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BECOMING A VOICEOVER ARTIST: A JOURNEY OF VERSATILITY AND EXPRESSION

Chandrayaan-3 Moon Landing Successful: India has created history

ARUN KUMAR RAO
Bengaluru

India on Wednesday scripted history with the successful soft landing of its lunar mission Chandrayaan-3 on the South Pole region of the Moon. It was a historic day for the country as the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) Chandrayaan-3 conquered the Moon. The achievement has not only made the entire nation proud but also opened up a wave of opportunities for several sectors that could boost India's economic growth, bringing the country closer to its dream of becoming the third-largest economy in the world. With this achievement, India has become the first country to land on the Moon's challenging South Pole region. The space agency ISRO announced the landing with sparking cheers and applause among the space scientists watching and wrote, "India, I remember this day forever! PM Modi said attending occasion virtual. Congratulating the team of scientists at ISRO, PM said, "India's successful



moon mission is not India's alone...Our approach of one earth, one family one future is resonating across the globe... Moon mission is based on the same human centric approach. So, this success belongs to all of

humanity." The Lander Module (LM) of the ISRO third lunar mission Chandrayaan-3, launched on July 14, making India only the fourth country after the erstwhile USSR, the U.S. and

China to make a soft landing on the lunar surface. Precisely at 6.03 p.m. the lander touched the lunar surface and there were euphoric celebrations at the Mission Operations Complex (MOX) at ISRO Telemetry, Tracking, and Command Network (ISTRAC), Bengaluru. In a few hours from now the Lander will deploy the Rover which will carry out in-situ chemical analysis of the lunar surface during the course of its mobility. The Lander and the Rover with a mission life of one Lunar day (14 Earth days) have scientific payloads to carry out experiments on the lunar surface. Given the history of India's second lunar mission, which failed during the last 20 minutes before landing, ISRO was extra-cautious this time in the process. The real test of the mission began at the last leg of the landing. Prior to 20 minutes before landing, ISRO initiated Automatic Landing Sequence (ALS). It enabled Vikram LM to take charge and use its on-board computers and logic to identify a favourable spot and make a soft-landing on the lunar surface. India's current space market is worth around \$8 billion and has been growing at about 4% annually in the last few years, compared to 2% globally.

Chandrayaan-3 to dig out hidden secrets of the Moon

YOGESH KANT
New Delhi

With the successful soft landing of "Chandrayaan-3" on the unexplored south pole of the moon on Wednesday evening, India has become the first and only country to achieve this. Now a rover, a small vehicle designed to move on the lunar surface, will emerge from the lander. Two main components of this project are the propulsion module (PM) and the lander module (LM). The PM, as the name suggests, will launch the LM into the intended lunar orbit and will take metric measurements of the Earth from the lunar orbit. The LM, Vikram, named after Vikram Sarabhai, the Indian physicist who is considered the father of India's space programme, and which has the rover Pragyan on board, will undock from the PM and descend to the lunar surface. Once the soft landing is complete, Vikram will lower a ramp to allow Pragyan to land on the lunar surface. However, on 14 July 2023, Chandrayaan-3 was launched by the country's heaviest rocket, LVM3. After a journey of about 42 days, it landed on the moon's surface.

What will be the mission of Chandrayaan-3 after landing?

Vikram has a mission duration of one lunar day, which is equivalent to 14 Earth days. It has a mass of 1749.86 kg including Pragyan. Its payload includes the Radio Anatomy of Moon Bound Hypersensitive Ionosphere and Atmosphere (RAMBHA) instrument, which will measure the density of ions and electrons on the satellite. **RAMBHA...** It will study the density, amount and variations of plasma particles coming from the Sun on the lunar surface. **ChASTE...** It will study the temperature of the lunar surface. **ILSA...** It will study the seismic activity around the landing site. **Laser RetroReflector Array (LRA)...** It will try to understand the dynamics of the Moon. 1. Laser Induced Breakdown Spectroscopy (LIBS): It will study the quantity and quality of chemicals present on the lunar surface and also look for minerals. 2. Alpha Particle X-ray Spectrometer (APXS): It will study the composition of elements such as magnesium, aluminium, silicon, potassium, calcium, tin and iron. These elements will be searched for on the lunar surface around the landing site.

ISRO to launch of Sun mission 'Aditya L-1', says PM Modi

NEW DELHI: As Chandrayaan-3 successfully landed on the Moon, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday, while witnessing the occasion via video conferencing from Johannesburg, took the occasion to announce that ISRO is soon going to launch the 'Aditya L-1' mission for a detailed study of the Sun. He also touched upon Mission Venus being one of ISRO's goals. "India is proving again and again that the sky is not the limit," the Prime Minister said as he highlighted Mission Gaganyaan where India is fully prepared for its first human space flight mission. "We'll test the limits of our solar system, and work to realise the infinite possibilities of the universe for humans," Modi asserted. Earlier, while expressing his happiness at the success of the Chandrayaan mission, Modi said, "India has reached the South Pole of the Moon where no country in the world could reach to date with the dedication and talent of our scientists." "Time is not far when the children would say 'Chanda Mama Door Ke Nahi Ek Tour Ke' (the moon is only a tour away)," an ecstatic Prime Minister said.

Punjab Guv warns CM to respond or face consequences

CHHAVI BHATIA
New Delhi

Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit has issued a stern warning to Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, urging him to provide responses to his letters, failing which the governor will resort to legal and constitutional actions. In a strongly-worded letter, Purohit expressed his concern about potential failures within the state's constitutional framework. He conveyed, "Before I am going to take a final decision regarding sending a report to the President of India under Article 356 about the failure of the constitutional mechanism and decide about initiating criminal proceedings under Section 124 of the IPC, I ask you to send me the requisite information sought for under my letters referred to above, as also in the matter of the steps taken by you concerning the problem of drugs in the state, failing which I would have no choice but to take action according to the law and the Constitution." The ongoing clash between Mann and Purohit has persisted for more than a year, encompassing various issues like the appointment of vice chancellors, convening of special assembly sessions, and the CM's absence from official events.

India-UK FTA likely to be announced soon, says Sitharaman

NEW DELHI: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday said that the India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is likely to be announced soon. Addressing the B20 summit, the Finance Minister said that India is continuously in touch with various nations and even the European FTA (EFTA) is in the pipeline. EFTA includes Liechtenstein, Norway, Iceland, and Switzerland. "We need to quickly diversify our supply chains. Well-func-



tioning international markets with resilient and efficient

supply chains are the ones that can help us sustain our growth. So, we need to cushion ourselves sufficiently against any shock that can happen," Sitharaman said. India and the UK have been negotiating on the FTA since 2022. Earlier this week, UK trade secretary Kemi Badenoch had said that the negotiations are now in the final stages. India-UK FTA likely to be announced soon, says Sitharaman

Mann govt discussed to start a special bus service for religious places

CHANDIGARH: With an aim to resume minibus service in rural areas of Punjab, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Friday directed the transport department officials to chalk out a plan and conduct a survey for the smooth implementation of this decision. Chairing a high-level meeting with transport department officials at his office here, the Chief Minister said that the Punjab government has decided to resume the minibus service in rural areas aiming to facilitate people as well as provide employment to youth by giving them bus permits



for operation of buses. Bhagwant Singh Mann directed the transport department officials to prepare a complete blueprint of the plan and conduct a survey across Punjab in this regard to ensure identification of possible routes for implementation of this decision at the earliest. Terming the minibus ser-

vice as a boon for the common man, the Chief Minister said while the scheme would help streamline the transport facilities, it would provide employment opportunities to the educated unemployed youth and enable them to start the bus service by obtaining permits. He asked the officials to prepare a detailed plan and conduct a survey across Punjab to ensure identification of possible routes. During the meeting, the Chief Minister also discussed with transport department officials the launch of a special bus service to religious places to facilitate pilgrims.

UWW suspends Wrestling Federation of India for delaying elections: Reports

NEWDELHI: The United World Wrestling (UWW) has decided to suspend the membership of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) indefinitely, as per the reports. This action comes as a result of the WFI's inability to hold elections as required. The development means Indian wrestlers will have to compete as 'neutral athletes' at the Olympic-qualifying World Championships. Originally, the WFI elections were to be held on May 7 but the Sports Ministry had declared elections null and void and asked the IOA to constitute a Transitory Committee or Ad hoc Committee to conduct elections and manage affairs. The national wrestling body wrestling governing body, presently under the management of an ad-hoc committee established by the Indian Olympic Association, was supposed to conduct elections in June. Unfortunately, these elections have faced multiple delays due to a series of legal challenges put forth by different state units. Then, the election was slated to be held on August 12 but Punjab and Haryana High Court stayed WFI elections till further orders following a petition of the Haryana Wrestling Association (HWA).

Manipur CM in Delhi, meets Amit Shah

NEW DELHI: Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh has met Union Home Minister Amit Shah here and discussed the situation in the state, where ethnic clashes broke out in May. The meeting took place on Thursday night. During the meeting, the Chief Minister apprised the Home Minister of the current situation and also discussed a wide range of issues pertaining to the strife-torn state, sources said. Singh also apprised Shah of the various initiatives taken by the government for rehabilitation of the displaced people, added sources.



"Law and order situation is improving in the state. I have come here to take advice from the Home Minister," Singh told reporters before the meeting. Singh along with a

few of his cabinet colleagues and party MLAs reached the national capital on Thursday, officials said. Sources also informed that Shah is likely to hold a meeting very soon with civil society organisations from the state. Ethnic clashes erupted in Manipur on May 3 and since then hundreds of people have lost their lives whereas thousands have been forced to take refuge in relief camps. The Opposition Congress has been blaming the BJP government for the current situation and demanded the dismissal of Biren Singh.

Sonia 'thrilled' over Chandrayaan-3 success, says ISRO capabilities built over decades

NEW DELHI: Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP) chairperson Sonia Gandhi on Thursday congratulated the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for the success of Chandrayaan-3 mission saying "its outstanding capabilities have been built up over decades". In her congratulatory letter to ISRO chairman S. Somanath, Sonia Gandhi said, "This is to let you know how thrilled I was



by ISRO's magnificent achievement last evening. It is a matter

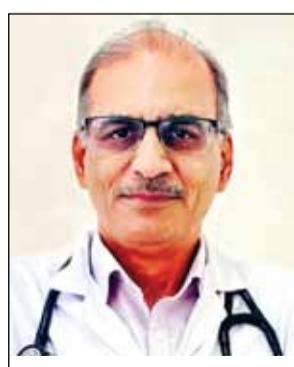
of great pride and excitement to all Indians, particularly the younger generation." The former Congress chief said, "ISRO's outstanding capabilities have been built up over decades. It has had remarkable leaders and a spirit of collective endeavour has always driven it." She said that its being "anchored" on self-reliance since the early sixties has contributed to its great successes.

Former Vice Admiral, Renowned Cardiologist Dr. Rajat Datta Joins Alchemist Group of Hospitals

FW DESK
Chandigarh

Former cardiologist to the president of India, Dr. Rajat Datta is now a valuable part of Alchemist Group of Hospitals. Dr. Datta is a Proctor of TAVR and the only doctor in tricity performing this procedure. TAVR (Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement) is a minimally invasive procedure used in cardiology to treat aortic valve stenosis, a condition where the aortic valve doesn't open properly, causing reduced blood flow from the heart. In the past, fixing this valve problem required open-heart surgery, which can be risky and take a long time to recover from. But with TAVR, doctors can now fix the valve without cutting open the chest.

Instead, they use a small tube (catheter) to insert a new artificial valve into the heart. This new valve takes the place of the old, damaged one and allows blood to flow smoothly again. The great thing about TAVR is that it's much less invasive, meaning it's safer and patients can recover more quickly. It's especially beneficial for older or weaker patients who may not be able to handle traditional open-heart surgery. TAVR expert Dr Datta is the former director of Army Hospital (R&R) Delhi and has also served as the head of Armed Forces Medical Services while heading all medical services, hospitals and healthcare for the Indian army, navy and air force. Leading the charge in providing quality cardiac care to



AVSM, SM, VSM, PHS
Former Director General Armed Forces Medical Services (Retd)
MD (General Medicine), DNB (General Medicine), DM (Cardio), FSCAI
Director Interventional Cardiology

more than 40 years of experience in Cardiology. In his extensive career spanning over 4 decades, Dr Datta has served in some of the most prestigious health institutions across the country. The doctor has served as cardiologist to the most prominent individuals of our country including the former President of India and former Chief of Army Staff. Speaking about his achievements, Dr Rajat Datta is credited with performing the first ever Aortic Valve (TAVR) successfully in Army Hospital R&R Delhi. He has performed over 200 TAVR procedures successfully with excellent results using all kinds of available valves in the country, both in aortic and mitral position. This makes him part of an elite set of doctors, which are very few in our

country who are qualified to perform the highly complex and cutting edge procedure. Till date Dr Datta has performed more than 10000 coronary angioplasties including 4500 highly complex procedures using ROTA, IVUS, OCT, IVL and laser therapy. His path breaking foray into cardiac care also includes implanting the country's first ever leadless pacemaker in Army Hospital (R&R). Apart from serving as a practicing cardiologist Dr Rajat Datta is also one of the leading teaching authorities of the subject having served in some of the most eminent educational institutions of the country for over 25 years. Dr Rajat will be available at Alchemist hospital and at Ojas Hospital which is a boon for the tricity.

Indian Ambassador to USA Taranjit Singh Sandhu pays obeisance at Sachkhand Sri Harmandir Sahib

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

Indian Ambassador to the United States of America (USA) Taranjit Singh Sandhu today paid obeisance at Sachkhand Sri Harmandir Sahib. He was honoured by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC). During his visit to Golden Temple 'Taranjit Singh Sandhu visited SGPC headquarters Teja Singh Samundri Hall named after his grandfather and remembered his elders. On this occasion, Taranjit Singh Sandhu said that Sachkhand Sri Harmandir Sahib is the center of faith for the entire humanity, from where human gets spiritual power. He said that he visits every year to pay obeisance at Sachkhand Sri Harmandir Sahib, to seek blessings of the Guru. He said that his family has a close relationship with the



SGPC. He said his elder Teja Singh Samundri contributed greatly during the establishment of SGPC and participated in many morchas (fronts). He said that it is a matter of pride for our family that Teja Singh was a high-ranking leader of the Sikh community. Speaking further, Taranjit Singh Sandhu said that the present time is the era of tech-

nology and the Sikh community should also make more efforts to make students experts in technical education in its educational institutions. On this occasion, SGPC official said that it is a great pride for the Sikh community that the grandson of Sikh leader Teja Singh Samundri, Taranjit Singh Sandhu is representing India as Ambassador to the USA.

Punjab CM gives nod to subsidise surface seeders under CRM scheme

CHANDIGARH: Exuberating with results of the Pilot Project of Surface Seeder, the Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Thursday gave his consent to subsidize Surface Seeders developed by Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana under Crop Residue Management (CRM) Scheme for better management of crop residue across the state.



Announcing to provide 50% subsidy on this newly developed technique, the Chief Minister said that in view of the results of the pilot project implemented at Satauj (Sangrur), the Surface Seeders proved its worth to manage the crop residue and the state government has

decided to include Surface Seeder under CRM Scheme to subsidize the equipment, Bhagwant Singh Mann said that a machine costs Rs. 80,000 and after 50% subsidy it will cost Rs. 40,000 to the farmers.

PAU about the Crop Residue Management in a meeting with agriculture officials, the Chief Minister said that Punjab Agriculture University recommended the Surface Seeders to be included under CRM scheme. He informed that the process for empannelment of manufacturers for supplying the machinery under the scheme is being done by PAU, Ludhiana. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that the individual farmers/Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies/Registered Farmers Groups/Farmer Producer Organizations/Panchayats can apply for purchasing various CRM machines and also for establishing Custom Hiring Centre (CHC).

The Chief Minister further said that under the scheme the equipment such as Super SMS, Super Seeder, Smart Seeder, Happy Seeder, Zero Till Drill, Paddy Straw Chopper/Shredder/Mulcher, Hydraulic Reversible Mould Board Plough, Shrub Master/Rotary Slasher, Crop Reaper, Balerand Rakeare available on subsidy @ 50% of the cost of the equipment/machine or a maximum amount approved by Union Government in the guidelines. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that the CHC can be established with an investment of Rs.15 lakhs and any of the above machines can be purchased by the CHCs @ 80% subsidy.

Cong calls Himachal Floods as National Calamity demands Rs10K Crores as relief package

KAVITA SHARMA New Delhi



The Congress party on August 23 demanded that the devastation caused by floods and heavy rains in Himachal Pradesh be declared as a 'National Calamity'. The party also demanded a special relief package of Rs 10,000 Cr for the state, saying the damage and devastation was unimaginable.

Addressing a press conference here today, Congress MP and AICC In-charge for Himachal Pradesh Rajeev Shukla urged the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Chairman Rajya Sabha to allow the MPs to donate for the calamity relief from the MPLAD funds as was done during earlier calamities.

The Congress leader said that the enormity of the devastating tragedy in Himachal Pradesh was not being realized and felt across the country. He said, such devastation had taken

place for the first time in Himachal's history where roads and highways have been washed away.

He said, the government of India had so far provided just Rs 200 Crores to the state which was just peanuts. He said, the total damage estimated was to the tune of Rs 13,000 crores.

Shukla demanded relief on the pattern of Uttarakhand, Bhuj earthquake and the tsunami given to other states earlier.

The Congress MP said, the Him-

achal Pradesh, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu had already met the Prime Minister, the Home Minister and the Finance Minister seeking relief for the state. He alleged that the BJP in HP was trying to politicize the tragedy. He appealed to people across the country to come forward and help the affected people as it was devastating humanitarian tragedy. Besides, he pointed out, Himachal Pradesh did not have enough resources of its own and it needed external support.

Centre to blame for dropping of murder charges against Sajjan Kumar, says Sukhbir Singh Badal



JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

Shiromani Akali Dal President Sukhbir Singh Badal today blamed the centre for "the poor and non-serious handling by the prosecution which led to the dropping of the murder charge against Sajjan Kumar, one of the key alleged culprits of the 1984 genocide of Sikhs in 1984.

"The prosecution is clearly to blame for the dropping of section 302 of the IPC against Sajjan Kumar. This rubs further salt into Sikh wounds and deepen the community's loss of faith in the system's ability and will to deliver justice," said Badal in a statement issued today.

"The whole world knows that Sajjan Kumar, Jagdish Tytler and several other top Congress leaders have their hands drenched in the blood of innocent Sikhs. But successive governments in Delhi have given them reprieve after reprieve," said Sukhbir Badal.

He said however the SAD will continue to lead the Khalisa Panth fight against injustice and will not rest until the killers are hanged.

The SAD president came down against Bhagwant Mann for "letting loose a wave of repression on Sikhs in Punjab with a witch hunt against farmers, a majority of whom are Sikhs. Badal extended his best wishes to scientists for soft landing of Chandrayaan 3 on the moon. "Every hard working Indian, including farmers, working classes, employees and housewives have contributed directly and indirectly to the country's progress to this stage. While scientists deserve special credit, we must acknowledge the contribution of all Indians to this venture," he said.

Nearly 300 firms from Haryana suspected involved in Rs 10,000 crore GST frauds by Noida based racket

SATISH HANDA

Central Goods & Service Tax has started physical verification of nearly 300 firms in Haryana state attached with a Noida based racket involved in GST frauds of value worth about 10,000 crore towards service and goods tax. Source reveals that during physical verification of few firms embezzlements of tax amount was detected in nearly 20 firms at Ambala of which the registration of six firms has been cancelled with immediate effect, since these firms were not located at the address intimated in the registration of the firms. According to an officer of the aies tax department the verification of nearly 3000 firms have been made in the country so far which include more than 100 firms only in NCR. Investigation reveals that most of the firms in question did sale and purchase on the basis of fake bills and collected amounts worth crores of rupees towards input tax credit (ITC) thus cheating



the government.

According to information a racket was detected functioning at Noida in June 2023 which prepared a large number of fake firms in different states, got these firms registered on the basis of fake documents including PAN card, Aadhar card, Rent Agreement of the premises, fake Electricity Bills and signatures. These firms purchased and sold goods on the fake bills and also collected ITC refund of GST. Investigations also revealed that the racket used to attract C class firms and trap them in their net offering a token amount of money and using their mobile phone number and prepare fake documents on their behalf. During investigation when large scale embezzlements were detected the investigation of-

ficers recovered 2660 fake GST forms, fake Aadhar cards, computers and datas of countless number of parties from them.

CGST officers during investigation recovered datas which was shared with all four Commissioners in Haryana state at Gurugram, Rohtak, Faridabad and Panchkula when officers of the department started search for all these registered dealers in their area as exposed from the aeized record of Noida based racket as regard sale-purchase of goods, Sales Tax return filed by them and Income Tax Credit (ITC) collected by them and during investigation maximum number of firms were found fake and does not exist at their addresses. CGST Commissioner Shikha Deep Randhawa said that the racket caught at Noida has disclosed names of large number dealers registered with GST and majority of them were found fake having no existence, however, the department is sending recovery notices to many made fake sale and purchase of bills to collect ITC.

BSF, Punjab Police seize broken drone, 3.4 KG heroin in Ferozepur



FEROZEPUR: A joint team of the Border Security Force (BSF) and Punjab Police foiled a heroin smuggling attempt using drone in Punjab's Ferozepur district.

Officials said that the forces recovered a broken drone and a packet containing 3.4 kg heroin.

A senior BSF officer said that a joint search operation was launched by the BSF, Army, and Punjab Police on the outskirts of Hazara Singh Wala village in Ferozepur district on Wednesday.

During the operation, the troops recovered a broken drone along with a packet of narcotics suspected to be heroin (weighing approximately 3.4 Kg), wrapped in an orange-coloured polythene.

Forty one Kilograms drug seized



JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

Special Task Force (STF) Wing OF Punjab police have seized 41 kilograms of drug (Heroin) which was smuggled to India from Pakistan through Ravi Riverine route.

In a statement issued here today, STF official said that Police succeeded to seize 41 kilograms Heroin with the arrest of three accused who were identified as Agayapal Singh, Ranjodh Singh and Sandeep Singh all were residents of Village Ramdas of Ajnala Town of district Amritsar.

Official said that last evening on the tip of these three

accused were nabbed for investigation purpose and during the course of interrogation today they took the police party where they had concealed the huge consignment of drugs which was smuggled to India from Pakistan.

Police said that arrested accused were having cozy relationship with the Pakistani based smugglers who were helpful to the arrested kingpin Agaypal Singh to smuggle the consignments of drugs to India from Pakistan.

Police said that arrested accused who were having past criminal record were presently out from the bars after obtaining bail from the court of law.

VB nabs Sub Inspector while accepting bribe of Rs 7000



JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

Punjab Vigilance Bureau (VB) on Thursday nabbed a Sub Inspector (SI), Dilbagh Singh, posted at Police Station Sarai Amanat Khan in Tarn Taran district while accepting a bribe of Rs 7000 from Nirmal Singh resident of village Kasel. In a statement here today, an official spokesperson of the VB said that Nirmal Singh lodged a complaint that an FIR no. 46/2023 under section 21 (C) of NDPS Act was registered against his brother Daljit Singh at Police Station Sarai Amanat Khan and the accused SI was investigating the case. The complainant alleged that SI Dilbagh Singh had demanded Rs 7000 as a bribe to get vetted the challan from Government Advocate and submit the same in the court.

Attitude of Sikkim government is negative in case of Gurdwara Guru Dangmar Sahib: Advocate Sialka

COURT WILL NEXT HEAR CASE ON SEPT 1, 2023

JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

The attitude of the Sikkim government is not positive in the case of Gurdwara Guru Dangmar Sahib associated with Sri Guru Nanak Dev. Despite the order of the honorable high court and the statement made by the advocate general of the Sikkim government in the court, the state government is running away from its due responsibility. This was expressed by Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) member Advocate Bhagwant Singh Sialka, who is also a member of the sub-committee on the issue of Gurdwara Guru Dangmar Sahib, after the recent hearing in this case on August 18, 2023.

Advocate Sialka in the press statement issued from the SGPC office on Monday has said that the Sikkim High Court had or-



dered to resolve this matter out of court on April 27, 2023, after which the responsibility of the government was very important.

"The court made this order on the basis of the statement given in the court by the advocate general of the Sikkim government. In his statement by the advocate general of government, it was said that presently there is an agreement between the parties to work out modalities for an amicable out-of-court settlement. After this, the court fixed the next date of hearing on August 18, 2023", said Advocate Sialka.

He said that in order to im-

plement the order of the court, advocate Naveen Barik, who appeared on behalf of the Sikh community, wrote twice to the advocate general of the Sikkim government, but no reply was received in this regard.

Sialka said that now when the hearing was held in the court on August 18, the advocate general of the government did not submit any satisfactory answer and asked for more time. On the other hand, during this hearing, senior advocate APS Ahluwalia and Naveen Barik on behalf of Gurdwara Singh Sabha Siliguri and the SGPC presented the

documents related to the history of this Sikh shrine and documents related to its authenticity through historical references. Along with this, information was also given to the court about the commemorative stones installed there by the Sikh and Punjab regiments of the Indian Army from time to time, which are still present there. The court has also been told that from time to time the representatives of the governments have also been recognizing this Sikh shrine, an example of which is the laying of the foundation stone of Deorhi (entrance gate) of Gurdwara Guru Dangmar Sahib by the local MLA in October 1983. He said that after this the court has scheduled the next hearing on September 1, 2023.

Sialka said that the Sikkim government should play its role and resolve the matter in an amicable environment as per its statement given in the court, and not unilaterally play an anti-Sikh role.

Union Minister of State for Law & Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal attends to members of Punjab and Haryana Bar Association

ADITI CHAHAR Chandigarh

On August 21 Union Minister of State for Law & Justice Arjun Ram Meghwal was invited on behalf of the Punjab and Haryana Bar Association, in which senior leaders, advocates and high officials of different communities were involved at Punjab and Haryana High Court.

Taking the Advocates Protection Act issue seriously, the minister assured to take action on it soon. The Minister was specifically told by the Bar Association President that never before till date, such



a large number of advocates had gathered to listen to the chief guest.

In the speech, the minis-

ter made people aware about the purpose to follow the path of truth of Shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

New freight terminal will be set up in Ambala, traders of many states will be benefited: Anil Vij

SATISH HANDA Ambala

Haryana's Home and Health Minister. Anil Vij while talking to media persons here said that a new freight terminal (goods warehouse) will be set up in Ambala for freight transportation. Due to the locational advantage of Ambala, it will be very easy for traders of nearby states to send or order products to any corner of the country.. In this regard, Vij held a meeting with Ambala DC Dr. Shaleen and other officers at his camp office in Ambala today and discussed about the project. He said that with the construction of freight terminal, traders of Ambala as well as traders of nearby Yamuna Nagar, Patiala, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Chandigarh and other states would be benefited. There is a plan to build a new freight terminal on the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor and this terminal will be set up near Ambala Cantonment on the Ambala-Saharanpur line. The Home Minister discussed with DC Ambala regarding the availability of land for the terminal and action will be taken by the Haryana State Industrial



Infrastructure Development Corporation (HSIIDC) regarding the availability of land for the termin Home Minister Anil Vij said that the construction of freight terminal will give a big boost to business in Ambala. Vij said, till now traders used to send their products and other goods to other states by road, but through freight terminal, the products can be sent to every corner of the country at cheaper rates and faster. The process is underway to construct a terminal at Ambala, he added.

A joint meeting of officials of District Administration, Dedicated Freight Corridor Corporation of India (DFCCIL), Container Corporation

of India (CONCOR) and other departments was also held on Wednesday regarding terminal construction on Dedicated Freight Corridor. In the meeting, discussions regarding the selection of the site, construction of the terminal, facilities and other aspects were held. It may be noted that the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor is being laid for speedy movement of goods through goods trains. This separate rail line is being laid for goods trains, which will start soon. There is a plan to set up a freight terminal on this rail line in Ambala. Due to the locational advantage of Ambala, the terminal is considered suitable here.

Firms involved in sale-purchase of fake bills on CGST radar for recoveries

SATISH HANDA Ambala

Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) has launched major action against large number of institutions evading GST of value more than Rs 68 crores by issuing fake input tax credit (ITC) bills. It was observed that these institutions were passing ITC to the taxpayers from outside the state as well as in the state. A spokesperson of the department said vigilance department has started search for firms cheating the government in false practices and has already identified large number of firms from whom recoveries and the fine is being recovered. Even in 'Science City' Ambala Cantt the department has identified large number of renowned business houses involved in sale-purchase of fake bills to

earn ITC fakely. There are few firms dealing in scientific goods but found falsely doing transaction in consumer as well as etable goods. He disclosed that in the coming some time, the persons operating the ITC racket will be identified by the department and strict action will be taken against them with recovery of amount, fine and interest thereon.

There are four commissioners in Haryana state at Panchkula, Gurugram, Rohtak and Faridabad involved in tacing out such firms involved in fake sale-purchase of bills to earn ITC unethically. DC CGST Shikhandeep Kaur Randhawa said that all registration numbers of registered parties are being checked at national level and registration of large number of parties claiming ITC falsely have been cancelled



with immediate effect and action for recovery of frauded amount is being taken against them along with amount of interest. She said, in most of the cases the addressed were found false during investigation and stern action is being taken against them. She further added that the department sending notices

to such establishment found involved in illegal practices under Sections 74, 122 (1) (!!) of 2017 and section 122 (I) (VI). Madam Randhawa said that it was observed that large number of business houses have been playing games of sale-purchase of bills without actual transactions just to grab ITC and in most of the

cases e-way fake bills were raised by them.

Principal Commissioner, Central Goods and Services Tax said that in campaign launched by the department against seven bogus parties that issued fake ITC bills which included Bizotic Developers, Golden Traders, ARL Trading Company, Devi Trading Company, Badri Enterprises, Kumar Traders and Singh Brothers in which tax evasion of Rs 68.04 crore was exposed from them. They were obtaining ITC and passing ITC to tax payers of other states without any kind of goods by these bogus institutions. According to information, Input tax credit of any goods is given only to the institution registered in GST. Credit is not given to a person who is not registered in GST. Credit is given only to the goods used for the business. Goods used for personal use is not to be given credit.

Chandrayaan-3: PM Modi to visit B'uru to congratulate ISRO scientists on Aug 26

BENGALURU: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) on August 26 to congratulate the scientists following the successful Chandrayaan-3 mission.

BJP will also hold a mega roadshow on the occasion. Former deputy chief minister and BJP MLA R. Ashoka said that the roadshow will be held between Jalahalli Circle to ISRO Head Quarters in Bengaluru. "I request the people and party workers to attend the roadshow to congratulate scientists and PM Modi," he said. In the backdrop of the visit of PM Modi to ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (IS-TRACK), BJP State President Nalin Kumar Kateel, BJP MLAs S.R. Vishwanath and S. Muni-



raju have visited the centre and inspected the campus. "The invitation is open for all

to make the programme successful. If people can come at 5.45 a.m. on Aug 26, they can

see PM Modi and ISRO scientists," Ashoka said. Nalin Kumar Kateel said that PM Modi would arrive at HAL at 5 a.m. and should be extended a grand welcome. The party workers and people are invited from the Bengaluru Urban District mainly, he said. Meanwhile, Bengaluru Police Commissioner Dayanand held a meeting to discuss about security arrangements with the Additional Police Commissioners, Joint Police Commissioners and DCPs. After arriving at HAL airport, PM Modi will reach ISRO by road and it has been decided to divert the traffic in Bengaluru on the stretch of the road.

The police department has banned the movement of goods vehicles in the Bengaluru City between 4 a.m. and 11 a.m.

It is India's moment on the moon: ASSOCHAM

FW DESK
New Delhi

On Historic day August 23, 2023 ASSOCHAM joins the nation in celebrating India's historic landing on the moon, congratulating the formidable ISRO and its team of spirited scientists and engineers for achieving the feat showing immaculate precision and success of Chandrayaan 3 mission.

"It is India's moment on the moon", ASSOCHAM Secretary General Deepak Sood said. As Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, landing on the moon, the first by any nation near the lunar South Pole, reflects India's new resolve to cross all barriers in our journey of exploration, premised on a solid foundation of science, technology and innovation.

Congratulating ISRO chief S



Somanath, Deepak Sood said, "Your team of scientists are gems of India. After your victorious words 'India is on the Moon', the entire nation salutes them and their ever increasing aspirations to continue the country's exploration into the universe". He said ISRO has incredibly demonstrated to the world how big feats can be achieved with a prudent and limited budget, raising eyebrows of the developed world about the financial resources being no constraints to national goals.

ISRO has incredibly demonstrated to the world how big feats can be achieved with a prudent and limited budget, raising eyebrows of the developed world about the financial resources being no constraints to national goals

"Today's moon landing is a decisive step towards India's goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047". As ISRO acknowledged, the successful Chandrayaan 3 Mission is also an example of contributions by several private sector companies as well in the nation goal, as critical as the Moon landing.

BJP not to stop leaders who want to join Cong in Kolkata



BENGALURU: The BJP's Karnataka unit has been directed not to stop the party leaders who want to join the ruling Congress in the state.

The Congress leaders have been claiming that about 10 to 15 BJP leaders will join their party through 'Operation Hasta' ahead of the Lok Sabha elections. Former Minister and BJP MLA S.T. Somashekar, Shivaram Hebbar, also a former minister and BJP MLA, are all set to join Congress party, according to sources. A large number of supporters of Somashekar, who have joined the Congress, claimed that Somashekar joining the grand-old party is mere a formality.

Hebbar is upset with BJP leadership and he is also likely to join Congress soon, sources said. Both leaders had joined BJP in 2019 through 'Operation Lotus' from Congress.

Former minister V. Somanna, who lost assembly elections from Varuna against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Chamaraanjagar seats is said to be considering switching over to Congress. Somanna is an aspirant of State President's post and he is said to be taking the decision once the party makes a decision in this regard.

Don't believe in false promises of Congress, BJP: KCR tells people



Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday cautioned people against believing false and misleading promises of Congress and BJP. Addressing a public meeting at Medak, he urged people to be alert and exercise their vote carefully in the coming Assembly elections. He advised them to analyse what was the situation in Telangana 10 years ago and what it is today. This was the first public meeting addressed by the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) chief after announcing candidates for 115 out of 119 seats for coming Assembly elections. KCR appealed to people to continue their support to the BRS so that the state can march ahead on the path of development and prosperity. He ridiculed the appeal of Congress to people to give the party a change and reminded people that they have given the chance to Congress for 50 years.

The BRS chief while BJP is saying that electricity meters should be fixed to agriculture pumpsets, the Congress party is saying that three hour electricity is sufficient for farmers. KCR claimed that Telangana lost Rs 25, 000 crore because his government refused to accept the condition laid down by the BJP government at the Centre that meters should be fixed to agriculture pumpsets.

Kharge questions PM Modi's 'clean image, clean politics' remarks

NEWDELHI: Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday attacked the BJP for stealing the popular mandates by bribing and intimidating MLAs after losing the elections.

He termed the existing Madhya Pradesh BJP government as 'illegal'.

Addressing a mammoth public rally in Sagar district of Bundelkhand region of poll-bound Madhya Pradesh, Kharge questioned the claims of "clean image and clean politics" made by the BJP leaders while referring to Karnataka and Madhya

Pradesh where the party (BJP) stole the popular mandate by either bribing or intimidating the MLAs to switch sides.

He accused the BJP of using Central agencies to harass and intimidate its opponents. "So many Congress leaders are being harassed and jailed. After November these people (while referring to BJP leaders), will run away to Mumbai and Delhi for cover as they will be held accountable for their misdeeds," he said.

Kharge said the Congress does not believe in vindictive-



ness, vendetta or intimidation. "We neither intimidate people, nor get intimidated," he said. Referring to the corruption charges, he said, in Karnataka it

was 40 per cent corruption and asked the gathering how much it is in Madhya Pradesh. To this there was a unanimous shout from the crowd, "50 per cent".

He told the gathering that the time has come to remove the "50 per cent corrupt" government in MP.

He also reiterated party's five commitments including the waiving off of the farmers' debt, 100 units of free power, Rs 1, 500 monthly stipend for women, gas cylinder for Rs 500 and old pension scheme for the government employees.

Trinamool's Derek O'Brien & MPs from opposition want more time for discussions on important bills



MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA
New Delhi

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs intends to start discussion on three important Bills at a week's notice. But the opposition camp has objected to the Govt.'s haste in passing the three Bills - 'The Indian Civil Code', 'The Indian Civil Defense Code' and 'The Indian Evidence Act' - that fundamentally change the country's legal system. After taking oath as MP for the third term in Rajya Sabha today, Derek O'Brien approached the Chairman of Rajya Sabha. BJP MP Brijlal, chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee, wanted to start discussion on this bill from this week itself. But opposition MPs, including Trinamool's Derek O'Brien and Digvijaya Singh of the Congress, claimed more time was needed before discussions could begin on such an important bill. In this matter also, the MPs of 'India Alliance' are moving ahead by coordinating among themselves.

The picture of this coordination of the opposition became more clear in the Parliament on the occasion of the birth anniversary of the late Prime

Minister Rajiv Gandhi when Congress leader Sonia Gandhi arrived at the remembrance function on his photo in the Central Hall of the Parliament. On this occasion, Kapil Sibal, who left the Congress and became a Rajya Sabha MP with the support of the SP, was also present. At that time, Sonia called Jawhar Sircar, Derek O'Brien and Kapil Sibal by name and made them sit next to her. According to the sources, after this she discussed these three laws for a long time with Sibal, the law minister of the UPA Government. After being introduced in Parliament, Sibal termed the three bills as 'unconstitutional' and said that these three proposed laws are against the independence of the judiciary, it is clear that the Modi government does not want to maintain democracy in the country. At that time the Congress had also complained that the crime of sedition had not been removed. Union Home Minister Amit Shah is not only bringing it back, but sedition has been defined in such a way that it can be misused arbitrarily. It is clear from Sibal's long conversation with Sonia Gandhi on leaving the Congress that day that the opposition camp is uniting against these three laws.

Akhilesh ready to 'walk extra mile' in seat sharing with Congress



LUCKNOW: Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav has said that he is ready to walk an extra mile when it comes to seat sharing with the Congress because his main concern is to defeat the BJP. Akhilesh, so far, has been maintaining a studied silence on his relationship with the Congress, giving rise to speculations about the fate of INDIA alliance in Uttar Pradesh.

Former UPCC chief Brijlal Khabri's statements that party cadres in the state were not in favour of alliance with SP, further strained the relationship. On July 6, Brijlal Khabri had issued a statement in Lucknow saying that Congress workers in the state were open to alliance with any party but SP in the 2024 polls.

The SP leadership took exception to such a strong statement by the then UPCC chief and that, too, days before the opposition alliance was to get together in Bengaluru for their second meeting on July 19. Thereafter the SP went silent on alliance with the Congress party in UP for the 2024 polls. SP's displeasure over Khabri's statement was apparently noticed by the Congress leadership in Delhi.

Finally, on August 17, Khabri was removed from the post of UPCC chief after a short stint of 10 months. He was replaced by party's regional president Ajay Rai. The development comes days before the opposition alliance is all set to meet again, this time in Mumbai on August 31 where SP and Congress are expected to discuss the final seat-sharing formula in the state for the 2024 polls.

"UP mein Congress ko kya dena hai ye koi bada sawal nahi hai. Bada sawal ye hai ki BJP ko harana hai," Akhilesh Yadav said, responding to a specific query posed to him at a function in Delhi on Saturday.

On his past experience of SP's alliance with the Congress in 2016 assembly polls and with the BSP in 2019 Lok Sabha elections, Akhilesh said that both the alliances were a great learning experience.

"I have always entered into an alliance to defeat the BJP as the prime objective. Samajwadi Party has always decided on the seat-sharing formula with a big heart," he said.

Odisha: Homeguard Controversy Snowballs

ARABINDA MOHAPATRA
Bhubaneswar

The controversy surrounding the alleged torture of a woman Home Guard who lost both her legs under the wheels of a running train after trying to commit suicide out of shame and frustration continues to snowball. This has also become a source of embarrassment for the government led by Naveen Patnaik which has already switched into the election mode.

The home guard Sairindri Sahu (47), a widow, is undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Cuttack. Following her allegations about alleged torture and humiliation at the hands of wife of Talcher-based north central range DIG, Brijesh Kumar Rai the officer has been shifted to the police headquarters in Cuttack. Sahu, who hails from Angul district, had been serving as a Home Guard for the last 19 years. She comes from Odisha's Angul district.

Sahu has alleged that was continuously tortured by the wife of the DIG in whose house



she was working. The DIG denied the allegations but the government shifted him in the interest of a fair probe. The issue has now taken a serious turn with human rights activist, Jayanata Das filing a complaint in this connection with the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC).

In his complaint, Das has demanded stern action against the Police DIG and his wife and a compensation of Rs 30 lakh for the home guard. The petitioner demanded that the compensation amount be sourced from the salary of the police officer. The complaint was filed after the female home guard claimed

that she lost both her legs in a suicide attempt after failing to bear the torture at the hands of Rai's wife. She is undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Cuttack. Sairindri alleged that the wife of DIG Rai asked her to do all kinds of menial work and tortured her in various ways including beating her up and even threatening her to take her job away. She didn't even allow Sairindri to take leave. Describing the sequence of events, the home guard said in her complaint that on a particular day, the DIG's wife pushed her and asked her to go and end her life somewhere when she refused to wash some clothes.

Bomb threat delays departure of Air India UK to Amritsar flight

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

Panic gripped the Shri Guru Ramdas ji International Airport terminal when cleaning staff of Air India UK to Amritsar flight reported Bomb threat to the Airport Authority here on August 21.

According to Punjab Police, a slip was found to cleaning staff in the aircraft toilet at Amritsar Airport and the matter was immediately reported to the Airport Authority which further called the Central Industrial Force (CISF) and the plane was parked in the isolated place forthwith. During thorough rummaging of the plane nothing objectionable was found and clean chit was issued in the evening at 4.30 p.m. The plane which was scheduled to take off back to Birmingham was allowed to move at 6.00 p.m around two hours behind the schedule.

India and its Need of a Uniform Civil Code



ISHANEE SHARMA
India, a diverse nation with a rich tapestry of cultures and religions, has been grappling with the issue of implementing a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) for decades. The UCC is a set of comprehensive laws that seeks to govern personal matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and property rights uniformly for all citizens, irrespective of their religious affiliations. The debate surrounding its implementation has been a contentious one, with proponents advocating for social cohesion and gender equality, while opponents raise concerns about preserving cultural diversity and religious freedom.

The Need for Uniformity:

One of the primary arguments in favor of a UCC is that it would foster a sense of national unity by transcending religious boundaries and promoting a common identity among citizens. The existence of multiple personal laws based on religious practices often leads to conflicting judgments, ambiguity, and injustice. A uniform legal framework would help in streamlining legal processes and ensure that all individuals are treated equally before the law.

Gender Equality and Women's Rights:

Another crucial aspect



of the UCC debate revolves around the issue of gender equality. Presently, different personal laws have varying provisions concerning matters like divorce, maintenance, and inheritance, which can often be discriminatory towards women. Implementing a uniform code could potentially address these discrepancies and empower women with equal rights and opportunities in personal matters.

Secularism and Unity:

India's diversity is its strength, and a Uniform Civil Code can further foster national integration and secular values. Implementing a UCC would signify equal treatment for all citizens, irrespective of their religious affiliations, and reinforce the principle of 'Unity in Diversity.'

Legal Simplification:

The current system of multiple personal laws leads to

legal complexities, disputes, and delays. A Uniform Civil Code would streamline the legal framework, making it more accessible and understandable to the general public. It could also alleviate the burden on courts, promoting a more efficient and transparent judicial process.

Historical Context:

India's personal laws are inherited from its colonial past, where different communities followed their religious laws in matters of personal life. With the nation's independence, the idea of a Uniform Civil Code was debated to ensure equal rights for all citizens irrespective of their religious beliefs.

Social Progression:

A Uniform Civil Code would reflect a progressive society, aligning India's legal framework with modern values and principles. It would address issues such as triple

talaaq and child marriage, paving the way for a more inclusive and forward-thinking nation.

Protecting Minorities:

Critics argue that a UCC might undermine the cultural identity of religious minorities. However, a well-drafted code can safeguard their unique practices while ensuring fundamental rights for all. A UCC should be inclusive and considerate of diverse cultural practices.

Challenges and Concerns:

Despite the potential advantages, implementing a UCC in a country as diverse as India poses significant challenges. The country is home to various religious and cultural communities, each with distinct customs and traditions. Critics argue that imposing a uniform code might infringe upon the right to practice one's religion freely, leading to resistance from certain communities. Preserving cultural diversity and religious pluralism while pursuing social justice becomes a delicate balancing act.

Finding Middle Ground:

A practical approach to the issue involves engaging in extensive consultations with various religious and community leaders, legal experts, and civil society organizations. A consensus-building process that respects the concerns of

all stakeholders is essential. A step-by-step implementation plan, with gradual reforms and adaptations, could be considered to ensure a smoother transition towards a UCC.

Modeling After Successful Practices:

India could learn from other countries that have successfully implemented a Uniform Civil Code. Nations like France, Germany, and Turkey have managed to balance their diverse cultural backgrounds while upholding the principles of equality and secularism. Analyzing their experiences could provide valuable insights for India's unique context.

Conclusion:

India's journey towards a Uniform Civil Code is a complex and multifaceted one. Striking a balance between promoting social cohesion and respecting cultural diversity requires careful deliberation and broad-based consultations. A well-crafted UCC, based on principles of equality and justice, could be a vital step towards a more inclusive and harmonious society. As India continues to evolve, the conversation surrounding a Uniform Civil Code remains an essential part of its ongoing quest for unity in diversity.

Ishanee Sharma is senior advocate, views are personal.

India joins elite space club with lunar landing

At 5.40 p.m. on August 23, a monumental event unfolded 30 km above the moon. The Chandrayaan-3 lander, a marvel of modern engineering, successfully descended to the lunar surface. This historic achievement was met with jubilation across India, marking the nation as the fourth globally to soft-land on the moon and the first in the moon's South Polar region. Such space missions, with their intricate complexities and unpredictabilities, are a testament to human determination and ingenuity. The lessons learned from the unfortunate demise of Chandrayaan-2 in 2019 were meticulously addressed, leading to the upgraded Chandrayaan-3. This iteration boasts redundancies ensuring that if one component fails, another steps in. This achievement positions India at a significant crossroads. As a member of the Artemis Accords, India is now poised to play a pivotal role in the ambitious goal of human lunar exploration by 2025. The recent setback faced by Russia's Luna-25 mission underscores the importance of India's success, hinting at a potential leadership role for India in future lunar endeavors. Chandrayaan-3's success has also broadened India's interplanetary repertoire, showcasing proficiency with orbiters, landers, and rovers. India's current edge in space technology should be leveraged to explore further into the cosmos, emphasizing scientific missions. The Chandrayaan-3 landing also heralds the conclusion of India's second phase of lunar exploration. The upcoming collaboration with the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) for the Lunar Polar Exploration (LUPEX) mission is eagerly anticipated. This mission will further study the moon's South Pole, utilizing ISRO's landing system developed for Chandrayaan-2 and -3. Looking ahead, ISRO's trajectory is clear. The organization is set to delve into quantum communications, human space flight, planetary habitation, and more. The private sector's involvement will be instrumental in driving innovation and expanding horizons. With Chandrayaan-3's success, ISRO is poised to lead the next era of space exploration. As India celebrates this lunar triumph, the future looks brighter than ever.

LETTERBOX

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The only difference between success and failure is the ability to take action

Alexander Graham Bell

THE FINANCIAL WORLD

RNI NO. CHAENG/2001/03736

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: PLOT NO-F5, IT PARK, CHANDIGARH CHANDIGARH 160101; PHONE: 9888040061

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



CAPTAIN A. (MOHAN) RANGANATHAN SAYS INDIA'S AIRLINE CREW RULES RANK POORLY, CAUSING FATIGUE GLOBALLY

Flying with pilot fatigue



On October 12, 1976, an Indian Airlines Caravelle flight from Bombay to Madras (IC 171) crashed shortly after take-off at Bombay and while attempting an emergency landing, killing all 95 passengers on board. An engine had caught fire. Among the last words of Captain K.D. Gupta, the commander, picked up by the cockpit voice recorder was that he "was feeling sleepy". He had done the early morning Boeing departure to Delhi and back, spent the whole day in office and opted to operate the delayed Caravelle flight. The ill-fated plane was to operate the flight after the authorities "had made two earlier futile attempts to fly the passengers to Madras" on a Boeing flight. One of the Boeings had had a bird hit and the other had a snag. Passengers were also discontented.

Some of the operating procedures on the Caravelle were different from those on a Boeing, which was highlighted in the court inquiry. Following the crash, one of the quick regulator actions was to stop pilots operating two types of aircraft. The pilots on the Caravelle flight, Captain Gupta and co-pilot Captain K.L. Pershad/Prasad, had endorsements on their licences to fly the Boeing and the Caravelle.

Recent crew incidents

In the past weeks, there have been reports of some Indian pilots who passed away due to cardiac arrest. One of them was a pilot of Indian origin flying for an airline in West Asia. Another was a pilot employed in a major private airline in India who collapsed and died at the boarding gate in Nagpur just before his flight. The third incident involved a pilot on a Latin American airline flight from Miami to Santiago, Chile, who collapsed on the flight and where the co-pilot had to land the aircraft. Ten years ago, another Indian pilot passed away as he stepped out of a simulator after training pilots.

Do airline managements and the aviation regulator in India understand the importance of fatigue and sleep deprivation? Are profits and passenger numbers the only important factor

in the airline business? Did not the loss of over 150 lives in the Air India Express crash (IX 812) at Mangaluru in May 2010 stir the conscience of all those involved? The Supreme Court of India, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and airlines? India has one of the worst sets of rules on Flight and Duty Time Limitations and rest periods. The people who drafted and implemented these rules have no clue about the risks involved. India's DGCA and airlines would do well to read through and understand the chapter, "Pilot fatigue and the regulation of airline schedules in post-war Britain" in the publication, *Balancing the Self*.

On fatigue and stress

In the examples given, only one involved death in the cockpit on a passenger flight. Fortunately, the copilot was experienced and well trained to take over and bring the aircraft to a safe landing. The death of the pilot in Nagpur, just before commencing a multi-sector flight, should be a wake-up call. There are many questions to be answered. One of them is the experience level and also the competence of the copilot if there is a serious issue involving the crew during flight.

Airlines will claim that all their pilots are well trained and meet the minimum standards. Having been a pilot for over 40 years, I have observed how proficiency checks are manipulated and where training is a mere 'box-ticking exercise'. If one adds to this deficiencies highlighted in the International Civil Aviation Organization's Annex 14 Volume I 'Standards for Runways and airfields', we are living in a dangerous situation. Airlines the world over have a minimum total cockpit time experience for both pilots put together, with specific hours for narrowbody aircraft and widebody aircraft, respectively. Can the DGCA and airlines in India meet these numbers?

I would like to highlight a phrase used by Real Levasseur, the lead Investigator of the Air France (AF358) overrun incident at Toronto airport, Canada, in August 2005. He said, "Humans and Humans. They are not machines." When are the MoCA, the DGCA and airlines going to wake up to that wisdom? Duty time for crew is not a 'one size fits all' matter. The fatigue level of a human differs at different times of the day and the circadian low comes into play in the hours that fall from midnight to sunrise. The number of landings a pilot performs during his duty period adds to the fatigue level.

More than 60 years ago, a scientific study proved that the stress level during an approach to land, especially in adverse weather conditions, can raise the heart level to more than 240 beats per minute. The adrenal glands kick in and a body faces severe sugar depletion. Analysis of accidents involving highly experienced crew identified this as a cause. Sleep deprivation and a micro-sleep condition for between five to 15 seconds during the approach and landing phase have also been identified as a cause for accidents. The subject is an urgent matter to be addressed before precious lives are lost.

A different category of staff

Pilots are not in the same work category as airline ground staff, including management staff. Those on ground can avail two days off every week for 52 weeks (a year) in addition to public holidays and annual leave. Flying crew in India on the other hand, get one day off in a week and just their annual leave. 'Safe airlines' worldwide provide at least two days off every week and proper rest periods between flights for the body clock to unwind. DGCA regulations lay down the absolute minimum. Nothing prevents an airline from providing more rest days if their interest in safety and the human factor of the flight crew is to be addressed.

The fatal accident at Mangaluru and Kozhikode (August 2020) had identified another important factor. The pilots were taking medications. This is not confined to a few. With a kind of rostering where crew do not have sufficient time at home but are away from it for six days a week, self-medication becomes a norm. Without many being aware of side-effects, these can induce other conditions.

Having inquiries without implementing their findings will not save lives. The sooner the system in India understands this the better it will be for safety.

Captain A. (Mohan) Ranganathan is a former airline instructor pilot and aviation safety adviser. He is also a former member of the Civil Aviation Safety Advisory Council (CASAC), India. Views are personal



TIKENDER SINGH PANWAR BELIEVES INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA HAS NOT BEEN CLIMATE SMART

Shimla is crumbling, and there are reasons for it

Rains have recently wreaked havoc in Himachal Pradesh, particularly Shimla. Heavy precipitation in the Summer Hill area of the State capital resulted in flash floods and the collapse of a temple which claimed over 15 lives. A landslide led to the destruction of many buildings in Krishnanagar area and left two dead. Landslides around Shimla have damaged roads and brought life to a standstill.

This is not unprecedented. The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report states that the coastal areas and the Himalayas are poised to experience a rise in extreme climate events and a shift in rainfall patterns. Consequently, the developmental strategies for the Himalayan region should prioritise climate resilience instead of solely pursuing unguided infrastructure expansion.

Regrettably, in Shimla, infrastructure development has not been climate smart. An analysis of several incidents reveals a pattern. In Summer Hill, the temple was constructed within a gorge. This was also the location of a water supply system for Totu, a suburb of Shimla. In Krishnanagar, houses were erected atop water bauris (natural water springs). When structures come up in areas closely linked to a water source, they become susceptible to disasters. There are around 25 major springs and over 100 water bauris in Shimla.

The shift in building strategies began after the 1990s, facilitated by the advent of reinforced cement concrete. A prime example of this transformation is the New



Shimla region, which was known for paddy cultivation. This area spans numerous water bodies. Empowered by the strength of reinforced cement concrete, people believed that water flow could be controlled and directed, leading to deliberate human settlements in water spaces, including ravines. Two significant development projects have been established directly atop substantial water springs and nallahs (water channels): the Himachal Pradesh High Court Lawyers Chambers and the new Indra Gandhi Medical College and Hospital building. They have been constructed on waterways that remain perennial, but can become tumultuous during the monsoon season.

The recent heavy precipitation at Summer Hill raises concerns about the fate of such substantial infrastructure funded by public resources. Typically, matters related to land

use should be addressed within a comprehensive development plan, often referred to as the city's master plan. However, Shimla has been run with an interim development plan since 1979. Adding to this complexity, the planning for Shimla is not overseen by the elected city government. Instead, it falls under the jurisdiction of a parastatal, namely the town and country planning department, which operates without any democratic oversight and relies heavily on computer-simulated plans, often guided by inputs from large technological consultancy firms.

Currently, the Shimla Development Plan (SDP) is pending before the Supreme Court. One critical oversight of the current SDP is the absence of a climate action plan that should ideally precede it. The existing SDP appears to be primarily focused on creating urban spaces with designations

like 'core' and 'open heritage'; yet it lacks the necessary emphasis on addressing climate-related challenges.

What the SDP does necessitate is a zonal and sub-zonal planning approach, which is important in Shimla, a region with unique geographical features. It is imperative that zones and sub-zones are meticulously defined based on comprehensive geological data and thorough studies. Subsequently, this information should guide the determination of the floor area ratio. The zoning strategy should dictate the regions where the city cannot support further settlements. Conversely, areas with robust rock foundations should be permitted to undergo vertical expansion, but all decisions should be rooted in solid geological and structural foundations. This approach aims to strike a balance between urban development and the preservation of the city's unique geological features.

The priority now should be to initiate comprehensive water contouring, which can be accomplished through a combination of satellite imagery and active participation from the community. Upon achieving this, the rallying cry of Shimla's citizens should resonate with the 'no means no' slogan, which is prevalent in the Sutlej valley.

Tikender Singh Panwar is an author, former directly elected Deputy Mayor of Shimla, and an urban practitioner. He is also a senior Fellow with the Impact and Policy Research Institute (IMPR), Delhi

BOOKS: REVIEW

Book offers a deep dive into the world of rose breeding

"Roses in the Fire of Spring" is not just a book about roses; it's a journey through the passionate world of the Viraraghavans, India's leading rosarians. The narrative takes readers through the transformation of a once "near-vertical wilderness" into the enchanting Hillview garden in Kodaikanal. The garden, which stands as a testament to dedication and love for nature, is a reflection of the couple's commitment to the world of roses.

Chapter 22, 'In the Shadow of Anamudi: Our Garden in the Hills', serves as a captivating entry point. Readers are transported to the Viraraghavans' garden, which over the decades has transformed from a rocky terrain to a blooming paradise, home to a myriad of rose hybrids and rhododendron collections.

M.S. 'Viru' Viraraghavan's sci-

entific approach to rose breeding, combined with his wife Girija's humanities background, creates a harmonious blend of technical expertise and artistic touch. Their combined efforts have resulted in the creation of 118 unique roses, each with its own story. The roses, with names like Chantal's Kolam, Ahimsa, and E. K. Janaki Ammal, are not just flowers but symbols of their lifelong dedication.

The book beautifully intertwines personal anecdotes with technical details. Viru's early interest in roses, influenced by his father and his background in chemistry, is heartwarming. Girija's transformation from someone who "never gave Nature a thought" to becoming an integral part of the rose-breeding journey is both surprising and inspiring.

The narrative is not just about the couple's achievements but also pays homage to pioneers in the

One of the most striking aspects of the book is the Viraraghavans' commitment to the environment.

field. Their acknowledgment of other rosarians and their international collaborations highlight their humility and the global nature of their work.

One of the most striking aspects of the book is the Viraraghavans' commitment to the environment. Their focus on creating better roses for warmer climates is timely and crucial. Their discovery of *Rosa chinophylla* and *Rosa gigantea*, and their efforts in hybrid creation, are significant contributions to the world of horticulture.

However, what truly sets this



Roses in the Fire of Spring
By M.S. Viraraghavan and Girija Viraraghavan
Running Head Books
444 pages, Rs 2,499

book apart is the Viraraghavans' philosophy. Their emphasis on celebrating diversity and naturalness in rose breeding is a refreshing perspective in a world driven by commercial interests. Their decision to share their hybrids freely, without commercializing their passion, speaks volumes about their character and love for the rose community.

While the book is described as a "part-travelogue and memoir", it offers so much more. It's an encyclopedia for rose enthusiasts, a love story for romantics, and a testament to perseverance for everyone else.

Beyond the technicalities and the art of rose breeding, the book offers readers a profound understanding

of the relationship between humans and nature. The Viraraghavans' journey is a testament to the idea that when we work in harmony with nature, the results can be nothing short of magical. Their garden, Hillview, is not just a collection of roses; it's a living, breathing entity that tells stories of trials, tribulations, and triumphs. Each corner of the garden, each rose, has a tale to tell, and the authors have masterfully woven these tales into the narrative, making readers feel as if they are walking alongside them in their garden.

The book also delves deep into the cultural and historical significance of roses. Throughout history, roses have been symbols of love, beauty, war, and politics. The Viraraghavans, through their extensive research and travels, shed light on the rose's journey across civilizations and its impact on art, literature, and society. They beautifully illustrate how this simple flower has been a muse for poets, a tool for lovers, and a symbol of power for rulers. This historical and cultural exploration adds depth to the narrative, making it more than just a book about gardening.

GST rate on insurance should be brought down: Tapan Singhel

CHANDIGARH: Tapan Singhel, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, one of the country's leading private companies in the general insurance business, believes that the Central Government should consider bringing down the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on life and health insurance. Rates should be cut which will be beneficial not only for the companies of this sector but also for the general public.

Singhel is also Chairman of CII National Committee on Insurance and Pensions and Board Member of Institute of Insurance and Risk Management. In a press conference here today, Singhel said that at present the GST rate on life and health insurance is 18 percent which is high and needs to be cut. He informed that the general insurance sector has demanded

a reduction in this rate from the Central Government and the GST Council. Asked what could be a reasonable rate, he said there are 12 more slabs below the 18 per cent. Any such reduction will be in the interest of expansion of insurance coverage and in general public in particular and also because insurance does not come under the ambit of luxury.

According to him, the insurance sector has an important contribution in the development of the country. He claimed that 40 per cent of the country's development expenditure comes from the insurance sector. Similarly, he says that due to lack of health insurance, about 10 crore people in the country go below the poverty line every year because due to any serious illness and lack of health insurance, people have to sell their houses, jewelry etc. But if



there is health insurance, then the insurance companies can prove to be helpful in this difficult time.

He said that in the same way crop insurance has also proved beneficial for the farmers. In case of crop loss, the farmers are compensated with the sum insured. The effect of this has been that wherever farmers have

taken crop insurance, there has been a decline in the incidents of farmer suicides.

On the question regarding insurance claims, he said that in case of an accident of the vehicle, if the insurance holder takes photographs of the vehicle and sends it to the company, then he gets his claim amount in just 20 minutes. But this is possible

in a situation where there is no loss of life or injury etc. He said that artificial intelligence is proving to be very helpful in settlement of claims.

On the question of business expansion, Tapan Singhel said that after strengthening its presence in metros, tier 2 and 3 towns, the company is focusing on increasing the reach of its products to the rural parts of the country and in this regard, in the next one to one and a half years by installing at least 1000 hub and spoke. He said that the market share of the company in the total general insurance business of the country is about 8.5 percent and its year-on-year growth rate is about 35 percent. The company currently has presence in about one thousand cities and towns in the country and has about one lakh insurance agents and distributors and brokers.

MSMEs Produced 55,000 Aerospace Components For Chandrayaan-3

NEW DELHI: Bhubaneswar Tool Room under the Ministry of MSME manufactured about 54,000 aero-space components of 437 types for the Chandrayaan-3 mission, said Union Minister for MSME Narayan Rane on Wednesday.

Congratulating the countrymen and the entire ISRO team on the successful landing of Chandrayaan-3 through a tweet, he highlighted the contribution of MSME sector in this mission. He said that along with the scientists of the country, the Ministry of MSME has also contributed significantly in realizing the dream of Chandrayaan-3.

The Union Minister informed that IDEMI Mumbai, another institute under the Ministry, also played an important role in manufacturing of parts for Chandrayaan-3.

He said that the success of this mission will prove beneficial for India as well as for



the whole world.

"From Charkha to Chandrayan, today the MSME sector is everywhere, playing a crucial role in increasing the production capacity of the country," he said.

Thanking the scientists, he said that India's history in the space sector has been exceptional. MSME sector will surely play a crucial role in the

space missions to be launched in the future as well, he added.

With the mission's success, India has become the first country to land a spacecraft in uncharted territory near the lunar south pole.

India is the fourth country in history to complete a soft landing on the Moon after the United States, the Soviet Union and China.

India scales to 11th place in global direct selling ranking 2022

FW DESK
New Delhi

Despite a dip in global retail sales, the direct selling industry in India rose one notch and now stands at the 11th place on global ranking. India registered retail sales of over \$3.23 billion in 2022, as per the latest report released by the World Federation of Direct Selling Association (WFDSA).

The Indian market attained highest Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of over 13.3 percent during the last three years on a constant dollar basis. This is all the more impressive, given that only three of the global top 10 direct sellers, are in Indian market.

The report indicates that India, while at 11th place in the global rankings, maintained 6th place in the Asia-Pacific region, with Korea among the top countries, followed by China, Japan, Malaysia and Taiwan.

The report highlights that global retail sales took a hit and decreased by 15 percent to \$172.8 billion during the year from \$175.5 billion in 2021. However, it managed to register a CAGR of 0.9 percent from 2019 to 2022. Despite the



blip, sales have surpassed the pre-pandemic level of \$168.17 billion in 2019 and \$172.14 billion in 2020, the first year of the pandemic. Beating the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic during the first quarter of the year, the Indian market has shown tremendous resilience and sustainability and could realize annualized growth of over 5.4 percent during the last year, which could be construed as marginally good, the report says. During the period, the United States continued to lead the ranking in the global direct selling industry with sales of \$40.52 billion, while reporting a negative YOY growth of five percent.

Overall, global retail sales demonstrated resilience and positive growth during the mentioned period, showcasing the ability of the industry to adapt and flourish even amidst challenging circumstances, the report concludes.

India is emerging as a world leader in teaching & framing of robotics in healthcare : Vandana Talwar

NEW DELHI: "The Ayushman Bharat Digital mission will bridge the existing gap among different stakeholders of healthcare ecosystem through digital highways. The mission has achieved a significant milestone by issuing more than 50 lakh digital tokens for queue less OPD registrations. AI is poised to reshape healthcare, ML algorithms can analyse massive amounts of medical data to aid early detection and treatment of disease, and they can also optimise hospital operations and even assist in surgical procedures. India is emerging as a world leader in teaching and framing of robotics in healthcare. A Robotic renal transplant conducted in Safdarjung Hospital was shown live to 52 medical colleges and 20 different countries on the NFC portal recently. We are committed to improving the quality of healthcare to meet the Health related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals that India aims to achieve Universal Health Coverage by 2023," said Dr. Vandana Talwar, Medical Superintendent, VMMC & Safdarjung Hospital, Ministry of Health & Family



Welfare, Govt. of India while speaking at the 2nd Healthcare Summit and Awards organised by ASSOCHAM.

"The past few decades has witnessed enormous medical advancements in therapeutic and diagnostics that has revolutionised diagnosis, treatment and prevention of diseases. From the invention of penicillin to the development of gene therapy for amelioration of previously untreatable genetic disorders, innovation has been the keystone for transforming medical care for the masses. Advances in genome sequencing technology has made personalised medicines a reality. Today, technological advancement has enabled a policy of creating

a new digital ecosystem that not only enhances accessibility and efficiency of healthcare delivery but also made it more cost effective and paves the way for universal health coverage in India that is inclusive, timely and safe. PPP is the next growth catalyst for the healthcare industry in India and is a win-win situation for all stakeholders." She said.

"Innovations and sustainable solutions is the future of healthcare which occupies a pivotal role in the development of India today. The future belongs to a society investing in healthcare. As we navigate the 21st century, we are in the brink of a new era in healthcare driven by ground breaking innovations and a pressing need for sustainable solutions. Healthcare systems around the world generate a significant footprint from energy intensive equipment's to disposal of single use plastics among others. As we look into the future, the imperative for sustainable solution becomes clearer. We must design healthcare infrastructure that minimises environmental impacts, reduces waste through recycling and reuse and adopt renewable energy sources for a more sustainable healthcare

system. The health of our planet and wellbeing of its inhabitants are intrinsically connected. The strides we make in healthcare innovation will significantly impact the quality of healthcare in the future generations to come." She added.

Delivering a special address at the Summit, Prof. (Dr.) Rajinder K Dhamija, Director, Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences (IHBAS), Government of NCT of Delhi said, "We have achieved a lot in the last 75 years. We are now a hub of vaccination industry providing 60 percent of all vaccinations in the world. We also provide 40 percent of all generics for the US and 25 percent of all generics in the UK and two-thirds of all anti-viral drugs in the world comes from India. The healthcare industry is worth \$50 billion and growing at a fast pace. India spends 4-5% of GDP on health which is comparatively lower than countries like Australia at 12% and Switzerland at 17% of GDP. We need to increase our spending on health. Our per-capita expenditure on health has increased over the past 10 years and the insurance sector is coming in a big way and so is digital health.

Trident marks a new era with revamped packaging of Copier & launch of 'My Choice' stationery products



KULBIR SINGH KALSI
Chandigarh

Trident, one of the largest manufacturers of wheat-straw based paper, proudly announced the successful run of its much-anticipated Trident Associate Meet 2023- Partners in Progress. This year's event, at Andaz Aerocity, New Delhi witnessed the convergence of Trident's dynamic associates for a remarkable occasion filled with innovation, engagement, and insightful discourse.

"We are proud to launch the Trident's new packaging of copier range, a transformational step after almost half a decade. The refreshed packaging design redefines the company's commitment to sustainability, reflecting

continued pursuit of excellence", said Rajinder Gupta, Chairman, Trident Group.

The unveiling ceremony showcased the brand's dedication to staying ahead in contributing to the planet and functionality, resonating with the evolving preferences of the market. The brand introduced an array of promotional schemes for its esteemed notebook brand, <My Choice>. These schemes promise to captivate retailers and distributors with irresistible offers, reaffirming the brand's dedication to providing value and quality in every product.

The event also hosted a thought-provoking panel discussion on the New Education Policy 2024- Impact on paper and publication landscape.

MSME Ministry Initiates Country-wide Udyam Registration Drive



NEW DELHI: The Ministry of MSME has launched Udyam registration drive all over the country to register MSMEs on the Udyam portal.

This will help any Micro, Small or Medium Enterprise (MSMEs) in becoming eligible for availing benefits of schemes/ Programmes of this Ministry.

A permanent registration number will be given after registration and after completion of the process of registration, a certificate will be issued online.

This certificate will have a dynamic QR Code from which the web page on our Portal and details about the enterprise can be accessed.

Registration Process is totally free. No Costs or Fees are to be paid to anyone.

MSME registration process is fully online, paperless and based on self-declaration.

No documents or proof are required to be uploaded for registering an MSME and only Aadhaar Number will be enough for registration.

PAN & GST linked details on investment and turnover of enterprises will be taken automatically from Government data bases.

Hindustan Zinc will be among the best companies in world: Chairperson

FW DESK
New Delhi

Hindustan Zinc will ramp up production of zinc - that is used in batteries to medicines - to 1.5 million tonnes, chairperson Priya Agarwal Hebbar said on Thursday as she looked to make India's largest zinc producer as one of the best firms in the world.

Speaking at the company's annual shareholders meeting, she said when the economic history of 21st century India is written, the turnaround story of Hindustan Zinc will have a



chapter of its own.

Incorporated as a public sector firm in 1996, the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led NDA government in August 2002 sold a controlling stake in the firm to Vedanta

group firm Sterlite Industries for around Rs 769 crore.

Hindustan Zinc is today the second largest zinc-lead miner in the world after Swiss firm Glencore and the fourth largest

zinc-lead smelter globally. It has now also broken into the top 10 list of silver producers in the world.

The profitability has grown manifold and so has its production capacity of zinc, lead and silver - from 0.2 million tonnes per annum in 2002 to 1.1 million tonnes.

"And we are not done yet. We remain hungry, we are capable, and we are motivated. Hindustan Zinc is a leader in the industry in India. One day, we will also be among the best companies in the world," she said.

Karnataka Govt inks MoU with Kaynes to Boost Electronic Manufacturing in State

BENGALURU: The Karnataka government has entered into an agreement with the Kaynes Technology India to promote electronics manufacturing in state. This collaboration positions Kaynes Technology as the anchor of the Electronics System Design and Manufacturing (ESDM) Semiconductor ecosystem in Mysuru.

The agreement is aimed at elevating Mysuru's global presence in the tech arena. The MoU is set to propel Karnataka to



the forefront of OSAT and PCB manufacturing, with a substantial investment of Rs 3,750 crore, creating approximately 3,200 job opportunities. Under this agreement, Kaynes Semicon

Private Limited will lead the establishment of a Semiconductor Assembly and testing (OSAT) facility. At the same time, Kaynes Circuits India Private Limited will spearhead the setup of a Printed Circuit Board (PCB) manufacturing plant specialising in complex multi-layered boards. The company's shares were up by 7.75 per cent after the company reported a partnership with the Karnataka Electronics, IT, and BT Departments, reported The Hindu Businessline.

Shaping future trends, Cosmo Films showcases new & innovative products at domestic and international exhibitions

FW DESK
New Delhi

Cosmo Films, a global leader in speciality films has announced its participation in four prominent trade shows in the label and packaging industry. The company will exhibit at Label Expo, Brussels from 11-14 September 2023, Pack Expo, Las Vegas from 11-13 September 2023, ANUTECH, Mumbai from 7-9 September 2023, and IICE, Kolkata from 13-15 September 2023 highlighting its latest product offerings and industry-leading innovations.

These exhibitions provide a platform for Cosmo Films to display its innovative solutions that are reshaping the packaging industry. With a focus on sustainability and cutting-edge advancements, Cosmo Films will showcase how its products are creating a global impact across various sectors.

Sharing his thoughts on the same, Pankaj Poddar, Group CEO, Cosmo First Limited said,



"As pioneers of innovation, we have engineered high-quality and sustainable products to meet the evolving needs of our clients. Such events hold immense significance, as it offers us a platform to engage with customers and industry leaders in these regions and widen our consumer base. This underscores our commitment to delivering industry-first and environmentally conscious solu-

tions to our esteemed clientele."

Cosmo Films will showcase its extensive range of speciality packaging, label, lamination, synthetic paper, promotional films and industrial films along with Cosmo Plastech (Rigid Containers) and Cosmo Sunshield (Window Films) for various applications in these exhibitions. During the exhibition, Cosmo Films' team of professionals will be present to discuss personalized packaging alternatives and address inquiries from visitors and delegates. The company aims to leverage these exhibitions to foster new collaborations and partnerships, exchange industry knowledge, and gain a deeper understanding of customers' requirements to deliver the most effective and innovative packaging solutions. With a strong focus on innovation, quality, and sustainability, Cosmo Films has emerged as a preferred partner for several leading brands across the globe.

Canon India spearheads transformation in Annadodi village as part of its 'Adopt a Village' initiative

ARUN KUMAR RAO
Bengaluru

Marking its commitment towards community development, Canon India celebrated three years of successful involvement in its sixth adopted village, at Annadodi in Karnataka, under its flagship CSR initiative, 'Adopt a Village'. Through its 4Es CSR policy, Canon India is continuously working towards building self-reliance and creating sustainable impact in the village across four key areas - Education, Eye Care, Environment and Empowerment, along with making significant infrastructure developments.

The flagship 'Adopt a Village' initiative was launched in 2012, through which Canon India undertakes the task of overall development of the villages across North, East, West, and South India for a certain period for the holistic development of the society.



At present, Canon India has a total of four adopted villages which includes Nandrapur Bass in Haryana, Parivali in Maharashtra, Annadodi in Karnataka and Kalyanpur in Kolkata.

Manabu Yamazaki, President & CEO, Canon India visited the village to map the progress and interact with the community members. Speaking on the third-year milestone, he said, "At Canon India, we believe that investing in the holistic development of villages is an important cornerstone towards building a self-reliant nation. Empowering villages with essential skills, education, and access to basic necessities not only uplifts their lives but also strengthens our collective future."

Instagram introduces more transparency measures for European users

Meta-owned Instagram on Tuesday introduced additional transparency measures and user options for European users, as the Digital Services Act (DSA) comes into effect later this month.

The users will now be able to access features like Reels, Stories, and Search on Facebook and Instagram without seeing content that's been ranked by Meta's recommendation algorithms, according to Nick Clegg, President, Global Affairs at Meta.

"We're now giving our European community the option to view and discover content on Reels, Stories, Search and other parts of Facebook and Instagram that is not ranked by Meta using these systems," said Clegg.

For example, on Facebook and Instagram, users will have the option to view Stories and Reels only from people they follow, ranked in chronological order, newest to oldest.

"They will also be able to view Search results based only on the words they enter, rather than personalised specifically to them based on their previous activity and personal interests," Meta said in a blog post.

Later this month, the European Union's DSA, one of the most comprehensive pieces of internet regulation, will begin to fully apply to Facebook, Instagram and a number of other tech platforms and services.

RBI issues fresh norms for personal loans

MUMBAI: The Reserve Bank last week asked banks to provide fixed interest rate option to individual borrowers and directed the lenders to levy only reasonable penalty charges in case of default in EMI payments.

The two decisions are expected to provide a relief to the borrowers amid rising interest rates and most of the retail loans being on floating rates now. In a directive to banks and NBFCs, including housing finance companies, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said that several consumer grievances have been received in relation to elongation of loan tenor or increase in EMI amount with regard to EMI-based floating rate personal loans, without proper communication or consent of the borrowers.

Interest rates have risen since May last year as the central bank hiked the repo rate to tame high



inflation. As a result of 250 basis points increase in the repo rate from May 2022 till February this year, a large number of borrowers are facing negative amortisation, wherein the Equated Monthly Instalment (EMI) works out to be less than the interest obligation, resulting in persistent increase of the principal amount.

"At the time of reset of interest rates, REs (Regulated Entities) shall provide the option to the

borrowers to switch over to a fixed rate as per their board approved policy," as per the notification on "Reset of Floating Interest Rate on EMI based Personal Loans".

The policy, inter alia, should also specify the number of times a borrower will be allowed to switch the interest rate system during the tenor of the loan, the RBI said.

At the time of sanction, the central bank said REs should

clearly communicate to the borrowers about the possible impact of change in benchmark interest rate on the loan leading to changes in EMI and/or tenor or both. "Subsequently, any increase in the EMI/ tenor or both on account of the above shall be communicated to the borrower immediately through appropriate channels," the RBI said. Banks and NBFCs have been asked to ensure compliance of the instructions for the existing as well as new loans by December 31, 2023.

In a notification on 'Fair Lending Practice - Penal Charges in Loan Accounts', the RBI said it has been observed that many REs use penal rates of interest, over and above the applicable interest rates, in case of defaults/non-compliance by the borrower with the terms on which credit facilities were sanctioned.

The intent of levying penal

interest/charges is essentially to inculcate a sense of credit discipline and such charges are not meant to be used as a revenue enhancement tool over and above the contracted rate of interest, the central bank noted. However, supervisory reviews have indicated divergent practices amongst the REs with regard to levy of penal interest/charges leading to customer grievances and disputes, the RBI said. "Penalty, if charged, for non-compliance of material terms and conditions of loan contract by the borrower shall be treated as 'penal charges' and shall not be levied in the form of 'penal interest' that is added to the rate of interest charged on the advances," it said.

Also, the RBI said there should be no capitalisation of penal charges, which means that no further interest can be computed on such charges.

Nifty, Sensex extend losing streak for 5th week

MUMBAI: Swayed by global markets, Indian equities opened lower and witnessed a choppy session on Friday, to close the day with a cut of 121 points for Nifty while Sensex fell by 365 points.

Nifty opened gap down and remained in the negative territory throughout the session to close with a loss of 121 points (-0.6 per cent) at 19,265, while the Sensex fell 365.83 points to settle at 64,886.51. This meant Nifty and Sensex extended their losing streak for the fifth week, losing -2.43 per cent and -2.7 per cent, respectively, in the past five weeks of correction, said Omkar Kamtekar, Research Analyst, Bonanza Portfolio. The boarder markets also tumbled on Friday, indicating signs of a deeper weakness in the overall market sentiment.

All the sectoral indices closed in the red, with NIFTY PSU index being the top loser - down 1.51 per



cent - followed by NIFTY Realty (-1.31 per cent) and NIFTY Metal (-1.26 per cent), Kamtekar said. Jio Financial Services (JFS) ended its losing streak, closing with a minor gain of 0.49 per cent as it saw massive volume-based buying at lower levels. Further, the exclusion of JFS from Sensex has been deferred to September 1. The Bajaj twins, i.e., Bajaj Finance and Bajaj Finserv, were among the top gainers as Nomura

initiated a Buy call on Bajaj Finance with a price target of Rs 8,700. The top gainers for Nifty were Bajaj Finance, Asian Paints and Bajaj Finserv, and the top losers were Dr. Reddy's, Adani Ports and JSW Steel, he said. The Nifty Midcap Index underperformed the Nifty with a large margin by falling 0.82 per cent in Friday's session, said Devarsh Vakil, Deputy Head of Retail Research at HDFC Securities.

Increase Overdues Limit of MSMEs From 90 To 180 Days: PHDCCI



NEW DELHI: Industry body PHDCCI has submitted several recommendations on issues related to the housing sector, banking, and foreign trade to RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das.

During the meeting, the industry body recommended that the 90 days limit fixed by RBI for classifying over dues of MSMEs should be increased to 180 days so that they are not constrained to divert their working capital towards servicing their loan instalments and clearing their over dues at the cost of their normal business operations. A delegation of PHDCCI led by its president Saket Dalmia made a strong case for lowering housing sector interest rates to stimulate growth. "Lower rates can invigorate investments, bolster consumption, enhance competitiveness, and aid industries facing headwinds," it said. "While we understand and appreciate the efforts of the Reserve Bank of India in stabilizing the economy and ensuring liquidity, we believe that a reduction in interest rates at this juncture would provide a much-needed boost to our industry," the industry body said. The chamber also highlighted several issues related to the banking sector, including the rectification of export realization purpose codes and the protection of GST input benefits.

India poised to become third largest global economy says President Murmu

DOMINICK RODRIGUES Panjim

The Indian President Droupadi Murmu said that the approach of the world towards India has changed, even as the country has become the fifth largest economy in the world and is poised to become the third largest economy.

"With the mantra of 'One Earth, One Family, One Future' in collaboration with G-20 countries, India is striving to find collective solutions to the present global challenges," she said, adding "We have the right opportunity to showcase India's potential and culture and we should take full advantage of this opportunity." She also expressed happiness at Goa's performance on the parameters of the "Sustainable Development Goals," while also describing the State as being among the leading states of the country in many areas of development.

The President was speaking at a civic reception in Goa, where she distributed "Sanad" under the Forest Rights Act to some beneficiaries on the occasion.



Praising the people of Goa for their generosity and hospitality, she said this characteristic of the people of Goa -- along with the beaches and the natural beauty of the Western Ghats -- plays an important part in attracting tourists.

Describing the rich forest cover as a priceless natural asset of Goa that needed to be conserved, she said the dense forests of the Western Ghats are the natural habitat of many wild animals and preservation of this natural heritage would give an impetus to Goa's sustainable development.

She also emphasized that tribals and other forest dwellers be made partners in development while also preserving their traditions.

The President said that apart from being a tourist hotspot, Goa is also an important centre for education, trade & commerce, industry, technology and naval defence. Highlighting Goa's cosmopolitan culture as having a tradition of gender equality, the President expressed happiness at noting the number of girl students in Goa's higher educational institutions being more than 60 per cent.

Collective responsibility of regulators and market players to convert savers into investors : SEBI

FW DESK New Delhi

"Investors are the backbone of the entire financial system. In India, we all are good savers but a few steps behind as investors. It is the collective responsibility of the regulator, intermediaries and issuing companies to educate the savers and convert them into investors," said V S Sundaresan, Executive Director, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) while speaking at the 5th National Conference on Investors protection, education and awareness organised by ASSOCHAM.

"SEBI as a regulator must provide a level playing field for the Issuers, Intermediaries and investors. The last few years has seen a definite move from savings to investing but the pace is slow. We need to speed things up for the economy to grow and become a developed nation. The adoption of technology and systemic improvements many of the earlier existing problems has been eliminated. Adoption of technology is seven to eight times faster than the global average. The number of investors coming into the system has increased because they have realised that the pro-



cess is reliable, sustainable and beneficial. Because of increased retail investors and institutional investments our dependence on FPI's to sustain market momentum has decreased comparatively. The increased participation of Indian institutional investors has made the economy more resilient," he said.

"The type of products available in the system for an investor to choose from has grown. An investor can now choose an instrument as per his risk appetite. Awareness and education is important as it enables us to protect ourselves. We need to constantly engage with market participants and spread awareness. Without the confidence of investors, the market will not be able to sustain for the long run. The investor base is heavily skewed with a majority of investors constituting

Congress questions withdrawal of BOB's auction notice for Sunny Deol's bungalow



NEW DELHI: Congress leader Jai Ram Ramesh on Monday taunted the BJP government at the Centre over withdrawal of bank notice to e-auction actor-turned-politician Sunny Deol's Juhu residence saying "wonder who triggered these technical reasons".

Taking to his social media handle X, formerly Twitter, the party's general secretary stated, "Yesterday afternoon the nation got to know that Bank of Baroda had put up the Juhu residence of BJP MP Sunny Deol for e-auction since he has not paid up Rs 56 crore owed to the Bank." "This morning, in less than 24 hours, the nation has got to know that the Bank of Baroda has withdrawn the auction notice due to 'technical reasons'.

about 60% coming from Tier-I cities. We need to increase outreach to smaller cities to raise education and awareness and to highlight the available protection for investors. We are writing and re-writing rules to protect the investors. Investors must follow basic safety precautions like making nominations," he added. Delivering the welcome address at the conference, Hitender Mehta, Senior Member - Managing Committee, ASSOCHAM and Managing Partner, Centrum Legal said, "Investors protection, education and awareness is an important topic that needs to be widely discussed and not just in metros. Investors irrespective of where they are located needs to be aware about their rights and they all need to be protected."

India's Trade Basket Expand \$800 bn in first half of 2023: GTRI

NEW DELHI: India's total foreign trade has crossed the USD 800 billion mark during the first half of 2023, despite a slowdown in global demand, think tank GTRI said in a report on Monday.

This has been achieved with the healthy growth in India's services segments, as per the report.

According to the analysis of the Global Trade Research

Initiative (GTRI), exports of goods and services rose by 1.5% to USD 385.4 billion during January-June this year, as against USD 379.5 billion in January-June 2022.

Imports, however, dipped by 5.9% to USD 415.5 billion during the six months of this year, as against USD 441.7 billion in January-June 2022. "India's foreign trade (exports and imports of mer-



chandise and services) reached USD 800.9 billion during January-June 2023, exhibiting a

decline of 2.5% over the same period last year (January-June 2022)," the report said.

Standalone, goods exports dipped by 8.1% to USD 218.7 billion, while imports contracted by 8.3% to USD 325.7 billion.

On the other hand, services exports during the six months period grew by 17.7% to USD 166.7 billion, while imports rose by 3.7% to USD 89.8

billion.

"Data is showing modest decline due to weak global demand and losing competitiveness in labour intensive sectors. The decline in merchandise exports happened despite appreciating INR (Indian Rupee). INR/USD exchange rate appreciated from 76.16 in April 2022 to 82.18 in April 2023," GTRI Co-founder Ajay Srivastava said.

India Looks For Global Maritime Investments Before Industry Summit

NEW DELHI: Union Minister for Ports, Shipping & Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal has invited investors to participate in various industries of India's growing Maritime sector.

This statement comes ahead of the Global Maritime India Summit (GMIS) 2023 which is to be held from October 17-19. Opportunities span from cruise tourism to shipbuilding and maritime education, offering international partners a multifaceted spectrum of avenues for collaboration, he said. He asked Indian ambassadors from the east and west zones to explore investment prospects in the domestic maritime sector.

"With a potential investment exceeding Rs 10 lakh crore (USD 12,000 million), we have the capacity to propel economic transformation within our borders and reso-



nate on a global scale. Recognizing the pivotal role of robust international trade relations in our economic growth, we are actively pursuing initiatives to foster global collaboration within the maritime sector," he said. India has already inked bilateral agreements and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with 34 countries on maritime transport and cooperation, alongside MoUs regarding the recognition of certificates of seafarers with 40 nations, he said.

Indian Economy on Even Road

SATISH SINGH that people are spending in villages as well, which is increasing demand and reinforcing the economy. Today, Amazon, Flipkart, Ajo, Myntra etc. are delivering in the villages as well, due to which the villagers are getting the goods of their choice sitting at a reasonable price and they got rid of the touts.

The Modi government in 2014 launched a nationwide campaign to open Jan Dhan accounts in the banks to promote financial inclusion, with the aim of making a range of financial services, benefits of government sponsored schemes including Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT), accessible to the poor. Even during the Corona period, due to the Jan Dhan accounts, the government was able to provide timely financial assistance to the poor, due to which thousands and lakhs of people were saved from untimely death.

The bank will start implementing Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma Yojana from September 17 to benefit 30 lakh families of traditional artisans, weavers, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, washermen, barbers etc. To give shape to this scheme, the government has allocated Rs 13,000 crore for 5 years. The bank will provide loans up to Rs 1 lakh in the first phase and up to Rs 2 lakh in the second phase at 5 per cent interest. The Finance Ministry has directed the heads of banks to ensure speedy disposal of applications



received under the Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma Yojana and to continuously monitor the sanction & disbursement of loans under this scheme.

Moody's has retained India's stable outlook status. This means that India's economy has a strong potential to continue to grow rapidly by international standards. According to Moody's, India's GDP growth will continue in incoming days too, and the Indian economy will continue to grow stronger. If the economy remains strong, it will be easier for fiscal consolidation and stabilization of the government's debt. Moody's believes that India's economic growth will be faster than the economies of all other G-20 countries for at least 2 years. India's potential growth rate is expected to be around 6 to 6.5 percent, which was less than 6 percent during the pandemic. However, this is less than the 7 percent increase in the middle of the last decade. Moody's also said that In-

dia is continuously trying to consolidate the economy and hence its economic and contingent liability risks are coming down. It is also believed that if India's fiscal consolidation accelerates as expected, Moody's may upgrade India's rating. Fiscal consolidation will reduce the debt burden of the government and improve debt affordability and increase fiscal strength. According to Moody's, at present, due to increase in global and domestic interest rates in India, there is a situation of increase in debt burden and weak credit distribution.

According to the research report Ecowrap published by State Bank of India's Economic Research Department, Corporate Centre, Mumbai, based on income tax returns, the weighted average income in the financial year 2022-23 will be Rs 13 lakh, whereas it was Rs 4.4 lakh in the tax assessment year 2013-14. According to SBI Research, even smaller states like Manipur, Mizoram

and Nagaland have registered more than 20 per cent growth in income tax return filing in the last 9 years. It is clear from this that not only the income of the people has increased in recent times, but tax compliance has also increased.

According to the Prime Minister's LinkedIn post, there has been at least a three-fold increase in the tax-base across various income groups and filing of income tax returns for each group in FY 2022-23. When comparing the income tax returns filed between 2014 and 2023, the picture of increased tax participation in all the states looks rosy. Uttar Pradesh has emerged as the leading performing state in terms of income tax return filing. According to Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, India can become a developed country by the time India completes 100 years of independence in the year 2047 if the current pace of development is maintained. Currently India is the fifth largest economy in the world.

During the first 4 months (April-July) of FY 2023-24, among India's top 10 export hubs, only merchandise exports to the UK grew, while exports to all other major economies declined due to lower global demand. Exports to the UK grew by 20.6 per cent to \$4.5 billion during the period. The UK has moved up from the eighth largest export hub to become India's

fifth largest export destination during this period in FY23.

According to the Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Rajeev Chandrasekhar, by the year 2026, the contribution of the digital economy to the country's GDP is estimated to be more than 20 per cent. India is a country which has adopted technology very fast and now it has started offering technological solutions to the world. The contribution of digital economy to GDP was four and a half percent in 2014, which has increased to 11 percent today. India has adopted technology not only for innovation but also for providing solutions in various fields, which has brought about radical changes in people's life, operational system, administration, education, health, technical nature of democracy etc. in the last few years. It is because of these reasons that Honourable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has called the coming decade as the decade of technology.

In such a situation, it can be said that the Indian economy is getting better gradually even in difficult times, and all this is possible due to the appropriate steps and initiatives being taken from time to time by the government and the Reserve Bank of India.

Satish Singh, Ahmedabad based Senior Columnist, Views are personal.

Gross Turnover at GeM Portal Crosses Rs 1 Lakh Cr in 145 days

NEWDELHI: Government e-Marketplace (GeM) has achieved Rs 1 lakh crore in Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) within a span of 145 days in the current financial year, said the Ministry of Commerce & Industry in a statement on Wednesday.

The government with this feat highlights GeM's commitment to revolutionizing government procurement. "It signifies a substantial improvement compared to the previous year, where this GMV landmark was reached in 243 days," said the Ministry.

The average GMV per day has also witnessed significant growth from Rs 412 crore per day in FY 22-23 to Rs 690 crore per day in FY 23-24. Since inception, GeM has crossed Rs 4.91 lakh crore in GMV and has



facilitated over 1.67 crore orders on the platform. Among the noteworthy contributors to this remarkable GMV achievement, the contribution of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs), Central Ministries and State Governments has been 54%, 26% and 20% respectively. GeM's strategic focus in FY 2023-24 centers on expanding its reach by integrating government buyers across all tiers into its robust e-procurement infrastructure.

INTERNATIONAL

India showed its capability to world by unfurling tricolour on Moon: PM Modi to diaspora in Greece

ATHENS: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday that India has shown its capability to the world by unfurling the tricolour on the Moon, and asserted that its science and technology and innovation are creating a wave globally.

Addressing the Indian diaspora in the capital of Greece, he also cited several development feats achieved by his government in the last nine years and emphasised that never before has so much investment been made in infrastructure development. Optical fibre cable more than 25 lakh km in length has been laid in India since 2014 which, he noted, is more than six times the distance between the Earth and the Moon. India has taken indigenous 5G technology to around 700 districts in record time, he said, drawing cheers from the audience.

The world's highest-altitude rail bridge and motorable road, biggest cricket stadium and tall-



est statue are in India now, he said. Referring to India's historic achievement of landing its spacecraft on the Moon, he said one wants to be among family members during the times of celebrations and festivals. "I am now among my family members," he said.

Congratulations to the country have been pouring in from across the world on the successful lunar mission, Modi said, adding Indians everywhere are receiving congratulatory messages. He noted the success has come days before the festival of

Raksha Bandhan and referred to images social media of the Mother India sending its Rakhi in the form of Chandrayaan-3 and the Moon embracing it.

India has become the first country to land its mission on the "dark" zone - the south pole of the Moon - he said. "Wherever you may be, your hearts beat for India," he said, adding the Indian community mixes with local populations in different countries like sugar with milk and contribute productively.

The Indian economy, he asserted, is going from strength to

strength with top global bodies such as the World Bank and the IMF praising it. Leading companies are vying with each other to invest in India, he said, asserting that the country's role is changing fast in the post-COVID-19 world order. The prime minister invoked ancient ties between the civilisations of India and Greece and praised the role of Sikh gurus in strengthening their relations. His government had worked with dedication in commemorating events related to Sikhs, he added. Guru Nanak had visited many places in Greece, fostering his message of harmony and brotherhood.

Modi said his birthplace, Vadnagar in Gujarat, as well as his Lok Sabha constituency, Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh, have been vibrant since ancient times like Athens. Noting that more than 13.5 crore people have been lifted out of poverty under his government, he said that with growing size of the country's

economy, the income of people are also rising, leading to more investment from them.

India has prioritised the safety of its citizens during different crises, be it the Russia-Ukraine conflict or the strife in Afghanistan, he said.

The Indian government also brought back Sikh 'saroop' (physical copies of Sri Guru Granth Sahib) from Afghanistan with full respect, he added. Promoting tourism in India, Modi said the way Indians visit Greece, Greeks would soon start travelling to India to witness its rich heritage and bio-diversity.

He asked the Indian diaspora members to tell their friends in Greece about various attractions in India like the country having over eight per cent of global biodiversity and 75 per cent of tiger population despite having only 2.5 per cent of the landmass, he said. "Today's India is celebrating its heritage and also linking it with development," he said.

China has illegally occupied thousands of kms of Indian territory says Rahul Gandhi

KAVITA SHARMA

Kargil

Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi today said that China had illegally occupied thousands of kilometers of Indian territory. He slams Prime Minister Narendra Modi for not speaking the truth and saying that no Indian land had been occupied by China.

He also offered floral tributes at the Kargil War Memorial, Dras.

Addressing a public meeting on the concluding day of his tour to Ladakh region, Mr Gandhi said, he had gone to Pangong lake in Ladakh. He said China has illegally occupied Indian land and the Prime Minister during a meeting of opposition parties denied it. The Prime Minister is not speaking the truth, he remarked, while adding, people of Ladakh know that China has illegally occupied Indian land.

Former Congress president profoundly thanked the people of Kargil for standing for the country whenever there was a need. He recalled how the people of this place had stood for the nation in 1999 during the Kargil War against Pakistan. For this, I thank you from the core of my heart.

Recalling his Bharat Jodo Yatra, the Congress MP said he had planned to conclude the Yatra in Ladakh. However, due to the cold weather he was advised not to travel to Ladakh that time. He said, during his recent visit he has covered each and every corner of Ladakh and found the people here very warm and friendly.

Expressing his profound gratitude to people of Ladakh region, Mr Gandhi said, he had found Ladakh perhaps to



be the most beautiful place in India and he will visit it again.

Mr Gandhi said, like the Congress party, which believed in harmony and brotherhood, people of Ladakh also believed in the same ideology. Narrating his experiences with the people who have come from different parts of the country to work in Ladakh, he said, he was told that people of Ladakh were so warm that they felt at home in this place. He recalled the popular slogan of the Bharat Jodo Yatra, "Nafrat Ke Bazaar mein, Mohabbat ki Dukan", saying people here were full of love and affection.

Referring to the demands of the local people which included raising the political voice, addressing the issue of unemployment, poor communication system and operation of flights from Kargil airport, Mr Gandhi said he will raise their voice in the next session of the parliament. Similarly, he added, the issues related to Ladakh in particular will also be raised in the parliament. He said the apex decision making body of the Congress party had endorsed various demands of Ladakh and Kargil regions.



Mr. Gandhi said the Congress party stood by the people of the region and will ensure that their land is protected. He said, since Ladakh region was rich in natural resources and there was a great potential for solar energy, the BJP wanted to take away the land and give it to Adanis. But, he assured, the Congress party will not let the BJP do that.

AICC Incharge J&K affairs & party MP Ms Rajani Patil and local Congress leaders were also present on the occasion.

Trump plans to turn himself in to face charges in Georgia election case

Former US President Donald Trump said that he plans to turn himself in on Thursday to face charges in the case of election interference in Georgia state.

In a post on his Truth Social app on Monday, the 77-year-old wrote: "Can you believe it? I'll be going to Atlanta, Georgia, on Thursday to be ARRESTED by a Radical Left District Attorney, Fani Willis."

"She campaigned, and is continuing to campaign, and raise money on, this WITCH HUNT... This is in strict coordination with crooked Joe Biden's DOJ (Department of Justice)." Trump's statement comes after Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis, who is overseeing the former president's case, has set bail at \$200, 000, the BBC reported.

The agreement says Trump can remain free pending trial so long as he does not attempt to threaten or intimidate witnesses. He has denied 13 charges, including racketeering and false statements.

"The defendant shall perform no act to intimidate any person known to him or her to be a co-defendant or witness in this case or to otherwise obstruct the administration of justice," the court filing posted on Monday said.

"The above shall include, but are not limited to, posts on social media or reposts of posts made by another individual on social media. In his post, the former President also mentioned suggested the bail conditions indicate the District Attorney must have thought he might attempt to flee the US."

"Would I be able to take my very 'understated' airplane with the gold TRUMP affixed for all to see. Probably not, I'd be much better off flying



commercial -- I'm sure nobody would recognise me!"

Willis has asked the judge to schedule arraignments, in which a defendant is formally charged and enters a guilty or not guilty plea, on September 5.

She has also proposed that the trial begin in March 2024.

When Trump does surrender, there will a "hard lockdown" of the surrounding county jail area, the BBC quoted the Fulton County Sheriff's Office as saying.

Barricades have been erected outside the court ahead of Trump's anticipated surrender.

The sheriff's office said on Monday the barricades would remain in place until Saturday.

The 19 accused have until noon local time on Friday to turn themselves in for processing.

Trump was charged last week alongside his co-defendants with attempting to subvert the will of the Georgia electorate by meddling in the state's election following his loss to Biden.

The former President was heard in a phone call pressuring Georgia's Republican Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger to "find 11, 780 votes" during the state's election-counting process in 2020.

The first former or serving US President ever to be indicted, Trump faces three other criminal cases.

Putin extends condolences to families of people killed in plane crash

Russian President Vladimir Putin extended condolences to the families of those who died in a plane crash near Moscow two days ago.

"As for the plane crash, first of all, I want to express my sincere condolences to the families of all those who died," Putin said on Thursday at a meeting with Denis Pushilin, the acting head of Donetsk, according to the Kremlin.

A private Embraer plane en route from Moscow to St. Petersburg crashed in the Tver region on Wednesday, Russia's



Ministry of Emergency Situations said, noting that all the 10 people on board were killed.

The Russian Federal Agency for Air Transport confirmed that Yevgeny Prigozhin, Head

of the Wagner military group, was among the passengers on board the flight, Xinhua news agency reported.

"I have known Prigozhin for a very long time, since the early 1990s," Putin said.

"He made serious mistakes in his life, but he also achieved the needed results both for himself and, when I asked him, for the common cause, as in these last months," he added.

According to Putin, Prigozhin returned from Africa on Wednesday and met with some officials in Russia.

Grieving widow sues Musk's Tesla over husband's death

A grieving widow has sued Tesla in the US after her husband died in a 2020 crash involving a Model 3 vehicle.

Jyung Woo Hahn, 46, died on March 12, 2022, when his Tesla malfunctioned and collided with a tree and burst into flames in New York. He allegedly survived the initial crash but was trapped in the burning vehicle.

Now, the plaintiff Jiyoung Yoon has sued Tesla in the US District Court, Southern District of New York, for its role in designing, manufacturing, distributing, and selling the vehicle "in its defective and unreasonably dangerous condition and for causing Hahn's horrific injuries, suffering, and death". Hahn was driving a Tesla on the Palisades Interstate Parkway in Rockland County, New York. "The subject vehicle's defective and unreasonably dangerous condition actually... caused Hahn's injuries and death and Plaintiff's damages," the lawsuit read.

The lawsuit is demanding judgment against Tesla "for all injuries and damages recoverable by law, including economic damages, lost wages and earning capacity, loss of parental guidance, mental anguish, emotional distress, pain and suffering, conscious pain and suffering of Jyung Woo Hahn, punitive damages, costs, and interest".

The lawsuit came as the electric car-maker's engineers reportedly admitted in their testimonies that Musk-run Tesla did not fix the Autopilot system after a fatal crash in the US in 2016 that killed a driver.

Despite the company's knowledge "that there's cross traffic



or potential for cross traffic, the Autopilot at the time was not designed to detect that," according to the testimony given in 2021 by company engineer Chris Payne that was excerpted in a recent court filing.

Engineer Nicklas Gustafsson provided a similar account in a 2021 deposition.

The family for one of the dead Tesla owners is now seeking punitive damages in a lawsuit, set to go to trial this October.

Tesla is under intense scrutiny for its Autopilot and its Full Self-Driving (FSD) driver assistance features.

Neither such acts nor their perpetrators have anything to do with Islam. It explicitly forbids the burning of Bibles and Churches. Islam calls for protection of man's life and property. Life and dignity of

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind condemns the attack on Christians and the burning of Churches in Pakistan

FW DESK

New Delhi

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH) has condemned the attack on Christians and the burning of Churches in Pakistan. In a statement to the media, the JIH National Secretary, K.K. Suhail said, "Jamaat-e-Islami Hind condemns the attack on Christians over blasphemy allegations and burning of Churches in Jaranwala, Faisalabad, Pakistan. We want to convey the message that Muslims share the pain of the Christians and we express full solidarity with them. The vandalization of Churches, burning of Bibles, and the surrounding houses that belonged to Christians is highly deplorable and extremely shameful. The desecration of a religious place of worship shows the intolerance and utter disrespect of fellow humans and their beliefs. Jamaat sees this attack as a collective assault on all religions and humanity. The Jaranwala incident has no sanction in Islam. Neither such acts nor their perpetrators have anything to do with Islam. It explicitly forbids the burning of Bibles and Churches. Islam calls for protection of man's life and property. Life and dignity of



an individual is sacrosanct in Islam. These acts cannot be linked with Islam. Those who are carrying out such acts in the name of Islam must know they are misusing it and giving it a bad name. They have no right to do it."

The JIH National Secretary said, "Jamaat-e-Islami appreciates and endorses the demand by Muslim Ulema and justice-loving citizens to restore the places of worship and offer adequate compensation to the victims. The rising intolerance, hatred, and vitriol spreading across societies is a cause for serious concern and is hurting our moral compass. We appeal to people belonging to all communities to avoid being provoked by those who want to stoke the flames of hatred. If at all, they come to know of any incident that hurts their religious sentiments, they should only alert the concerned authorities. Nobody has the right to take the law into their hands and exact revenge on their terms."

Russian President Vladimir Putin will not personally attend G20 summit in India: Kremlin

MOSCOW:

Russian President Vladimir Putin will not personally attend the G20 summit to be held in New Delhi next month, the Kremlin announced on Friday, saying he has a "busy schedule" and the main focus is still the "special military operation" in Ukraine. The G20 world leaders' summit is scheduled to be held in New Delhi on September 9 and 10. The summit is expected to be one of the largest gatherings of world leaders in India. India assumed the G20 Presidency on December 1, 2022, from Indonesia. "No, the president has no such plans," Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters in Moscow. The format of Putin's participation would be determined later, Peskov said. Putin did not personally attend the just-concluded BRICS Summit in Johannesburg. He was represented by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. President Putin decided against attending the first in-person BRICS summit after Covid-19 as the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for him in March over an alleged scheme to deport Ukrainian children to Russia.



Modi congratulates new Thai Prime Minister Srettha Thavasin



NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday congratulated Srettha Thavasin as he is elected as the Prime Minister of Thailand.

In a post on X, Modi said: "Heartiest congratulations @Thavasin on your election as the Prime Minister of Thailand. I look forward to working closely with you for taking India-Thailand bilateral relations to a higher level." Srettha, a real estate mogul who entered the Thai political landscape mere months ago under the Pheu Thai's mantle, required 375 votes to become premier and set up Bangkok's next government. He won 482, his party said.

Moonstruck! from US to SA - a 'proud day' for Indian diaspora

JOHANNESBURG: It was a 'proud and historic day' for India's 32 million-plus strong diaspora, which stood in unison with their mother country amid chants of 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' and 'Vande Mataram', as the nation conquered the moon on Wednesday with its historic Chandrayaan-3 mission.

From holding special screenings of the landing event, to saying prayers and distributing sweets, loudest cheers on the mission's success could be heard from the community that is far away, yet not away from India.

Capturing the excitement of Indians in South Africa, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is in the country for BRICS Summit, shared pictures of community members meeting him and celebrating. "Feeling the fervour all the way from Johannesburg for Chandrayaan-3! The enthusiasm of our diaspora in South Africa for India's achievements in the space sector is truly gladdening. "PM Modi posted on X, formerly known as Twitter, on Wednesday.

Taking to X, member of the House of Lords of the UK Parliament, Lord Rami Ranger, said, "Indians are literally over the moon with the smooth landing of the Chandrayaan-3 space-



craft! Congratulations ISRO. India becomes the only nation to land on the South Pole of the Moon." "Congratulations to India on the #MoonLanding -- this is a national, regional and global success story. Everyone involved has played their personal part in a national victory. #Chandrayaan3 is a win for everyone," Virendra Sharma, Member of British Parliament, posted. Indians from across the UK joined the High Commission in London where people chanted 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' and 'Vande Mataram' slogans.

Calling it a "moment of immense pride", the Friends of

India Society International (FISI), a UK-based diaspora group, celebrated India's expanding prowess in the realm of technology.

"The successful soft landing of Chandrayaan-3 on the lunar surface is a moment of immense pride for the 1.4 billion people in India and the global Indian diaspora. This achievement serves as a powerful testament to India's unwavering dedication to scientific progress, poised to ignite the aspirations of forthcoming generations of explorers and scientists within the nation," FISI said in a statement.

Singapore's Indian-origin

Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan also dropped a congratulatory message to Indians. "Congratulations India for landing on the South Pole of the Moon. This is indeed a proud achievement that will resonate across the world!"

M A Yusuff Ali of Emirates-based Lulu Group and Second Vice Chairman of Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce & Industry, said, "It is a historic moment not just for India and Indians but for the entire mankind. May this landmark landing of #Chandrayan3 pave for many more achievements in the science and technology field".

Chandrakanth 'Chandra' Arya, a powerful Indian-origin voice in the Canadian parliament, who visited India in July this year and met External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, attributed the success to 'India's mastery of advanced technologies'.

"India is now on the Moon". Congratulations to India on Chandrayaan-3 becoming the first space mission to land near the south pole of the Moon and joining the exclusive club of just three other countries in the world to land on moon," Arya, who hails from Karnataka, wrote on X.

Modi holds talks with Greek PM, decides to upgrade ties to strategic partnership

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday held talks with his Greek counterpart Kyriakos Mitsotakis. An official joint statement said that both India and Greece have shown extraordinary economic resilience, despite the challenges in their respective regions, and have restored domestic economic growth.

"Building on the foundation of the long-standing warm and close relationship between their countries and peoples, the two leaders decided to upgrade Greek-Indian bilateral ties to the level of a Strategic Partnership". It was also decided that they would work to further expand bilateral cooperation in political, security and economic spheres. Welcoming India's presidency of the G20



forum, Mitsotakis expressed confidence that under India's leadership, the G20 will successfully advance its goals.

Prime Minister Modi extended an invitation to the Greek Prime Minister to visit India. Modi is on a day-long visit to Greece at the invitation of Greek Prime Minister Mitsotakis. Both the leaders appreciated the increase in bilateral trade

and economic engagement in recent years, and also directed that both sides shall work to double bilateral trade by 2030. Modi and Mitsotakis reiterated the need for further broadening and deepening bilateral engagements, in the field of defence, shipping, science and technology, cyber space, education, culture, tourism and agriculture. They took note of the signing of the MoU on cooperation in the field of agriculture, including the establishment of a Hellenic-Indian joint sub-committee on agriculture for facilitating sectoral cooperation for mutual benefit.

The 69th National Film Award: Alia Bhatt and Kriti Sanon joint winner as Best Actress and Allu Arjun best Actor

MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA
New Delhi



The National Film Awards is one of the most prestigious and highly anticipated awards in the country where regional films are made an impressive footprint. When Manipur is the highlighted world over for political turmoil, the culture ministry has given some cultural light on them, Meiteilon Film won award. Famous Film Director who was Jury head said, "The regional films are doing good nowadays becoz the recent technologies are reachable to them. We had very good talent in the regions earlier also. We, the juries spent lot of time and did hard work for this selection, these films are made during COVID time which is very important".

won Best Actress awards for Gangubai Kathiawadi and Mimi. Pallavi Joshi wins Best Supporting Actress for The Kashmir Files and Pankaj Tripathi won Best Supporting Actor for Mimi. Best Actor, Allu Arjun won best Actor award for Pushpa: The Rise. Best Director award won by Nikhil Mahajan for Marathi film Godavari. Nargis Dutt Award for Best Feature Film on National Integration is

Production Design award jointly won by Dmitrii Malich and Mansi Dhruv Mehta for Sardar Udham.

Best Editing award won by Sanjay Leela Bhansali for Gangubai Kathiawadi and Best Dialogue Writing award won by Utkarshini Vashishtha and Prakash Kapadia for Gangubai Kathiawadi. Best Screenplay (Adapted) won by Gangubai Kathiawadi again. Best Make-up award won by Gangubai Kathiawadi too.

Best Music Director (Songs) won by Devi Sri Prasad for Pushpa. Rocketry: The Nambi Effect won Best Feature Film Award. The Best Actor Award was presented to Allu Arjun for 'Pushpa: The Rise'. Famous Singer Shreya Ghoshal won Best Female Playback Singer for Maayava Chaayavaa from Iravin Nizhal (Tamil).

'The Kashmir Files'.

Vicky Kaushal's 'Sardar Udham', directed by Shoojit Sircar, has won the Best Hindi Film Award, Best Cinematography award won by Avik Mukhopadhyay for Sardar Udham. Best Audiography (Re-recorderist of the final mixed track) award jointly won by Sinoy Joseph & Sardar Udham. Best Costume Designer award won by Veera Kapur for Sardar Udham. Best

69th National Film Awards: Vicky Kaushal-starrer 'Sardar Udham' feted with Best Hindi Film honour



NEW DELHI: Filmmaker Shoojit Sircar's film 'Sardar Udham' starring Vicky Kaushal has been honoured with Best Hindi Film at the 69th National Film Awards.

The award event is being held in the National capital on Thursday. The film also was named in the Best Production design, Best Cinematography, the Best Costume Design and Best Audiography category. 'Sardar Udham' is a biographical historical drama film directed by Shoojit Sircar, and produced by Rising Sun Films in collaboration with Kino Works.

Based on the life of Udham Singh, a freedom fighter from Punjab who assassinated Michael O'Dwyer in London to avenge the 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar. The film also stars Shaun Scott, Stephen Hogan, Amol Parashar, Banita Sandhu. The film was also noted for its realistic portrayal of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, being depicted in an extended and graphic sequence.

POTPOURRI

Becoming a Voiceover Artist: A Journey of Versatility and Expression

SAVNEER BAL

In the world of media and entertainment, a voiceover artist is an unsung hero, breathing life into characters, commercials, documentaries, audiobooks, and much more. Behind every captivating voice that accompanies visuals, there's a talented individual who specializes in the art of voice acting. In this article, we will explore the rewarding career path of a voiceover artist, the skills required to succeed, and the diverse opportunities that await those with a passion for vocal expression.



Developing Essential Skills

Becoming a successful voiceover artist requires honing a set of essential skills beyond possessing a unique voice. Training in diction, pronunciation, and enunciation is crucial to ensure clarity and comprehension. Moreover, learning to modulate pitch, tone, and pace allows artists to evoke different emotions and moods in their performances. Additionally, mastering the art of breath control enables consistency and stamina during long recording sessions.

The Art of Storytelling

At the core of voice acting lies the art of storytelling. Voiceover artists are storytellers, using their vocal prowess to captivate audiences and

transport them to different worlds. Through the skillful delivery of dialogue and narration, voiceover artists can breathe life into characters and create immersive experiences that resonate with listeners.

Recording Techniques and Technology
In today's digital age, voiceover artists must be familiar with recording techniques and technology. Many artists set up home studios, where they record auditions and projects remotely. Knowledge of audio editing software and understanding the nuances of recording equipment are essential to deliver professional-quality work that meets industry standards.

Embracing Continuous Growth
To stay relevant and in-demand, voiceover artists must continuously refine their craft and adapt to changing industry trends. Taking voice acting workshops, participating in improv classes, and seeking constructive feedback are ways to enhance skills and explore new vocal territories.

At the end I would say becoming a voiceover artist is a journey filled with creativity, versatility, and expression. These talented individuals breathe life into scripts, capture hearts with their emotive performances, and leave lasting impressions on audiences worldwide. From commercials to animated features, video games to documentaries, the work of voiceover artists enriches the media we consume daily. If you have a passion for vocal expression and storytelling, a career as a voiceover artist may be the gateway to a fulfilling and exciting artistic journey.

Neeraj Chopra qualified for the World Athletics Championships final & the Paris Olympics

SUNIL THAPLIYAL
New Delhi

Neeraj Chopra, India's star javelin thrower threw 88.77 metres in the qualifying round of the 2023 World Athletics Championships on Friday. With this, he has qualified for the Paris Olympics next year. To qualify for the Paris Olympics, a javelin throw of at least 85.50 metres was required, and Neeraj



threw the javelin to 88.77 metres on his first attempt. Neeraj has also confirmed his place in the final of the World Athletics

Championships. Neeraj threw 88.77 metres in his first attempt at the qualifying round of the World Athletics Championships in Budapest, Hungary, which is also his season's best. The 25-year-old Neeraj Chopra is a Diamond League champion and has also won gold medals at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, 2018 Asian Games and Commonwealth Games.

With Neeraj Chopra qualify-

ing for the final, India's medal hopes in this competition have increased as no Indian player has won gold at World Athletics Championships so far.

Other participants include defending champion Anderson Peters, the Olympic champion from Trinidad and Tobago, Keshorn Walcott, the world No. 2 Julian Weber from Germany, and Arshad Nadeem from Pakistan.

Shabana Azmi wishes to sit on hot seat of 'KBC' someday



NEW DELHI: Veteran actress Shabana Azmi has expressed her desire to sit on the hot seat of 'Kaun Banega Crorepati' someday, hosted by megastar Amitabh Bachchan.

In the special episode, the star cast of 'Ghoomer' -- Abhishek Bachchan, Saiyami Kher and filmmaker R Balki, were present on the set of 'Kaun Banega Crorepati 15' (KBC).

During the episode, a tune of the bugle was played. Big B says responding to the sound: "badlaav ke iss daur me, desh ke sath sath KBC me bhi ek badlaav ki pehel shuru ho chuki hai, jisme desh ki janta hamare studio audience se sawal karti hai."

"Let's see which citizen of India has asked the question today," he said. The location in the video played on the screen shows of Maharashtra.

Veteran actress Shabana Azmi appears on screen and says, "Aadaab Amitabh ji. Itne saalon ke baad finally I am on KBC. Though this is for short duration, but I hope I will be able to sit on the hot seat someday." "I am so sorry that I am not present among you people," says Shabana. The actress wore a yellow top and paired it with a blue scarf. She then asked the question: "Which of these award winning films is directed by a woman?" The options were: Raazi, Thappad, Gangubai Kathiawadi, and Dangal. The correct answer was given by a homemaker Radha Gawande, from among the audience. The answer was 'Raazi'. Amitabh said: "The director of 'Raazi' was Megha Gulzar." "Raazi" was a 2018 spy thriller film starring Alia Bhatt in the lead role. The flick also starred Vicky Kaushal, Shishir Sharma and Jaideep Ahlawat in pivotal roles.

In 'Ghoomer', Saiyami is playing a paraplegic sportsperson. Written and directed by R Balki, the flick stars Abhishek Bachchan in the lead, along with Shabana Azmi, and Angad Bedi in the pivotal roles. The story revolves around Anina (Saiyami), a young woman battling prodigy, who loses her right hand in an unfortunate accident on the eve of her international cricketing debut. An unsympathetic, failed and frustrated cricketer enters her life, gives her a new dream and transforms her fate by the most innovative training, to make her play for the Indian cricket team again, as a bowler.

'Ghoomer' is the new style of bowling they invent to bamboozle the opposition. It is inspired by the incredible achievement of Karoly Takacs, the achievements of special athletes, and who have achieved more than when they were called "normal".

Exhibition -cum-sale of Snehalaya held at Infosys

ADITI CAHAR
Chandigarh

A two-day Exhibition-cum-Sale of articles prepared by the children residing in the Children Home, Snehalaya for Boys, Maloya, was recently held at Infosys, IT Park UT Chandigarh. The event took place from 22-23 August 2023 and was organized by the Department of Social Welfare, under the guidance

of the Secretary Social Welfare and Director Social Welfare, Women & Child Development, Chandigarh Administration, as part of the ARPAN Week observed by Infosys. The exhibition showcased various articles and items that were created by the children of Snehalaya for Boys. These included decoupage bottle art and lamps, Warli art on wood, candle stands adorned with stones, and Paper Mache Art. The children



at Snehalaya for Boys receive regular vocational training courses within the home to ensure their effective rehabilitation during their stay. Through these

courses, they learn skills such as painting, art & craft, and creating artwork from waste materials. The art pieces displayed during the ARPAN Week exhibition were all made using waste material, showcasing the children's creativity and resourcefulness. The Exhibition-cum-Sale was organized part of the "Learn to Earn Program" initiated by the Department of Social Welfare. The aims to provide a platform

for children to showcase their talent and creativity to the public, while also generating earnings for them. The ultimate goal is to boost their confidence, instill a sense of self-dependence, and develop resilience among the children. By organizing such events, the Department of Social Welfare not only supports the children in Snehalaya for Boys but also promotes their integration into society.



Special Task Force of Punjab Police (STF) personnel display 41kg of recovered heroin from three alleged smugglers during a press conference, in Amritsar on Wednesday. STF has arrested 03 accused involved in cross border smuggling which was smuggled through Ravi river from Pakistan side. PHOTOS : PRABHJOT GILL



Farmers block a toll booth on the national highway at Toll Plaza near village Nijjer Pura in Jandiala Guru on the outskirts of Amritsar on Tuesday. Protest was held against the arrest of their colleagues ahead of a farmers' tractor march to Chandigarh. PHOTOS: PRABHJOT GILL

Kashmir's Tulip Garden achieves Asia's largest title in World Book of Records

FW DESK

The tulip garden nestled at the foothills of the Zabarwan mountain range in Kashmir has been recognized as Asia's largest tulip garden by the World Book of Records. This prestigious accolade marks a significant milestone for the garden since its establishment in 2008.

The renowned garden, situated on the picturesque banks of Dal Lake, has garnered attention not only for its breathtaking beauty but also for the tireless efforts of the Department of Floriculture, Gardens, and Parks in Kashmir. This diverse array, consisting of 68 different tulip varieties, has been a captivating spectacle that drew the admiration of approximately 3.75 lakh



visitors during the month-long tulip season. The World Book of Records awarded the coveted certificate of recognition to the Department of Floriculture, Gardens, and Parks during a ceremony held in Srinagar. "The inclusion of Tulip Garden Srinagar in the World Book of Records as Asia's largest tulip garden is a monumental achievement. This recognition not only honors the hard work of every individual involved but also bolsters Jammu and Kashmir's tourism industry," Javid Masood, the dedicated Floriculture Officer in charge of the Tulip Garden, said.

Gulzar - From painter of cars to artist of words

MUMBAI: There are a number of stories about how Gulzar, who turned 89 on August 18, became one of Hindi cinema's most celebrated lyricists after being better known in his years as a struggler after Partition in Mumbai for his expertise in re-painting cars mauled in crashes.

The one that seems most credible, however, has come from him. Despite his skill with car colours, Gulzar's first love was the written word and he was a regular at the Progressive Writers Association (PWA), which was then a creative hub of just about every Titan in Hindi and Urdu literature.

It was at PWA meetings that the undiscovered poet struck up a friendship with lyricist Shailendra, who introduced him to Bimal Roy, who, in turn, told him that he was wasting his time and talent at a car workshop.

Roy drafted Gulzar, till then known as Sampooran Singh Kalra, for his last film, 'Bandini' (1963). It was for 'Bandini' that he wrote the lyrics for his first song in Hindi cinema -- 'Mora Gora Rang Le Le' -- pictured on Nutan and memorably sung by Lata Mangeshkar to the music of Sachin Dev Burman.

The film's star cast also included Ashok Kumar and another rookie, Dharmendra. The song was a hit and Gulzar was not even 30.



parently, it was not so straightforward. Shailendra, the film's official lyricist, had a tiff with Burman, and he refused to write more songs, leaving Roy in the lurch. A desperate Roy requested Shailendra to complete the assignment. Shailendra, instead, recommended Gulzar.

It is a recommendation that generation of cinema goes and top music directors, from Salil Chowdhury to Rahul Dev Burman to A.R. Rahman and Vishal Bhardwaj, would thank Shailendra for.

Born in a Sikh family on August 18, 1934 to Makhn Singh Kalra and Sujan Kaur, at Dina in Jhelum District (now in Pakistan), Gulzar got addicted to writing when he read the translations of the works of Rabindranath Tagore in school.

Following Partition, he had to stop his studies and come to Mumbai to join his elder brother. The two did not quite get



along and Sampooran started painting cars to support himself in the big city.

After 'Bandini', Gulzar's path wasn't one of tinsel glory, although he was establishing his reputation for his "daringly defiant" Urdu poetry, but over the years, his oeuvre has ranged from the prayer song of Hrishikesh Mukherjee's 'Guddi' ('Humko man ki shakti dena') to the anthem 'Jai Ho' from 'Slumdog Millionaire' and the lyrical 'Kajra re' from 'Bunty Aur Babli'.

In between, his words have provided the soul to songs as different as the Amir Khusraw-inspired 'Ay hairathe aashiqui' for Mani Ratnam's 2007 Hindi film 'Guru' (music: A. R. Rahman) to the all-time hit song, 'Chaiyya Chaiyya', from 'Dil Se...' (another Ratnam-Rahman joint venture), based on the Sufi folk song 'Thaiyya Thaiyya', with lyrics by Bulleh Shah.

And imagine Vishal Bhardwaj's three iconic films -- 'Om-kara' (2006), 'Kaminey' (2009) and 'Ishqiya' (2010) -- without Gulzar's lyrics, from 'Beedi, to 'Dhan Te Nan' and 'Dil To Bachcha Hai Ji'.

Gulzar may have got his break in Hindi cinema because of his way with the Urdu language, but his films as director have left behind an equally big mark.

They range from the Kh-waja Ahmad Abbas-scripted 'Achanak', based on the Navavati case that shook Mumbai's moral fibre in 1958, to 'Aandhi' (Sanjeev Kumar and Suchita Sen), which was banned during the Emergency because it was too uncomfortably close to Indira Gandhi's life, to the Shabana Azmi-Naseeruddin Shah-starrer 'Libaas', whose portrayal of an extra-marital relationship was considered too daring for Indian audiences -- it has been screened only twice in India, both times at the International Film Festival of India (1992 and 2014).

A complete **KNOWLEDGE CAPSULE**

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