are performing in IFNNY) and the Austrian accordance with the law. The product compliance company concept of Infineon's AURIX $^{\text{\tiny TM}}$ 



compatibility and scalability in terms of the processor core, package, safety, and peripherals enables a simple upgrade path. This allows Infineon and Kontrol to provide necessary regulatory updates for their customers at any time, thus ensuring road safety in line with current standards. tions and relevant road traffic Together, the two companies standards and regulations into can safely integrate the digital

driver license for autonomous vehicles into intelligent driver assistance systems.

"The software technology from our ecosystem partner Kontrol implemented on the dependable AURIX microcontroller architecture is a step forward to enhance the

trust in autonomous driving technology by a deterministic, algorithm-based solution which is able to offer legal based, regulatory boundary conditions for vehicles on the road," said Lars Wemme, Vice President ADAS, Chassis and EE-Architecture at Infineon.

"We are very pleased to have a strong partner at our side who trusts in our technology and believes in the future of autonomous driving," said Andreas Lauringer, CEO and co-founder of Kontrol. "With Infineon as the world's leading expert in automotive semiconductors, together we can make tomorrow's mobility safer".

# Oracle introduces generative Al capabilities to boost HR productivity

Cloud major Oracle on Wednesday introduced generative AIpowered capabilities within Oracle Fusion Cloud Human Capital Management (HCM) solution to help boost HR productivity for enterprises.

Supported by the Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI) generative AI service, the new capabilities are embedded in existing HR processes to drive faster business value, improve productivity, enhance the candidate and employee experience, and streamline HR processes.

The move will help enterprises streamline HR processes for candidates, employees, managers, and recruiters.

"With the new embedded generative AI capabilities in Oracle Cloud HCM, our customers will be able to take advantage of large language models to drastically reduce the time required to complete tasks, improve the employee experience, enhance the accuracy of workforce insights, and ultimately increase busi-



refine models for their specific business needs - each customer's dedicated generative AI models are only tuned on the customer's own proprietary data. By giving customers control of the data used by generative AI,

customers use their own data to

Oracle is helping keep sensitive and proprietary information safe. According to Deepa Param Singhal, vice president appli-

said Singhal.

cations, Oracle India, despite

their ability to create an efficient work environment for their em-"As we move forward into Business app. an increasingly digital era, our

generative AI embedded Oracle Cloud HCM will emerge as an intelligent tool that is set to elevate employee experience by equipping employees with in-built modern, intelligent tools and features that will automate mundane daily tasks,

# Google-owned navigation platform Waze lays off employees

Google is reportedly laying off employees from its navigation and mapping company Waze,

"The passengers on board ar-

rived safely at their destination

despite the weather-related

detour, "the official added.

products The tech giant is moving Waze over to Google's ads system which means there will be iob cuts at Waze in "sales, mar-

'reports CNBC. The report cited an email by Chris Phillips, VP and GM of Google's Geo unit, which read that the company hopes to "create a more scalable and optimised Waze Ads product".

keting, operations and analytics,

Waze has more than 500



how many of those will lose jobs. "We have decided to transition Waze's ads monetisation to be managed by the Global Business Organisation (GBO), similar to Google Maps, "Phillips wrote in the email.

"Unfortunately, this will result in a reduction of Waze Ads Latin America regions as it monetisation-focused roles in sought to refocus its business employees and it was not clear sales, marketing, operations on certain markets.

and analytics, "the email noted. Waze was acquired by Google for about \$1.1 billion in 2013.

around 140 million active users, uses a crowdsourcing technique that allows it to determine the fastest driving route from one location to another, with the most recent traffic information.

In 2020, Waze had laid off 5 per cent of its global workforce, about 30 people, amid

the pandemic. Waze had shut several of its offices in the Asia-Pacific and

# TikTok COO resigns after nearly five years V Pappas, TikTok's chief operat-

ing officer (COO), has resigned after nearly five years at the Chinese short-video making app to "refocus" on her "entrepreneur-

Pappas tweeted on Thursday, "After nearly 5 years at TikTok I am stepping down as COO. To our amazing community of creators, employees and people who have made TikTok 'the last sunny spot on the internet', it has been an absolute privilege to serve you all and to be a part of

this once in a lifetime journey.' In a note to all Twitter emplovees, she said, "Five years ago when I was first approached by TikTok, I was incredibly inspired by the product vi-



sion to be a new mobile-first video experience that serves as a canvas, bridge and window for everyone.

"The pitch was to take on a role to transform and grow the product and broaden its appeal through developing diverse communities and content. I

will bring them the highest utility

or satisfaction, given their money

and accessibility constraints.

reached at TikTok, I finally feel the time is right to move on and refocus on my entrepreneurial passions, "she added.

"Given all the successes

will stay at the company in an advisory role.

"In particular, supporting our diverse creators with efforts like our 'culture of credit' or 'visionary voices' initiatives has marked some of my personally most

rewarding work, "Pappas said. According to Pappas' Linkedin profile, before joining Tik-Tok, she had spent more than seven years at YouTube leading company-wide strategic growth initiatives at the intersection of

# development claims CM Eknath Shinde



BY DOMINICK RODRIGUES Mumbai

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said the State is ranked as the "number one" state in the country for creating maximum infrastructure facilities.

"Maharashtra has taken the lead in foreign investments in India where FDI worth Rs 1,18,000 crores was made last year itself," he said.

The Chief Minister recently urged farmers to attain prosperity by employing state-ofthe-art technologies alongside traditional farming methods in agriculture.

Noting that farmers need to cultivate crop species which give double income in the equivalent inputs, Shinde expressed confidence that a recently-held agricultural exhibition would prove to be useful in highlighting information of new projects to farmers.

The occasion was the Krishi Pandhari Exhibition and Cereals Festival, where the Chief Minister said that the state government had taken many decisions in the interest of farmers and these included the "Jalyukta Shivar Abhiyan 2.0" and "NaMo Shetkari Sanman Nidhi scheme.'

While the State Government would be paying the instalment towards the premium in providing crop insurance at Rs 1, farmers would benefit from the Government's decision to give Rs 6,000 per year to the beneficiaries of the PM Kisan Yojana in addition to the same amount by the Central Government, he said.

information of modern technologies in agriculture, besides various government schemes, strengthening the farmer-science extension mechanism, developing farmer-producerconsumer chain, providing a boost to market-oriented agricultural production and marketing, besides importance of cereals in nutrition.

The Exhibition highlighted

The Chief Minister also visited a Mega-Health Camp in Pandharpur for providing necessary health services to pilgrims on annual pilgrim-Highlighting the State

Government's public health initiatives, Shinde said the Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya scheme would provide health cover of Rs 5 lakhs instead of Rs 1.5 lakhs, while the Hindu Hriday Samrat Balasaheb Thackeray Aapla Davakhanas had been sanctioned for 700 places in the State. The Chief Minister also handed out appointment orders on compassionate grounds to various beneficiaries during his visit under the "Government at your Doorstep" programme.

He said the Government had announced giving 75,000 jobs and was reviewing this time to time, besides providing all types of certificates under one roof and conveying schemes effectively to people.

Shinde also stated that a

provision of Rs 100 crore is being made for the "Banana Development Corporation, while revised administrative approval would be given for the Bodwat lift irrigation scheme.

# ECONOMICS OF SMALL THINGS: "Why We Should Pay Our Maid More"



n our daily

economic transactions, often decision-making to investment overlooking their significance in the share market. So ecoand impact. From buying a nomics can be used to explain cup of coffee to taking public domestic issues as well and one transportation, the economics of simple things floods our tic help. Our neighbours often routines. This article aims to complain about their domestic shed light on the interwoven web of economic interactions job properly. Rarely do we find surrounding these seemingly ordinary activities and explores how they shape our lives and the broader economy. From are desperate to steal them from ways share a slice of it with your

I was unable to find a reliable enough to discuss the concept servant. Suddenly I remember about the book by Sudipta Sarangi, Economics of Small Things and ideas strike in my market wage to your domestic mind. I paid 20 per cent more than their trending rates which domestic helper will work with we call equilibrium price in economics which is decided by the that in case s(he) loses the job, forces of demand and supply. I s(he) will be unable to find a stolen, especially if they were

sumer surplus, we are always

unconsciously guided by the

invisible hand of economics.

in our house and she was ready to do extra work also We can apply simple microeconomics in our daily life. Sometimes engage in unconsciously we use economics countless in our daily routine from small such issue is managing domeshelp quitting or not doing their someone happy with their domestic help, and if we do, the more envious ones among us the third law of demand to con- our unsuspecting neighbours. So what does one do to retain their domestic help? The example is before you. "Why We Should Last month we shifted to our Pay Our Maid More. This comnew house in a new locality as mon experience is sufficient and effects of efficiency wages. Efficiency wage refers to the idea of paying a higher-thanhelp, which ensures that your ence of the Indian religion while all sincerity because of the fear



market wage.

Moreover, we can pay one month's advance wages so that she or he will not leave immediately. If you are eating pizza alservent or your co-worker. He or she will do work with more efficiency and these are called efficiency wages in economics and the third law of demand will work. We can also increase their income in kind, as we can offer one-time meals or even clothes. Stories on complements show

up in examples as well, such as

recounting a common experi-

visiting the temple. Most Indi-

ans have been a victim of petty

thievery and had their shoes

visits to the temple. Shoes, by the way, are a classic example of complementary goods where the left pair is useless without access to the right pair, and vice versa. One strategy suggested by Sarangi is to separate the pairs when visiting the temple so that the thief has to hunt to find the matching pair. This strategic idea does not seem to be foolproof, however. The Swedish experience of shoe stores as they display only the left pair in the storefront, presumably to minimise the risk of theft. The

gang of thieves will be unable to complete the pair.

Economic theory assumes that individuals are rational decisionmakers who seek to maximize their utility or well-being. This aswas surprised that the servant job that will pay more than the sporting a new pair during their sumption implies that individuals

The utility is the want satisfying capacity of the commodity or the service. According to the economics of simple things, individuals weigh the utility they expect to derive from a particular good or service against the price they have to pay. This evaluation helps determine whether the purchase is worthwhile from an economic standpoint. If you are going to market and want to buy a costly saree, have a pause of two minutes and think and do a cost-benefit analysis. If you will wear a saree of ten thousand only two times in functions then buy two sarees of five thousand each and you can wear it four times on different occasions or you can go for a rented dress also. By following these simple economics you will save your money and in an economy like India, savings are very important to increase the rate of investment. The cash in your hand is like a king and a penny saved a penny earned is an old proverb At the heart of the economics

of simple things lies the price mechanism—the language through which goods and ser-

vices are exchanged. Prices convey information about scarcity, demand, and value, allowing consumers and producers to make decisions. Whether it's the cost of a loaf of bread or the price of a movie ticket, these seemingly trivial numbers reflect the underlying forces of supply and demand, signalling the equilibrium point where buyers and sellers agree to transact Consumer behaviour plays a

crucial role in the economics of simple things. Our preferences, tastes, and budget constraints shape the goods and services we choose to buy. Factors like brand loyalty, convenience, and quality influence our decisions. For example, opting for a sustainable product may reflect our environmental concerns, while choosing a locally sourced item may reflect our desire to support local producers. Consumer behaviour is a dynamic force that drives market demand and shapes the production and availability of goods and services. As a person who travels to Indian Airlines supports the income of the domestic country.

Dr. Harvinder Kaur, Associate Professor in Economics, Ambala, views are personal

# Maharashtra No 1 State in top infra

Commerce Ministry

**Production-Linked** 

**Incentive Scheme** 

advises departments to

consult PLI beneficiaries

# World Bank approves \$700mn to help Sri Lanka implement foundational reforms

Group said it has approved \$700 million in financing for two operations to help Sri Lanka implement foundational reforms as the island nation is trying to overcome its worst-ever economic crisis.

The World Bank Group's **Board of Executive Directors** discussed the new Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Sri Lanka, which aims to help restore economic and financial sector stability and build a strong foundation for a green, resilient, and inclusive recovery, reports Xinhua news agency quoting an official statement issued by the global



The CPF, which covers the tal and the most vulnerable years from 2024 to 2027, lays out a two-phased approach that starts with a focus on urgent macro-fiscal and struc-

population.

The statement said it comes at a time when the country is navigating its worst-ever tural reforms and supports economic crisis that has protecting the human capi- had devastating impacts on

deep reforms to stabilise the economy and protect the poor and vulnerable.

Sri Lanka's poverty rate is estimated to have doubled from 13.1 to 25 per cent between 2021 and 2022, an addition of 2.5 million poor people, and is projected to increase by another 2.4 percentage points in 2023, according to the statement.

"The extent of the crisis in Sri Lanka is unprecedented, but offers a historic opportunity for deep reforms to reset the country's economic storyline, said Faris H. Hadad-Zervos, World Bank country director

## **RBI** will make every effort to bring down inflation to 4%: Governor

Bank of India (RBI) will strive to get headline inflation to its 4% target, said Governor Shaktikanta Das flagging El Nino as a challenge.

news agency, Das expressed confidence that the

economy will grow at 6.5% in FY24, as estimated by the RBI earlier. Since May 2022 the central bank's rate hikes by

a cumulative 2.50% along with Russia-Ukraine war, which supply-side measures from the government, have helped get the inflation down to 4.25% in May from a peak of 7.8% in April last year, Das said.

He said the RBI continues to be watchful on the inflation

**NEW DELHI:** The Reserve front as they expect inflation to be at 5.1% in FY24. "We will continue to strive and get it down to 4%," he added.

On the high borrowing costs. Das said interest rates In an interview with PTI on loans may have a direct relation with inflation, and

if inflation cools down on a durable basis, people can expect lower interest rates on loans. The governor explained that the

led to a shoot-up in the commodity prices, led to a surge in inflation, but added that crude prices are not a concern from an inflation perspective now as they've come down to USD 76-76 a barrel.

and help the bank accelerate its

strategic growth agenda. Infosys

will collaborate with Danske

Bank to strengthen their core

business with greater digital,

cloud and data capabilities. This

will help Danske Bank create

more value for their customers

using powerful advances in AI,

Infosys looks forward to wel-

coming Danske India employees

joining our team as part of this

journey.Nordics is a strategic

market for Infosys and this col-

laboration further enhances our

commitment to the region. Info-

including generative AI.

**NEW DELHI:** The industry ministry so that Commerce and Industry Ministry has recommended departments to hold consultations with PLI beneficiary The Ministry, which

their issues. The suggestion was made in a workshop on the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme called by the ministry recently.

companies to understand

The meeting assumed significance as the government disbursed only Rs 2,900 crore till March 2023 out of Rs 3,400 crore claims received under the scheme.

The scheme was announced in 2021 for 14 sectors, such as telecommunication, white goods, textiles and pharma with an outlay of Rs 1.97 lakh crore. The departments were also asked to ensure that PLI beneficiaries complete their investments and meet production targets.

"It was suggested to the line ministries now to call the PLI beneficiary companies for consultations with them only and if they flag any issue, it could be conveyed to the commerce and

India's Labour

those issues can be taken up with the highest authorities," one of the officials said.

coordinates the scheme, also urged PLI beneficiaries to take up any procedural challenges/ issues with the respective implementing ministry or department so that positive reforms can be brought about and the scheme can be made more efficient and effective.

The workshop witnessed participation from 10 implementing central departments, companies, PLI beneficiaries under 14 key sectors, various Project **Management Agencies** (PMAs) like IFCI (Industrial Finance Corporation of India), Small Industries Development Bank of India (Sidbi), Metallurgical and **Engineering Consultants** (MECON), Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA), and Solar **Energy Corporation of India** (SECI), select industry associations and relevant export

#### **Government keeps** interest rates for popular small saving



schemes unchanged

**NEW DELHI:** The government has kept the interest rates for popular small savings schemes like national saving certificate, public provident fund (PPF), Kisan Vikas Patra and Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana, unchanged for the next three months, i.e from July 1 till September 30, 2023.

According to a Finance Ministry notification, only the interest rate of one year time deposit has been hiked to 6.9 % from 6.8 %

Also the interest rates for 2 years time deposit scheme has been hiked from 6.9 per cent to 7 per cent, while for five-year recurring deposit, the interest rate has been increased from 6.2 per cent to 6.5 per cent.

However, the rates for PPF (7.1 per cent), national saving certificate (7.7 per cent), Kisan Vikas Patra (7.5 per cent), Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (8 per cent), monthly income scheme (7.4 per cent) and senior citizen saving scheme (8.2 per cent) have been kept unchanged for the next three

#### **Banks withdraw** foreclosure charges after MSMEs decide to involve Banking **Ombudsman**

and Small & Medium Enterprises (FISME) is pro-actively involved in resolving such issues faced by MSMEs and has provided extensive support in these two cases.

pur had complained that IDFC was not cooperating in the closure of their account and

sion after being reminded of RBI's guidelines that banks have been advised to continue to follow their commitment to MSMEs as failure to adhere to the Code can be a ground for approaching Banking Ombudsman. According to the Code of Bank's Commitment for Micro and Small Enterprises' which was adopted by all commercial banks in 2012, Banks had committed that they would 'permit prepayment of fixed rate loans up to Rs 50 lakh without levying any pre-payment penalty and also 'permit prepayment of floating rate loans without levying any prepayment penalty'.

For operational reason IDFC has requested the MSME unit

EMI is recovered. Similar case of Rathna Sweets in Tirupathur, Tamil Naduhas recently been settled after private lender Karur Vysya Bank Ltd., (KVB) agreed to waive off the pre-closure

## Danske Bank Selects Infosys as Strategic Partner to Accelerate Digital Transformation **Infosys will also acquire** ernised technology landscape,

Danske Bank's IT centre in India which employs 1400 digitally skilled professionals **Engagement expands** Infosys' footprint and reinforces commitment to the Nordics.

**ARUNKUMAR RAO** Bengaluru/ Copenhagen(Denmark)

Infosys (NSE, BSE, NYSE: INFY), a global leader in nextgeneration digital services and consulting, today announced that it has signed a strategic collaboration with Danske Bank, a leading Nordic Bank, to accelerate the bank's digital transformation initiatives with speed and scale. This collaboration will help Danske Bank achieve its strategic priorities towards better customer experiences, op-erational excellence, and a mod-

deterioration in real estate could

be less intense. However, since

non-mortgage personal loans

are the fastest-growing category

within household debt, this

scenario could also be equally

forceful in disrupting the retail

In the past couple of years,

powered by next-gen solutions, company press statement said here today.

Headquartered Denmark, Danske Bankprovides banking services to personal and business customers, as well as large corporate and institutional customers. In a bid to accelerate the bank's technology transformation, optimise their access to talent and capabilities and improve productivity, Danske Bank chose Infosys as its strategic partner, statement said.

As part of this collaboration, Infosys will also acquire Danske Bank's IT center in India, where over 1,400 professionals are employed. With its global xpertise and industry-solutions, Infosys will accelerate the bank's digital agenda by significantly enhancing their IT operations and capabilities, powered by Infosys Topaz, an AI-first set of services, solutions and platforms, experience design, and services that support operations.

Slowdown expected in consumption, real estate



Frans Woelders, Chief Operating Officer, Danske Bank, said, "Our Forward '28 strategy sets clear ambitions for Danske Bank to be a leading bank in a digital age. This is backed by significant investments in digitalisation and technology, including plans to further develop our customerfacing digital solutions, and modernising our technology infrastructure to enable even better customer experiences and drive operational efficiency. We have a strong starting point, and we want to further accelerate our digital and technology transformation. We have conducted a thorough process to find a partner that can help us achieve that. Infosys has the tools, experience, and expertise to support us in accelerating our transformation using cloud and AI technologies. Given Infosys' global presence and scale, this collaboration will also give us access to wider talent pools and capabilities.

Salil Parekh, Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, Infosys, said, "We are delighted to bring our rich experience in financial services transformation to work for Danske Bank

sys has acquired BASE Life Science in Denmark and Fluido in Finland, and recently opened a new proximity center in Gothenburg, Sweden and Oslo, Norway. With this relationship with Danske Bank, Infosys has further enhanced its localization strategy in the Nordics.Infosys

expects the transactions to be completed before Q2'FY2024, subject to customary closing

# Participation Rate

Flexible repayment products were favoured by 16% of respondents that will give them the choice to make daily or weekly loan payments or variable loan payments, based on their business turnover for the selected time period, it

Stock Market-Boom Reflects Growth

edgement of the importance of MSMEs and unlocking this sector>s full potential will require a personalised approach.

«It is a sign that India>s small business entrepreneurs Sentiment Survey> about are now seeking much more 55% of the total MSMEs in- than access to formal credit terviewed said an instant line and want tailored products of credit is their top require- and services aligned with their growth needs.» Kinara Capita founder and CEO Hardika

The report surveyed 2,600 formal MSMEs that are Udyam-registered and represent a range of businesses across manufacturing, trading and services sectors in Karnataka, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil



participation rate (LPR) of India has declined from 40.1% in financial year 2022 to 39.5% in financial year 2023, said Centre For Monitoring Indian Economy

According to CMIE's data, India's LPR is one of the lowest compared to global estimate of 60%

The data cited by the analysis suggested that their working age are out of India's labour force.

According to the definition of LPR, it refers to share of working age population which is either employed or unemployed, looking for employment.

Compared to LPR of Indonesia (67%), South Korea and Brazil (63-64%), India's LPR is behind with quite a



Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy

margin.

CMIE analysis said that the low participation rate is a worrying sign as a large share of population has force and isn't willing to seek employment.

A sharp decline in Indian workforce was seen during the pandemic when the workforce declined from 442 million in 2019-20 to 424 million in 2020-21.

This recovered to 439 million in 2022-23 but was still lower than the prepandemic level.

NEW DELHI: Two private lenders Infrastructure Development Finance Company (IDFC) First Bank Ltd., and Karur Vysya Bank Ltd.. (KVB) have decided to reverse their decision on foreclosure charges unfairly imposed on their MSME customers.

Federation of Indian Micro

Sethia Handicrafts in Jodhimposing foreclosure charges.

The bank reversed its deci-

to apply for FCL after the next



which could disrupt retail lending boom

Net financial savings (NFS) dropped to a three-decade low of 6 % of GDP in FY23, while physical savings increased to a decade-high of 13 per cent

lending boom," the report said. However, in 2HFY23, the notwithstanding higher inflagrowth in private consumption and residential investments tion, the consumption and real estate sectors have performed ing financial savings, the report very well at the expense of fi-

out and may rise in the near future. Thus, we expect household spending trends in FY24 to match more with 2HFY23. rather than 1HFY23. In that case, due to weak income growth this year, growth will subside significantly in either private consumption or real estate investments or both, the According to the recent RBI

said. NFS could have bottomed

survey of professional forecasters, although consumption growth is expected to weaken in FY24, its share in GDP is projected to rise, implying a further fall in household savings. It means the consensus is more inclined toward a sharp deterioweakened substantially, boost-ration in the real estate sector, which could surprise investors.

#### Instant line of credit top MSME need: Survey **NEW DELHI:** The instant there is a growing acknowl-

line of credit and industry networking are the top requirements of majority of MSMEs, as per survey by fintech Kinara Capital.

According to the <MSME business decisions.

The survey also cites that Nadu and Puducherry.



SATISH SINGH

At present, the selling shares is going on in the stock market

of almost all the developed countries including USA. Along with ups and downs, the stock market is also diving. Due to corona pandemic, geopolitical crisis, ongoing war between Russia-Ukraine, high price of crude oil in the international market, the condition of the stock market in developed countries is not good. The global economy also remains dismal. There are chances of recession in some countries. On the contrary, Indian stock market has been on a boom for the last few months. On June 21, the Sensex closed at a record high of 63,588 with a gain of 261 points and earlier on December 1, 2022, it closed at 63,523 with a gain of 195 points. Now on June 28, the Sensex crossed the 64000 marks. According to experts, by the end of this year the Sensex can reach the level of 70,000.

Even though the Nifty could not reach its highest level of 18,887 on June 21, however, it remained around the all-time high of 18,640. Then, on 28th June it crossed 19000 level. According to experts, Nifty can reach the level of 21000

the boom in the stock market, the wealth of the stock market investors has increased by Rs.40 lakh crore in the last 3 months. Not only this, by the vear 2025, it is being said that the Indian economy will be from 3 trillion to 5 trillion. At the same time, in the recent report of HSBC, it has been said that the Indian economy will be 7 trillion in incoming 5 to 10 years. Thus, right now, there is a favourable environment for investing in India. Domestic institutional and foreign direct investment (FDI) can take advantage of this.

The Indian economy is also in a state of recovery. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is also improving. In the last quarter of the financial year 2022-23, the GDP was estimated to be 4.2 percent, but it was 6.1 percent. Due to the improvement in the GDP growth rate in the fourth quarter of the financial year 2022-23, the growth rate of the entire financial year has also been improved. In the first financial year 2022-23, the MPC had predicted 6.8 percent of GDP, which was 7.2 percent.

#### What is stock market?

To understand the ups and downs in the stock market, it is necessary to understand its operations. Share means share by the end of this year. Due to in asset or company. Shares of



companies listed in the stock market are bought and sold with the help of a stockbroker, that is, shares of companies are bought and sold. Now, due to the digitization of buying and selling of shares, there is no need for stockbrokers. Any investor can buy and sell shares by himself through a smartphone. There are two major stock exchanges in India namely Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) and National Stock Exchange (NSE). Bonds, mutual funds, and derivatives are also bought and sold in the stock market.

#### Meaning of Buying Shares

Any listed company issues share to raise capital. Investors have to buy shares as per the offer of the company. The more an investor buys shares,

When shares are issued, it is up to the company to decide how much shares to give to an individual or group. Investors can sell their share of shares anytime in the stock market with the help of a broker or on their own. Brokers charge some fee from the investors in lieu of this work or the investor has to pay some fee even after buying and selling the shares online by himself.

#### Procedure for getting the company listed. To list itself in the stock mar-

ket, the company has to enter into a written agreement with the stock market. Thereafter, the company submits the required documents to SEBI, which is examined by SEBI. If the information is found to be correct on verification, the the more he owns the company. company is listed on BSE or

economic activities from time to time, so that the interest of the investors is not affected.

#### Fluctuations in share prices

Evaluation of the work of a company, whether orders are received or not, profits increase or decrease, level of import, or export, stoppage of work in the factory, production decreases or increases, level of marketing of finished goods, etc. Therefore, the price of shares fluctuates daily depending on the positive or negative impact it has on the company.

#### SEBI is the Regulator

The regulator of the stock market is SEBI, which works to monitor the activities of the listed companies. If a listed company works outside the agreement, then SEBI separates it from BSE or NSE. Its work is also to rein in the brokers who artificially increase or decrease the prices of shares. Last years, Harshad Mehta, who was a stockbroker, had carried out a big scam by artificially inflating the prices of shares.

#### Effect of weak rupee on Stock

The weakening of the rupee against the dollar makes more money to buy \$ 10 from

NSE, depending on the applicatic costlier for Indian compation. Thereafter, the company nies to import, as goods worth has to inform SEBI about its Rs.100 have to be bought for Rs.105 or Rs.110. Since, India is still dependent on imports to meet most of its needs, therefore, companies have to spend more money in importing raw or finished goods, which leads to a fall in the stock price of the

company when its economic

condition is tight.

The value of the rupee against the dollar entirely depends on its demand and supply, which is decided based on imports and exports. If a country exports more than it has more reserves of foreign exchange. Since, India imports more than exports, therefore, the reserves of foreign exchange are always limited here. Due to low foreign exchange reserves, the rupee always remains weak compared to the dollar.

Dollar is an international currency, which is used by many countries and for this reason it is considered the strongest currency in the world. Therefore, in international trade, we pay ne price of goods in dollars.

Rupee weakens even when foreign exchange reserves are low. For example, if India has a currency reserve of \$ 100, but it has to buy or import goods worth \$ 110. In such a situation, he has to spend

the market, due to which the rupee depreciates.

#### Conclusion

Generally, domestic, and foreign investors invest in companies in the form of shares in the hope of getting higher returns, but due to lack of understanding of the economy or proper analysis of the balance sheet or financial results of the companies, or economic, political reasons etc., investors have to bear the loss. So, if an investor wants to invest in the stock market, then he needs to be cautious and keep a close eye on the activities of the listed companies in the stock market.

It is not only the investors who suffer due to the fluctuations in the share price. This also has a negative impact on the country's economy. Selling by foreign investors reduces FDI, whereas FDI is very important for India's economic development. In the absence of this, the growth rate of India, which is already running slow, can go down further. If FDI comes less, there will be a decrease in employment as well as economic activities will also be adversely affected.

> $Satish\ Singh, Ahmedabad$  $based\ Senior\ Journalist.$ Views are personal.

# Putin calls PM Modi 'great friend of Russia'

dent Vladimir Putin called Prime Minister Narendra Modi "a great friend of Russia" and also praised the Centre's 'Make in India' initiative.

Addressing an economic forum in Moscow organised by the Agency for Strategic Initiatives (ASI), the President said on Thursday: "Our friends in India and our big friend, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, launched the 'Make in India' initiative several years ago. It has had a truly impressive effect on the Indian economy. It would do no harm to emulate what is working well, even if it was not us but our friends who created it, "RT News



Putin made a case for India as he discussed the opportunities for Russian companies due to the West's sanctions policies, and the need for the Moscow to "offer support

market their products more

efficiently" Crediting Indian leadership for creating an effective model to develop local manufacturing capabilities and woo foreign investors, Putin emphasized tools to help our companies the need to think about "mak-

nient and functional, with a modern look and properties".

Industrial and product design should become an important resource for the development of domestic business, RT News quoted the President as saying.

The 'Make in India' initiative was launched by Prime Minister Modi in 2014 aimed to to create and encourage companies to develop, manufacture and assemble products made in the country and incentivise dedicated investments into manufacturing. Putin and Modi last met

on the sidelines of a regional security bloc summit in Uzbekistan in September 2022.

# PM Modi's visit to the US takes bilateral relations to greater heights: ASSOCHAM

**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the US which included his inspirational address to the US Congress and meetings with the President Joe Biden, has taken India-US strategic and commercial relations to greater heights, paving way for immense opportunities for the bilateral engagement , ASSOCHAM has said.

"Prime Minister's visit is being viewed as a turning point in Indo-US relations in a fastchanging world order which would see both the countries emerge as the most influential economies with strategic prowess in the unfolding international political economy, 'ASSOCHAM Secretary General Deepak Sood said.

Deepak Sood said while Modi demonstrated India's



soft power as he participated in the International Yoga Day at the UN Headquarters in New York, his personal chemistry with President Biden at the White House demonstrated shared cultural values of the two largest democracies of

"In his inspirational address to the joint sitting of the US the world substantive all-round progress India has made in

These include an inclusive and impressive expansion in the Digital landscape with 850 internet connections, online transactions and tech-enabled governance. The Make In India initiative has started yielding dividends in electronics and strategic space of defence manufacturing, as is evident in the deal between GE Electric and Hindustan Aeronautics for manufacture of fighter jet engines in India".

The 'Initiative for Critical and Emerging Technologies' is a demonstration of mutual trust paving the way for cooperation in the cutting-edge technologies. Joint commit-Congress, Modi conveyed to ment in sustainable development under the aegis of Indiaheaded G 20 too stands out the most critical areas for as a common area of interest.

#### **Indo-Canadian** biologist takes up cudgels for Indian elephants in UK **Parliament**



LONDON: With only 40, 000 of Asian elephants left on the entire planet and 60 per cent in India, biologist and conservationist Sangita Iyer is rallying hard to save the endangered pachyderms in their last bastion, India.

Canada-based Iyer, along with Conservative MP Henry Smith, recently addressed the UK Parliament, imploring Indian authorities to act urgently in the wake of the alarming number of elephant deaths caused by electrocution, poaching and habitat loss, among other growing threats.

As part of their collaborative efforts, they are also encouraging lawmakers, business leaders, and celebrities to do their part in saving the indispensable natural climate champions before it's too late.

With only 27, 000 left in

India, saving them in their last stronghold is critical in order to save the species, according to Iyer, founder of Voice for Asian Elephants Society, which was created in 2016 to protect wild and captive elephants of India. In her presentation before the UK Parliament, Iyer said that the threats facing the endangered Asian elephants have reached a crisis point in India where they are being killed at an alarming rate. The parliamentary presentation also called the state of Odisha the "largest elephant graveyard". In the last 10 years almost 1,200 elephants have been killed across India. And in the last three years, 245 of them have been killed in the central state of Odisha state where mining is rampant. The mega herbivores have already lost 80 % of their habitats to reckless development such as mining, electrocution, railways, roadways, and agriculture. Forest fires are also on the rise, most of them set off by arsonists and poachers to

lure the wildlife and trap them.

#### SGPC President Dhami expresses grief over murder of Sikh shopkeeper in Pak



JAGMOHAN SINGH

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President Harjinder Singh Dhami has condemned the attacks on minority Sikhs in Pakistan. In a statement issued from SGPC office in Amritsar, Dhami said that murder of Sikh shopkeeper Manmohan Singh in Peshawar city in Pakistan is a very unfortunate incident. He said that the government there should be serious about the security of minority Sikhs in Pakistan. This is the second incident of attack on Sikhs in two days. Dhami said that it is sad that many such incidents have taken place in Pakistan in the past, too. If the government had given severe punishment to the culprits in past cases, then this would not have happened again. The SGPC President sought strict action from Pakistan's government against those who killed Sikh shopkeeper Manmohan Singh.

# OpenAI opens office in London, home base of Google's DeepMind

LONDON: Sam Altman-run OpenAI is expanding beyond the US with opening a new office in London as part of its global expansion plans.

London is the home base of DeepMind, Google's largest AI research division.

The first international office in London, said OpenAI, signifies a milestone in OpenAI's growth, "showcasing our commitment to broaden the scope of our operations, bring in diverse perspectives, and accelerate our mission of ensuring that artificial general intelligence (AGI) benefits all of



Altman, CEO of ChatGPT developer OpenAI, said that they see this expansion as an opportunity to attract world-class talent and drive innovation in AGI development and policy.

"We're excited about what the future holds and to see the contributions our London office will make towards building and deploying safe AI," he said in a

focus on advancing OpenAI's leading-edge research and engineering capabilities while collaborating on its mission with local communities and policy makers. "We are eager to build dynamic teams in Research, Engineering, and Go-to-Market functions, as well as other areas, to reinforce our efforts in creating and promoting safe AGI, " said Diane Yoon, OpenAI's VP of People. More than 1, 300 AI companies are based in London and the city was the top-funded in the UK in terms of venture capital invested, reports said recently.

# Border situation with China matter of perceptional difference: Rajnath Singh

**NEW DELHI:** Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday termed the border situation with China as a matter of 'perceptional difference' but there are agreements and protocols based on which the armies of both the countries carry out patrolling. Rajnath, while referring to

the stand-off in East Ladakh in 2020, said that the Chinese Army ignored the agreed protocols and unilaterally tried to change the status quo along the LAC.

He lauded the valour and dedication of the Indian Army which prevented the attempts by the

PLA to change the status quo.



government's stand to resolve the border issue through dialogue and in a peaceful manner. He added that talks are continuing at the military and diplomatic levels to resolve the dispute.

He assured the nation that the government will never compromise on India's border, its honour Rajnath Singh reiterated the and self-respect. "We will never

let the sanctity of our borders be violated," he said. He touched upon the measures taken by the government to bolster national security, including strengthening border infrastructure and achieving 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence.

He listed a number of steps taken to attain self-reliance, namely notification of positive indigenisation lists and earmarking 75 % of the defence capital procurement budget for domestic industry in the Financial Year

"India does not want to depend on imported weapons. Our national security will only strengthen when we become selfreliant in defence manufacturing. Our aim is to 'Make in India, Make for the world'.

"Our efforts are bearing fruit. Today, we are manufacturing tanks, aircraft carriers, submarines and various kinds of weapons. Defence exports have crossed Rs 16,000 crore from a meagre Rs 900 crore before 2014. The exports will soon touch the Rs

20,000 crore mark," he said. Rajnath Singh also enumerated the structural reforms undertaken by the government, including the appointment of a Chief of Defence Staff and setting up the Department of Military

#### Desire to settle abroad brought death to youth whose dead body recovered due to hunger & thyirst

**SATISH HANDA** 

The body of youth Lavjot desired to settle abroad in France remained missing since past about 11 months was traced out by the police in Hungary lying at a lonely place in the jungles near Hungary which was identified with the help of matching DNA profile with his father Daljit Singh and elder brother Gurdeep Singh both already settled in France since past many years and Lovjot was to join them. According to a complaint lodged with police by victim's mother Manjit

Kaur resident of village Dadiana in Ambala district her son Lovjot was introduced by Gurpreet Singh a resident of village Khama-majra running immigration business with Baljit Singh a resident of village Kachhwa sending people abroad along with his other companions Manga Singh and Jaspal and a deal was finalized at Rs 15 lakh to send Lavjot

to Europe but he was left on the way at a lonely place near Hungary jungles after snatching luggage, mobile phone and cash amount he was having by the members of immigration agents. According to victim's mother Manjit Kaur, she had last spoken to his son lavjot about 11 months ago on 25th July 2022 and since after there was no where about of his son Lavjot and her husband and elder son residing in France too attempted to make search of missing Lavjot through police in Hungary and spent amount between Rs 20 to 25 lakh for the same but to no result and failed to find where about of his younger son, Laviot in-spite of all efforts, finally he came to know that the body of a youth was recovered in Hungary jungles months ago in a highly decomposed condition beyond recognition, which had lost life due to hunger and thirst.

#### World Bank's Ajay Banga named in Carnegie's 2023 'Great Immigrants' list Australian parliamentary **NEW YORK:** World Bank Banga is expected to usher years before being named Dame Louise Richardson, panel recommends ban executive chairman. president of Carnegie Cor-President Ajay Banga has in transformative policies at Among numerous honors, poration of New York, and a been named to this year's the World Bank to combat "Great Immigrants" list by poverty and address climate he was awarded the Foreign naturalized citizen who first

the Carnegie Corporation of New York, which honours contributions by immigrants to American life.

Indian-American Banga, who became the 14th president of the top bank this year, was among 35 honorees from diverse backgrounds and fields whose contributions and actions enriched and strengthened American society and democracy.

From India, he is the only honouree in the prestigious Carnegie list, which has named more than 700 "Great Immigrants" since 2006.

With over 30 years of ex-

change, opening opportunities for people around the globe, a Carnegie statement said on Wednesday. "We need to find ways to

embrace the value and talent immigrants have to offer -- not the least of which is their diversity. Their diverse perspectives and experiences make us stronger, "Banga was quoted as saying in the statement. Earlier this month, Banga

became the new president of the World Bank, the first-ever Indian American to lead the Nestle India and two at Pep- as CEO. institution.

He started his career in



siCo, and in 1996, he joined

Later moving to the US. Citigroup, eventually lead- he served as President and perience in key positions, India, spending 13 years at ing the Asia-Pacific region CEO of Mastercard for 12 racy more resilient, "said

Policy Association Medal, Padma Shri and the Ellis Island Medal of Honor.

The Class of 2023 Great from 33 countries, who, achave fostered opportunities for others through their work as educators, mentors, philanthropists, job creators, public servants, storytellers, and advocates".

"The 35 naturalized citizens honored today embody that tradition, reminding us that the contributions of immigrants make our country more vibrant and our democ-

came to the US from Ireland as a graduate student.

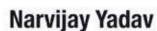
Other honorees in the list are esteemed leaders in their Immigrants has individuals fields, including two Nobel Prize laureates, an Olympian, cording to the Corporation, a member of Congress, a university president, a public theologian and immigration advocate.

It also includes celebrities such Elle magazine editorin-chief and TV personality Nina Garcia, bestselling novelist Min Jin Lee, seventime Grammy Award winner Alanis Morissette, Hollywood star Pedro Pascal, and Academy Award winner Ke Huy Quan.

# on gambling ads



# Talking Points



The video of US singer Mary Millben touching the feet of PM Narendra Modi trended for a long across the media. This news was special to me, as I had the privilege of inviting her to an Indian event for the first time in 2020.

The video of US singer Mary ture towards Indian culture Millben touching Prime Minister Narendra Modi's feet Indians! during a grand public event held at Ronald Reagan Center in Washington DC trended the privilege of inviting Mary for a long across the media. Millben to an Indian event Modi>s visit to the US pro- for the first time in Septemvided us with several proud ber 2020, when the world moments, but this event was was battling the lockdown a bit different. Mary sang and pandemic. As soon as the the national anthem of India lockdown was announced in and then greeted the Prime Chandigarh, I started a regu-Minister by touching his feet lar Twitter Chat, in which in a very emotional way in every week a public group full public view of a packed chat was held with one or the

has touched the hearts of us

This event was even more special for me because I had

## With due respect from the US people used to participate in this Twitter Chat that hap-

pened on Sundays at 6 pm. It was India>s first and longestrunning Twitter Chat during the pandemic era. Mary Millben, the African-

American Singer, became a social media sensation in August 2020 by singing Indias national anthem on Independence Day. That's when I thought to invite her to our popular chat show held every week in collaboration with the Bloggers Alliance. Later, she gained more popularity by singing 'Om Jai Jagdish Hare' aarti on the occasion of Diwali. Later she also visited India as an official guest. She has a special respect for India, which is evident in her acts and words.

Meanwhile, Mary also participated in the 9th International Yoga Day programme held at the United Nations on June 21, where



Prime Minister Modi. Having sung America>s national anthem for three consecutive George W. Bush, President worldwide. Barack Obama, and President Donald Trump, she has relations are going to prove become one of the world>s hottest new voices. Her shows have taken place at the White tween the two Superpowers,

National Football League, the National Basketball Association, Major League Baseball, US presidents, i.e. President and numerous concert halls

As you know, Indo-US beneficial for our shared future. It is the friendship bestadium. Obviously, her ges- other celebrity. Hundreds of she was seen sitting next to House, the US Congress, the which explains the growing

strength of India. The next ten years are going to change the fate of India. We are fortunate to be witness to such a critical time and change. Among the more than 30 agreements signed with the US in defence, technology, space and healthcare sectors, the most important is the technology transfer agreement. Now India will be able to become a big player in the field of semiconductors, manufacturing and defence. A few semiconductor plants will start here in a year. The made-in-India chip will hit the market next year. The US company will train 60,000 Indian engineers. American warships will also be repaired in India. Both countries will jointly make jet engines. All such changes will be turned into reality soon.

 $The \ writer \ is \ a \ senior$ journalist and columnist. Views are personal, Twitter @narvijayyadav An Australian parliamentary committee on Wednesday recommended a ban on gambling advertising in the country within three years.

The standing committee on social policy and legal affairs tabled a report from its inquiry into online gambling and its impacts, reports Xinhua news agency.

After months of hearings and submissions, the committee made 31 recommendations including a comprehensive ban on all forms of advertising for online gambling, to be introduced in four phases, over three years.

Peta Murphy, chair of the committee, said the three-year time frame would give sports broadcasters time to find alternative advertisers.

"Australians are the biggest losers in the world when it comes to gambling. We have a culture where sports and gambling are intrinsically linked. These behaviors are causing increasingly widespread and

serious harm to individuals. families, and communities, she said in a statement.

According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), citizens lost approximately A\$25 billion (\$16 billion) on gambling in the financial year 2018-19, representing the largest per capita losses in the world.

The inquiry also called on the federal government to implement a comprehensive national strategy on online gambling harm reduction, supported by national regulation, an online gambling ombudsman, a harm reduction levy on online wagering service providers, a public education campaign, more independent research and improved data collection.

It recommended a crackdown on illegal gambling websites and a requirement for gambling companies to verify a customer's identity before accepting their bets.

# **Drifting premium cars to** set new benchmarks

Mercedes, Lamborghini, and Hyundai put to test for records



**NEW DELHI:** The number of individuals and institutions finding a significant place in the India Book of Records (IBR), India's leading record-setting platform, is growing rapidly. Some of its stories are really mind-boggling and inspiring. Drifting a car is not an ordinary task. But, companies like Launch Control India and the Power Drift Studios are doing it with ease once and again.

The record for performing a continuous drift for the most extended duration in a car was set by Launch Control India at the Buddh International

Circuit, Greater Noida, when Mudit Grover, driving a modified Mercedes Benz C-Class, drifted non-stop for 19 minutes, 20 seconds. Then, the Power Drift Studios set the record for unboxing a smartphone while performing the fastest drift in a sports car. Gaurav Gill, a champion of premier car races in the country, achieved this feat by unboxing the OnePlus 11 mobile while drifting a Lamborghini Huracan Spyder at a speed of 205.47 kmph at the NATRAX automotive test tracks, Pithampur, Madhya Pradesh.

With the electric vehicles

making their way, Hyundai (India) set a record for the fastest EV run, covering the 7 Wonders of India. The Hyundai IONIQ-5 team embarked on a journey from Delhi to visit the Golden Temple, Taj Mahal, Khajuraho, Nalanda, Sun Temple, Hampi and Gomateshwara, covering 6458 km.

The Art of Living Foundation created two records for the largest number of people reciting Ganesh Atharvashirsha and the largest number of people taking the pledge for a drug-free India in one place, entering the Asia Book of Records also. A total of 54,560 people recited the hymn at Suryakant Kakde Farm, Pune, while 1,26,613 students participated in the Drug-Free India campaign. Pune University supported the event. Art of Living founder, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar and Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis graced the event. On the announcement of the records. Sri Sri Ravishankar said, "It is a matter of pride for all of us to be named in the India Book of

# Aditya says working with Anil Kapoor is a flip side of teaming up with an energetic star



ONE COMPLEX YOU DO GET WHILE WORKING WITH ANIL KAPOOR IS THAT YOU FEEL YOU AREN'T WORKING HARD ENOUGH, AS HE IS THE MOST HARD-**WORKING ACTOR"** 

ditya Roy Kapur, who has worked with Anil Kapoor on various projects, says there is a flip side of teaming up with an energetic star.

Aditya Roy Kapur was interacting with the media on 'The Night Manager 2' in Mumbai along with the Disney+ Hotstar show's creator, Sandeep Modi, and co-stars Anil Kapoor, Shobhita Dhulipala and Tillotama Shome. After 'Malang', the 2020 action thriller directed by Mohit Suri, 'The Night Manager' marks the second outing of Aditya Roy Kapur with Anil Kapoor, so he was naturally asked about the pros and cons of working with a senior actor.

"One complex you do get while working with Anil Kapoor is that you feel you aren't working hard enough, as he is the most hard-working actor, 'Aditya said. "I can only think of that as a con, for you feel

like shit and keep thinking you need to pull up your socks. Continuing in the same vein,

he added: "There is plenty to learn from him. I was working with him for the second time, yet he never ceases to amaze you -- the kind of zest he approaches his work with, the passion with which he approaches his roles, his attention to detail, and being a team player who wants everyone to succeed. "He has the wisdom, and he

wants everyone in the team to

succeed, so in return the whole project becomes successful. His love and experience have been invaluable to this project, 'Aditya added. In Season 2 of 'The Night Manager', who premieres on June 30, the alliance of Shaan (Aditya Roy Kapur) and Shailendra (Anil Kapoor) promises to shake up established systems and spin a new web of conspiracies and

Sonam Kapoor Ahuja plays a visuallyimpaired key witness to crime in 'Blind' trailer



Kapoor Ahuja, is coming back to the screens after the maternity break, will be soon seen in the upcoming crime drama 'Blind' in which she who is visually impaired.

The trailer of 'Blind' was

unveiled on Thursday and it presents a riveting tale of a blind girl, played by Sonam, who helps unravel a rime committed by Purab Kohli's character. Clocking 2 minutes in length, the trailer starts off with the reference to 'Pulp Fiction', as a woman named Mia Wallace goes missing. Sonam's character goes to the authorities to report the missing woman saying that she has a strong feeling that the taxi s boot. From there begins ne cat and mouse chase with sion. 'Blind' also stars Vinay Pathak, Lilette Dubey, and een directed by Shome Makhija. It is a story of a visually impaired resilient woman (played by Sonam) events and give testimony about the incident, she is forced to confront the killer on her own.

in association with RV Motion Pictures & Lead Films, a Kanai, Avma and Kross Pictures Production, 'Blind' will premiere on July 7 on

# **Axis Three Dee Studios display's** sound & light show at Statue of **Belief in Rajasthan**

NEWDELHI: Axis Three Dee Stuimmersive visual media and projection mapping-launched a fascinating son-et-lumière (light-andsound) show display at the recently inaugurated Vishwas Swaroopam (Statue of Belief) as a permanent installation. Revolving around the themes of 'Aarambh' (The Beginning) and 'Shabd Utpatti' (Origin of Language), the shows keep the audience enthralled throughout the entire 20-30-minute program. With many more stories to be introduced shortly, the 369-foot Statue of Belief promises to be a 'mustvisit' landmark already thronged by thousands of visitors every day.





The unique narration is in a 'Kathavachak' or narrative form, and has been scripted and narrated by Madan Paliwal Ji, Chairman of the iconic conglomerate, Miraj Group, of Udaipur. The language brings alive the timeless knowledge and wisdom of this ancient land weaving lucidly into the narrative numerous anecdotes, references and direct quotes from the Sanatan

# Lindsay Lohan to welcome baby boy with husband Bader Shammas

Actress Lindsay Lohan is preg-nant with her first child with husband Bader Shammas and reports say they are expecting

The couple, who got married in 2022, are readying themselves for parenthood, with the 'Mean Girls' star said to be due imminently, reports

And now reports claim the

36-year-old, who has lived in Dubai for eight years, is expecting a baby boy to enter her world. According to TMZ, a source

close to Bader has confirmed the gender of the unborn child, telling the publication the star is very close to giving birth.

It's said the actress' mum Dina will be on hand to sup-



port her daughter through her first pregnancy when the time comes to give birth.

And some of her closest family members, including her

siblings will be in the area at the same time in order to meet the bundle of joy.

Lindsay first announced she was expecting back in March.

to Instagram of a baby grow which had the words "coming soon" emblazoned across

Many of her fans and friends rushed to the post at the time to send congratulatory messages. Among them was pal Paris Hilton, who gushed: "Congratulations love! So happy for you Welcome to the Mommy Club." Baby nappy brand also got involved in the messaging and joked: "Is the baby due... October 3rd? We can already tell you're not like... a regular

The news was also music to the ears of proud grandadto-be Michael, with Lindsay's father telling MailOnline at the time that his daughter is going

He said: "It's so amazing to welcome another grandchild into the world. It's a totally new chapter in her life." Michael added they had

to be "an unbelievable mom".

waited a while" but gushed that "everything is coming at the right time". Speaking previously about her day to day life since moving from Los Angeles to Dubai, Lindsay confessed: "Sometimes, I call it The Truman Show, because it's the same thing every day.

"But I love it. I really love structure, because I didn't think I had that when I was young. Everything was coming so fast and I had so many things happening. My only structure was filming and be-

# Diljit Dosanjh responds to being mentioned by US leader at luncheon hosted for PM Modi



US leader at the luncheon media. hosted for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and he had a very subtle reaction.

Narendra Modi.

At the luncheon, US Secretary of State Antony of Diljit at Coachella. And

Dosanjh was mentioned by Dosanjh shared on social He was standing on a

podium and said: "Here in the US, India is a part US Vice President Kamala of our daily lives. We enjoy Harris with US State De- our Jhumpa Lahiri novels partment hosted a luncheon over samosas. We laugh for Indian Prime Minister at the comedies of Mindy Kaling.'

MUMBAI: Popular Pun-jabi singer and actor Diljit lives, a clip of which Diljit I can say this from personal experience, we keep ourselves more or less fit and healthy doing yoga.

Unlike his usual banterfilled captions, Diljit just shared an Indian and US flag for the video he shared on Twitter.

On the acting front, Diljit Dosanjh will next be seen 'Chamkila', which is directed "We dance to the beats by Imtiaz Ali. The film also stars Parineeti Chopra. It Blinken spotlighted how yes, Mr Prime Minister and which will stream on Netflix.

## Matrix Fight Night: India's star MMA fighter Angad Bisht to defend Flyweight title against Brazil Hugo Paiva at MFN Organization has been a key



**KAVITA SHARMA** 

India's biggest Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) Promotion, Matrix Fight Night (MFN) is returning to the National Capital Region (NCR) once again with MFN 12 set to take place on July 1st at the Indoor Stadium in Noida. The fans of martial arts will get a chance to witness the thrilling MMA action and intense fights.

In the main event India's Angad Bisht will defend his flyweight title against Brazil Hugo Paiva. Bisht defeated Egypt's Mohamad Gamal for the Flyweight title at MFN on 10th November 2022. MFN is India's premier Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) property and is the brainchild of Bollywood sensation Tiger Shroff, his mother Ayesha shroff and sister Krishna shroff. The

driving force in shaping MMA in Southasia and Southeast Asia. Speaking on the upcoming

title match, Angad said, "I am ready for the fight as always. I have trained well over the past few months and retaining the prestigious MFN title has been my goal ever since the match-up was announced. I will give my all once again, but it will be a good fight against Brazil's Hugo skilled fighter as well. But I will have a few tricks up my sleeve."

On being asked about his opponent, Brazil's Hugo Paiva said, "I am excited to come to India to win the MFN title. I have a strong opponent to face who has been unbeaten in his past couple of fights. But I have trained well with my team and we are confident that we will make an impact.

# **Monsoon Tourism** Panjim

Sao Joao Fest heralds Goa

**DOMINICK RODRIGUES** 

The monsoon rains heralded a welcome relief from the unrelenting summer heat in the erstwhile Portuguese state of Goa, where locals and tourists took a traditional dive into the wells and rivers.

The occasion was the popular Sao Joao" Fest that is celebrated globally and is a huge tourism draw for Goa with the state tourism denartment highlighting it even as the curtain fell on the G20 Tourism summit recently.

This Fest is held at the beginning of the monsoon season where people of all ages jump into wells, ponds, streams and rivers in Goa. Dressed in their colourful festive best including the beautiful flowery headgear "Kopel" (crown), villagers welcomed people with a variety of sliced fruits and juices in keeping with the age-old, global



traditions ushered in by the Por-

The popular tourism villages of Siolim and Aldona in North Goa continued to witness the crazy rush of tourists from different parts of India and abroad as they oined in the activities.

The "Teen Manos" (three bridges) section in Aldona saw people leaping off the low bridge into the swirling high tide waters of the river within safety limits set by the concerned authorities.

# PGDAV College of DU wins 'Gandhi Darshan Competition'



New Delhi

Navrang, the theatre Society of PGDAV College in Delhi University secured First Position in the "Gandhi Darshan Competition' held at Jawahar Bhawan on 25th June. Aurbindo College and Shivaji College of DU scored second and third position respectively. The theme of the Drama was "Gandhigiri" where many colleges of Delhi University participated.

The competition on Gandhi-

giri was jointly organized By Nation First Foundation and DU Ahimsa Unit. The Title of the play was "Vichardhara ya Mithya". The Play was directed by Sourabh Mishra and Soubhagya Kukreja and was written by Sourabh who also played the character of Mahatma Gandhi in the play. After securing the first position, the President of Navrang, Soubhagya said.. "All our team members have worked very hard for this act," we are looking forward for some more in the future".

On this occasion Nation First Founder, Devendra yadav appeal to the students to follow the principles of Gandhiji in their lives. The performance of the students was outstanding, Yadav added. The other members of the Navrang theatre group that participated in the play were Mahie, Ay-ush, Baleshwar Kumar, Vanshika, Anshika, Shubham, Deepanshu, Ankit, Parth, Raghav, Yashika, Aditya raj, Payal ,Aaina,etc. Navrang has given many outstanding performances in the past also.

## Suhaib Ilyasi's serial Crime Alert will be aired on Dangal TV channel soon: Gulshan Kumar



**FW DESK** Yamunanagar

Producer, director and anchor Suhaib Ilyasi, the country's famous and popular serial India's Most Wanted's new serial Crime Alert will be aired very soon on Dangal TV channel. Giving this information, Suhaib Ilyasi's colleague Gulshan Kumar said that the Crime Alert serial is based on the brave police officers who risked their lives to apprehend gangsters, even take bullets in encounters with criminals and give tough time to dreaded criminals. After that he was put in jail.

Gulshan Kumar also said that the police officers played an important role in nabbing the criminals by solving various complex knots of crime with their courage, courage, conscientiousness and under-

standing. This serial is based on the bravery of the police officers and the purpose of this serial is also to make the public aware of the crimes committed. In this, public is made aware through dramatization of incidents like cybercrime, fraud, love affair. Significantly, the serial India's Most Wanted, aired earlier by Suhaib Ilyasi, is about the criminals who were absconding and were far from the police's grip. In this serial, such in-depth information about the wanted criminal was given that it became difficult to hide the criminal. After the telecast in the serial, on the information of the public, that most wanted criminal was caught by the police. Through India's Most Wanted serial, many most wanted criminals were brought behind the bars of the jail.

