

REGION

2



**RAHUL MAKES SURPRISE VISIT TO RAILWAY STATION, INTERACTS WITH PORTERS**

BANKING & FINANCE

6



**INDIAN ECONOMY GAINS STRENGTH AMID FADING GLOBAL PROSPECTS: RBI**

POTPOURRI

8



**CHEERING CROWD, GIANT HOARDING WELCOME RAGNETTI IN UDAIPUR**

## LG 'illegally' expelled Delhi Assembly fellows to stop work being done in people's interest: AAP

FW CORRESPONDENT  
New Delhi

AAP said that Delhi will be run by those who adhere to the law and the Constitution, "not by Gundagardi," after the Delhi High Court directed that the services of Assembly Fellows and Associate Fellows engaged with the Delhi Assembly Research Centre shall continue till the next date of hearing on December 6.

"Delhi High Court has stayed Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena's order to remove Delhi Assembly Research Fellows and made it crystal clear that Delhi will be run by those who adhere to the law and the constitu-

tion, not by Gundagardi," claimed the party in a statement issued on Thursday. A petition was moved by 17 such fellows challenging the termination of their contracts by the Delhi legislative assembly secretariat. Justice Subramonium Prasad issued notice on Thursday and sought a response from the legislative assembly secretariat as well as the Services and Finance Department within two weeks.

The court directed that, until the next date of hearing, the ser-

VICES of the petitioner shall not be discontinued and they be given a stipend. The Delhi High Court's order makes it clear that the Fellows of the Delhi Assembly Research Centre were "arbitrarily removed by misusing powers", the AAP statement claimed. AAP in its statement said Delhi LG is "arbitrarily misusing its powers".

"Delhi will not be run by those who coerce and misuse their powers. And the fact that LG had expelled the fellows by going against the laws. All of this

was a part of his ongoing campaign to stop all the work being done in the interest of Delhi's citizens". The party alleged that the contracts were terminated on July 5, as per the orders of the Lieutenant Governor, VK Saxena. "The High Court's order makes it clear that the LG is arbitrarily misusing his powers".

"The Delhi government will not be driven by intimidation but will adhere to the law and the constitution. The LG has an intent on completely undermining and destroying Delhi. This has become evident with today's High Court order. The LG's role is solely to trouble the people of Delhi. The LG had no authority to remove employees.

### Arvind Kejriwal also launches his personal WhatsApp channel



FW DESK  
New Delhi

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Friday announced the launch of his personal WhatsApp channel to connect with the people. Delhi Government office said that last one was the Delhi CMO channel, whereas this is Arvind Kejriwal's personal channel which is far more important. Kejriwal said that he was delighted to connect with the people through his channel. "Today, after 75 years of independence, Aam Aadmi Party is the only political party in India that says vote for us because we will build world-class schools for your children, we will build mohalla clinics and hospitals to take care of your family members if they fall ill. Let us stay connected as we chart the journey of making India the no. 1 country in the world. Because India, that is Bharat, deserves nothing less," Kejriwal posted on his WhatsApp channel.

## India's Visa suspension in Canada to have minimal impact on Business

**BENGALURU:** The suspension of visa services to Canadian citizens announced by India amid estranged diplomatic ties is likely to have limited impact on business.

As per media reports the ongoing standoff between the two countries due to political issues has raised concerns among technology companies, professionals and entrepreneurs.

While potential new contracts could get delayed, the impact on projects that Indian IT companies are already implementing there may be limited, since Canada has not halted visa applications by Indians to Canada.



The ramifications on business will be greater if Canada were to also stop visa applications. On the whole though, considering the world learnt to work without travel during the Covid pandemic, visa restrictions are unlikely to severely handicap business in the short term.

Vikram Shroff, head of HR Law at Nishith Desai Associates, said the Indian government's decision implies that investors,

entrepreneurs, and techies who are Canadian citizens may not be able to get visas to travel to India, reported TOI, "Technology talent mobility would be adversely affected between the two countries," he said.

Shroff said the decision does not affect those Canadian citizens who have an existing Indian visa or OCI card. "It also does not affect Indian citizens to continue to travel to Canada including for family, business, or education purposes," he noted.

More than 600 Canadian companies have a presence in India and over 1,000 Canadian companies are pursuing business interests in India.

### PM Modi to address all women meeting in Varanasi on Saturday



**NEW DELHI:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address a public meeting, exclusively for women at the Sampurnanand Sanskrit University grounds in Uttar Pradesh's Varanasi on Saturday.

This is his first visit to his parliamentary constituency after introducing the historical 'Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam'.

Divisional Commissioner Kaushal Raj Sharma said: "As per the initial itinerary, after laying the foundation of the international cricket stadium the Prime Minister was scheduled to address a public meeting. On Thursday, another event was added to his visit in which he will address women exclusively at the SSU ground. Only the Prime Minister and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will be present on the dais at this special meeting."

The Prime Minister will next visit the Rudraksha centre in his constituency where he will distribute prizes to the winners of Kashi Sansad Sanskrit Mahotsav and interact with students of Atal residential schools which he will dedicate to the nation.

### Delighted at passage of women's reservation bill in LS: PM

FW CORRESPONDENT  
New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday expressed delight at the passage of the women's reservation bill in the Lok Sabha and thanked MPs from across party lines for support.

"The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam is a historic legislation which will further boost women empowerment and will enable even greater participation of women in our political process,"



he said on X.

Soon after the bill was passed by the Lok Sabha almost unanimously, Modi said, "Delighted at the passage of 'The Constitu-

tion (One Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2023 in the Lok Sabha with such phenomenal support. I thank MPs across party lines who voted in support of this Bill." After a spirited eight-hour debate in which 60 members participated, the Lok Sabha passed the Constitution (128th Amendment) Bill, with 454 members voting in favour and two against it.

Modi, a member of the House, was present during the voting on the bill.

## First Session of the New Parliament "Naya Sansad" begins, old Parliament is now Samvidhan Sadan

KAVITA SHARMA  
New Delhi

Parliament's Special Session have started in the New Parliament Building from September 19. The first session of the Special Parliament Session announced last month September 18-22. It was held at the old building, where both the houses, Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha discussed the 75 years of parliament's journey since independence. Before the start of the five day special session, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Parliament in the old building yesterday. In an emotional tone, he recollected the contributions and memories of the old Presidents and the Prime Ministers including Jawaharlal Nehru, Manmohan Singh, Atal Bihari Vajpey and others. He acknowledged First Prime Minister Jawaharlal Ne-



hru and his cabinet members. For India's First Law Minister B R Ambedkar, Modi said "Ambedkar sought to imbibe the best practices of the world and came out with a historic factory Act and water policy. First Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's speech of the midnight hour will also remain an inspiration for us, he added. Recollecting the speech-



es of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Modi said "Atal ji always said 'Governments will come and go but the country will remain forever'."

During his 80 minutes speech Modi also said "We might shift to the new building but this building will keep inspiring the new generations and will remain as a golden chapter of the Indian Democracy. He

also proposed to name the old parliament building as "samvidhan sadan" Prime Minister Modi also talked about women participation in the country. The cabinet has already given approval for the much awaited Women Reservation Bill and it is likely to be discussed in Lok Sabha tomorrow.

Before shifting to the New Parliament members of Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha gathered for a group photograph which was followed by a function in the Central hall of old building. Before leading the fellow MPs to the new Building Modi said "It is a historic day". The old Building will now become a Museum. The MPs received a special hamper which includes a copy of the Constitution of India and a commemorative coin which features the new parliament and a stamp.

## Congress urges Centre to implement Women Reservation Bill soon

KAVITA SHARMA  
New Delhi

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi today praised the Women's Reservation Bill but called it a diversion tactic from the demand of caste census. He also asked the govt. to implement this bill immediately. The Women Reservation Bill is passed from both the houses.

Addressing media persons in AICC headquarters, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said, BJP came up with the idea of the special session. We appreciated that idea, with a lot of fanfare and pomp, we moved from the old building to the new building. The Prime Minister in a very dramatic gesture carried the constitution of India from the old building, to the new building. And he said- that he is passing a very important law and we agree with him.

"Women's Reservation is a central step in the empowerment of the women of India and it is a critical step, but when we read the fine print, we found something very interesting, two little subtexts were there, one- this will be done after delimitation and two this will be done after census, which means, this bill will be implemented a decade from now, Rahul said.

Every woman in India should understand this it is not going to be implemented ten years from now. So, this is a diversionary tactic, it's a way of making everyone's attention move away. It is not complicated but Govt. does not want to do it. Rahul said, OBCs, Dalits"



know this number, otherwise we are working without data. Please, tell us, how many OBCs, we have the data, I know, because the government of India has already done the census and all this data is available. Why is the Prime Minister not releasing this data? And second, what is this delay in the census? Asked Rahul.

On a question that do you feel that in the present form, this bill will be able to achieve the desired goal considering that it is not being implemented now, Rahul Gandhi said, the problem is the implementation, so what they have said is we are placing a bill on the floor of the house, but we will implement it ten years from now, what does that mean? That's like the Prime Minister saying- You know we are going to place a bill on OBC caste census on the floor of the house and we are going to do it in thirty years, what does it mean? Means nothing, so we agree with the bill, remove these two clauses and make it happen today and don't insult the intelligence of India's women, because India's women knows the truth, said Rahul.

### Mirwaiz freed from house arrest, delivers Friday sermon at Grand Mosque



FW DESK

Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, a prominent separatist leader in Kashmir, has been released from house detention after more than four years. This move allowed him to lead the Friday prayers at the historic Jamia Masjid in Srinagar.

Authorities removed the police personnel who were stationed around Mirwaiz Farooq's residence at Nigen in Srinagar earlier today and informed him of his release. This development came shortly after he filed

government revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status and reorganized it into two union territories.

The news of his release has been met with positive reactions from various political figures and parties in the region. National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah expressed hope that Mirwaiz Farooq would be allowed to move freely, interact with people, and resume his social and religious responsibilities. He emphasized the significance of Mirwaiz's first Friday sermon at Jamia Masjid since 2019.

Other political leaders, including Mehbooba Mufti of the People's Democratic Party, Ghulam Nabi Azad of the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP), Sajad Lone of the Peoples Conference, and Altaf Bukhari of the Apni Party, also welcomed Mirwaiz's release. They recognized his role as a religious figure with societal importance and expressed hope for an uninterrupted continuation of this tradition.

governments of both the countries should bring the matters on the agenda of serious consideration.

In an official statement here today, the SGPC President said that the Sikhs are living across the globe, whose human rights as well as religious concerns are also important.

The Sikh community has gone through many painful times, including the June 1984 military attack on Sachkhand Sri Harmandir Sahib and Akal Takht Sahib, the 1984 Sikh Genocide and the extra-judicial killings of Sikh youths of a decade. The Sikh community living across the globe can never forget this pain. Even today, the Sikhs living in many

## Governments of India and Canada should adopt agenda of serious consideration instead of accusations: SGPC

JAGMOHAN SINGH  
Amritsar

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President Harjinder Singh Dhani reacted to the souring diplomatic relations between India and Canada and said that the governments of both the countries should bring the matters on the agenda of serious consideration.

In an official statement here today, the SGPC President said that the Sikhs are living across the globe, whose human rights as well as religious concerns are also important.

The Sikh community has gone through many painful times, including the June 1984 military attack on Sachkhand Sri Harmandir Sahib and Akal Takht Sahib, the 1984 Sikh Genocide and the extra-judicial killings of Sikh youths of a decade. The Sikh community living across the globe can never forget this pain. Even today, the Sikhs living in many



countries have been deprived of coming to their homeland and of paying obeisance at the sacred shrines of their Gurus (religious masters).

Dhani said that in the murder case of Canada based Sikh Hardeep Singh Nijjer, the expelling of a diplomatic officer of India by Canadian government after allegations were levelled against him raises many questions. As a reaction to this, even though India rejected the allegations and expelled a Canadian diplomatic officer, this matter is very serious and directly related to the Sikhs which is going to affect the community members at the global level.

He said the Sikhs have always kept their presence and existence high in the country as well as in the whole world with their hardworking nature and intellectual strength, but despite this, the Sikhs always have to struggle for their rights. It is the responsibility of the government of the country to adopt a sincere approach regarding such matters related to the Sikhs of the country and abroad and not to allow an atmosphere of distrust among the community members.

Dhani appealed to the Government of India to simplify the issues of Sikhs in India and move towards an appropriate and meaningful solution by understanding the problems and feelings of the Sikh community living abroad. He said that seeing the existence of Sikhs in the whole world today, both Canada and India need to join hands, so that the truth can come out in case of accusations and the relations between the two countries also remain good.

## E-commerce linked MSMEs have greater market access: ICRIER survey

NEW DELHI:

Firms that are not integrated with e-commerce platforms are likely to find it more challenging to access markets at a time when firms already integrated with such platforms are making deeper inroads into markets by leveraging platforms, as per a recent survey on MSMEs.

As per media reports the economic policy think tank Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) in its annual survey revealed that technology may represent a survival threat rather than an opportunity for MSMEs unable to join e-commerce platforms in the country.

The survey, 'Leveraging E-commerce for the Growth of MSMEs', was carried out between November 4, 2022, and January 20, 2023. It included 2,007, of which 65 per cent were micro, 19 per cent were small, and the remaining 16 per cent were medium. At the time of the survey, 1,005 enterprises were already integrated with e-commerce platforms, while the remaining 1,002 were not integrated.

As per the survey, policymakers and other stakeholders must be mindful of these potential

inequities and seek to bridge the divide between the integrated and non-integrated firms, requiring an understanding of the factors that impede firms from joining platforms.

The non-integrated firms in the survey indicated that the reason for not joining platforms was largely around lack of knowledge and information about digital technologies and e-commerce platforms.

In addition, the firm's own internal capabilities which determine whether it stands to benefit from joining e-commerce platforms was also a challenge. "This suggests that bridging the gap between integrated and non-integrated firms will not only require investments in technology, digital skills, information, and other factors that are complementary to e-commerce adoption but also enhancing the capabilities and productivity of MSMEs by providing them with infrastructure services, financial services, managerial and business skills and enterprise support and training," the survey said. With e-commerce platform integration, over 85 per cent of surveyed MSMEs reported an increase in their total sales and profit margins.

# Rahul makes surprise visit to Rly station, interacts with porters

**NEWDELHI:** Former Congress President Rahul Gandhi on Thursday once again surprised people by visiting a Railway station here and interacting with the porters to know their concerns.

According to party sources, the Congress leader arrived at Anand Vihar Railway station to talk to the coolies. Gandhi spoke at length with them and discussed the issues they face, the source said. The Congress leader's visit comes months after few porters urged him to meet them to understand their issues and work for their uplift.

The Congress leader, in the last few months, has surprised people with his visits among people. Rahul Gandhi had vis-



ited Bengali Market, Jama Masjid area to have food and then visited Mukherjee Nagar area to interact with the UPSC aspirants. He had also visited Delhi University's PG Men's hostel to have lunch with the students and then took a truck ride from Haryana's Murthal to Ambala to understand their pain. Gandhi had also visited the farm lands during the paddy sowing season and interacted with farmers in Haryana's Sonapat, visited bike mechanic shops in Delhi's Karol Bagh area, visited Azadpur Mandi amid skyrocketing prices of vegetables.

## Delhi government to deploy electric scooters and e-cycles in Dwarka for last-mile connectivity

**FW CORRESPONDENT**  
New Delhi

In order to strengthen last-mile connectivity, the Delhi government plans to deploy 3,000 electric scooters and e-cycles at 90 locations in Dwarka, said a government statement on Thursday.

The government has invited proposals for the deployment of high-speed e-scooters, low-speed e-scooters and e-cycles, the statement said.

This move is part of the Public E-Scooter Sharing (PeSS) System and Public E-Cycle Sharing System (PeCS) initiative aimed at providing a cost-effective and



eco-friendly mobility solution for the residents of the national capital, the statement added.

"The heart of this initiative lies in our commitment to providing affordable, eco-friendly, and efficient last-mile connectivity options to complement our existing public transport infrastructure, including the metro and buses," said Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot. We

have invited proposals from potential service providers for the deployment of high-speed e-scooters, low-speed e-scooters and e-cycles," he added.

In an interview to news agency earlier in the day, Gahlot said that Dwarka has been chosen since it is a sub-city with group housing societies and is quite widespread with a huge population living there. "We have started a pilot with Dwarka and subsequently other areas will be identified," he added.

The minister said the project envisions the deployment of a total of 3,000 electric vehicles (EVs) across 90 locations in the Dwarka sub-city in three phases.

# UP Cong asks Yogi to withdraw cancellation of Amethi hospital registration

**LUCKNOW:** The Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee (UPCC) president Ajay Rai has requested Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to withdraw orders for cancellation of the registration of Sanjay Gandhi Hospital in Munshiganj in Amethi.

In a letter, Rai has drawn the chief minister's attention towards problems being faced by people following cancellation of the hospital registration. "Cancellation of registration has led to suspension of health services, which was causing inconvenience to the people in nearby areas," said Rai in his letter. The Sanjay Gandhi Charitable Trust runs the Sanjay Gandhi Hospital and Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi is one of the members of the trust.

Former Congress MLC Deepak Singh said the cancellation of registration has been done at a short notice. He said the Congress held a demonstration against the cancellation and the agitation will continue to press for restoration of the registration.

Action has been apparently taken following a case of medical negligence reported from there. Rai said there was no justification to cancel the registration on the basis of a single complaint. He also said the chief minister should give positive directions to ensure that no injustice was caused to the people, doctors and employees of the hospital.

The state health department had, on Monday, cancelled the registration of the hospital and halted the OPD



**"Cancellation of registration has led to suspension of health services, which was causing inconvenience to the people in nearby areas"**

and emergency services in connection with the death of a 22-year-old woman.

Earlier on Sunday, a case was registered against Avadesh Sharma, general surgeon Dr Mohammad Raja, anaesthesia specialist Dr Siddiqui and physician Dr Shubham Dwivedi under section 304A (causing death by negligence) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) at the Munshiganj police station over the woman's death.

The woman was taken to the Sanjay Gandhi Hospital on September 14 morning by her family members after she complained of a stomach ache. After examining her, the doctor suggested an operation to remove stones in her

gallbladder, her family said.

On the same day, she went into a coma before the operation and was kept at the hospital for more than 30 hours before being referred to Lucknow. She died around 4 am in Lucknow on September 16, said her husband, alleging that she suffered a heart attack at the hospital.

The health department officials said that a three-member team led by Additional CMO Dr Ram Prasad in its report said there was laxity in the treatment given to the patient, adding she could have been saved if specialist doctors had reached the hospital. Later, Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak said, "Taking immediate cognizance of the case of death of a female patient due to doctor's negligence in Sanjay Gandhi Hospital, Munshiganj, Amethi, as per the orders given by me, CMO Amethi immediately conducted a preliminary inquiry into the matter through a three-member committee. Orders have also been given to complete all the proceedings as soon as possible and the hospital administration has been banned with strict instructions not to admit new patients."

# Nearly 350 Northern Railway employees on CBI radar



**SATISH HANDA**

Nearly 350 Northern Railway employees offered jobs during year 2004 to 2009 when Lalo Persad Yadav was union railways minister in the country their records while working in this period are being checked. Aat present 11 such employees are on CBI radar and their record while working for five years are being checked suspecting that such employees were offered jobs in railways against the land gifted by them. Information reveals that the power for employment opportunities in railways were under the charge of General Manager, Railways were discontinued and taken over by the Union Railway Minister Lalo Persad Yadav himself or his wife Rabri Devi, as such CBI presently handling the case thoroughly now checking records of all employees offered jobs in in railways during his period without appearing in examination or holding an interview by then Union Railways Minister or his wife. During May 2022 a case was registered against both Lalo Persad Yadav and his wife Rabri Devi presently undergoing investigation by the CBI which had prepared a list of about 350 employees working in five Divisional offices in Northern Railways.

CBI investigation reveals that those belonging to Patna were initially offered jobs in railways at Kolkata, Mumbai, Jaipur, Jabalpur and Jammu-Kashmir state for an eyewash and later were transferred to their desired divisions. Information also reveals that a large number of officers in senior ranks or junior level posts were offered appointment in railways directly without appearing in examination or an interview. Prior to the case was referred to CBI investigation, railway vigilance department also investigated the case thoroughly and observed large number of embezzlements and irregularities in railway recruitments including junior level posts for trackman, cabin man, security guard, technicians, cooks, safai karamchari and porters which were offered on the recommendation of Lalo Persad Yadav and his wife Rabri Devi as observed during railways vigilance and CBI investigation.

# Jammu and Kashmir police arrests DySP in Srinagar



**FW DESK**

Jammu and Kashmir has been arrested in Srinagar on charges of corruption, extortion, and fraud. The arrest comes after a police team conducted a search of DySP Sheikh Aadil Mush-taq's residence two days ago. It is reported that in an attempt to evade arrest Sheikh Aadil had fled from his house. However, during the search of his residence, the police discovered incriminating evidence, including documents and electronic devices stored on a laptop. Subsequently, an FIR has been filed against the officer at the Nowgam police station, and he was apprehended by the authorities today. To ensure a thorough investigation into the matter and to explore any potential serious implications, a Special Investigation Team (SIT) has been established under the leadership of the Superintendent of Police.

# Nearly 100 drug smugglers identified in Haryana to attach their properties

**SATISH HANDA**

Haryana Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has already identified a list of nearly 100 drug smugglers in the state to attach or demolish their illegal properties. Information reveals that the state government has already seized 342 illegal properties of more than 75 drug smugglers of value worth Rs 43 crore in recent past some time, now has prepared a list of another nearly 100 more big drug smugglers whose drug business spreading in the states as well as outside Haryana state has already been identified. O.P. Singh Director General Narcotic Control Bureau in the state said that an action plan to confiscate these illegal properties of hundreds crore will be seized shortly for which an action plan has been prepared by the state police department.

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar and Home Minister Anil Vij alongwith new Director General of Police Shatruijit Kapoor and Narcotics Control Bureau Director General OP Singh has prepared a road map to break the back of drug smugglers by contacting the police of such states where network of business is spreading fast as well. Following their instructions, the state police is also engaged in contacting banks in Haryana and outside Haryana states, so that the accounts of drug smugglers can be searched and the amount deposited in them can be ascertained. The police also keep an eye on such bank accounts from which huge sums of money have recently been transferred elsewhere. Police are keeping an eye on smugglers' relatives and associates.

# Government to introduce women's reservation bill to increase their status as Nari Shakti Vandan Abhiyan



**SATISH HANDA**

Similar to the Panchayat elections, Union Government has decided 33% reservation for women under 'Nari Shakti Vandan Abhiyan' by the Prime Minister which will not be implemented in coming 2024 Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha polls, can come into effect only after a delimitation based on a census conducted after the Bill has been passed i.e the next delimitation in 2026 as per Parliamentarians in the Lok Sabha during a special session of the Parliament in New Delhi on September 19, 2023. The Union government introduced a Bill to provide one-third reservation to women in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies as the historic first legislation in the new Parliament House to upgrade the status of women, but this quota will not be implemented in general election since the Constitution 128 Amendment Bill, 2023 can be implemented only after a delimitation exercise is completed. Information reveals that within the females quota itself, one third of the seats will be reserved for women belonging to the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes, however there is no other quota for women belonging to the other backward classes.

«Nari Shakti Vandan Abhiyan» after the passage of the Bill, the next delimitation exercise, or redrawing of constituency boundaries, is scheduled to be held in 2026. Effectively, this means that the earliest implementation of the women's quota in the Lok Sabha can be in the 2029 general election, rather than in the coming 2024 polls. The «Narishakti Vandan Adhiniyan» will further strengthen our democracy ensuring rights of the women and putting their power to be used for many noble works. The Bill, referred to as the «Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyan» was introduced by Law Minister Arjun Meghwal in the Lok Sabha when the number of its women members reached 181 from the present 82. Haryana's past scenario reveals that it is unfortunate that only six females reached Lok Sabha in past 45 years which include the names of Chandravati, Kumari Shelja and Shruti Choudhary from Congress, Sudha Yadav and Sunita Duggal from BJP and Kailasho Saini from INLD. Unfortunately, none of the females from important districts Karnal, Rohtak, Hisar, Faridabad, Sonipat and Gurugram in Haryana state were sent to the Lok Sabha by the voters of these districts.

# Haryana Govt launches drive to free 13982 acres panchayat land from encroachers

**SATISH HANDA**

Haryana state government has launched a drive to free panchayat land mostly located in rural areas in the state since a long time having encroachments by the farmers or antisocial elements. Rural Development and Panchayat Minister Devinder Babli said that the total 13982 acres land illegally occupied by the encroachers has been freed by the government in as many as 19 districts across the state and the possession handed over to the Panchayats in past two years which include maximum 8721 acre land in Yamunanagar district,



1487 acre area land in Kaithal district and 908 acre land in Panchkula district and possession of such land already handed over to the concerned Panchayats.

According to information, in past about two years Panchayat land illegally occupied by the encroachers several years ago got vacated and handed over to the Panchayats in other

# Rahul took the 'Mohabbat ki dukaan' to the house of the MP who was taunted by the BJP MP!



**MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA**  
New Delhi

Controversy rages over BJP MP Ramesh Vidhuri's 'indecent' comments in Lok Sabha. He made harsh comments to BSP MP Danish Ali. BJP has already 'show caused' Ramesh. In the meantime, Rahul Gandhi went to Danish Ali's house. The Congress leader informed about this meeting and said, "Love is a shop in the market of hate". Such comments of Rahul have been heard before

with which BJP attacked him. This time, despite the 'indecent' comments of the BJP MP, Rahul was seen pointing out the 'spreading of hate'.

Meanwhile, Danish became emotional and said that he feels he is not alone anymore. In his words, "Rahul Gandhi has come here to boost my morale. Said that I should not mind that and take care of my health. It reassures me that I am not alone". Besides, he complained that the kind of comments he had to suffer was

an attack on the constitution and democracy. Referring to Rahul's 'Mohabbat ki Dukaan' comment, he said, "It is truly regrettable that the bazaar of hatred that was opened on the streets has also been opened inside the new Parliament building when so called Amritkaal is there".

It is to be noted that during the discussion on Chandrayaan on Thursday, Ramesh Bidhuri made a harsh comment to BSP MP Danish Ali. He was repeatedly told to stop but he did not stop and then the controversy flared up. Cabinet Minister Rajnath apologizes and tried to handling the situation. "If the opposition was hurt by that member's comments, I apologise," he was heard saying. Opponents claim, however, that a mere apology is not enough, Ramesh Vidhuri should be suspended.

# Over 3115 dengue positive cases reported in Haryana worries state health department

**SATISH HANDA**

According to Haryana State Health Department information, 3115 dengue positive cases have been reported in government hospitals in the state till 20th September 2023, which is a matter of concern for the department since as many as six persons have been reported died due to brain dead as well as failure of multi organs because of reduction in platelets and low blood pressure. The district-wise number of patients suffering from dengue reported in the state have been identified as maximum number

of 321 cases reported at Charkhi Dadri, 274 cases at Rewari, 233 cases at Rohtak, 213 cases at Jhajjar, 208 cases at Yamunanagar, 205 cases at Ambala, 158 cases at Gurugram, 177 cases at Hisar, 199 cases at Jind, 181 cases at Karnal, 165 cases at Panchkula, 172 cases at Sonapat, 120 cases at Sirsa, 84 cases at Faridabad, 36 cases at Bhiwani, 81 cases at Kaithal, 99 cases at Kurukshetra, 28 cases at Fatehabad, 23 cases at Mohindergarh, 19 cases at Nuh, 37 cases at Palwal and 84 cases at Panipat.

Dengue is a mosquito-borne viral disease that spreads from



one person to the other only when an Aedes mosquito infected with the dengue virus bites a healthy person, especially during day time. It does

not spread by touch, cough or secretions. The symptoms of the disease include high-grade fever, pain in the eyes, skin rashes, headache, body aches

and pain in the joints. In severe cases, dengue fever can lead to difficulty in breathing, severe abdominal pain, vomiting, and bleeding. Most patients with dengue fever have mild illness and can be managed at home by maintaining fluid intake, monitoring symptoms and taking medicines. However, at times it may cause a potentially serious complication called severe dengue (hemorrhage and shock). People suffering from dengue fever should take adequate rest, eat a healthy diet, take plenty of fluids and monitor platelet count and blood pressure closely.

# Dialogue only solution to diplomatic problem: Punjab MP Sahney on India-Canada ties



**CHANDIGARH:** Member of Parliament from Punjab, Vikramjit Singh Sahney, on Friday responded to Indian political dispute with Canada by saying "he always strongly believe dialogue is the only solution to every diplomatic problem".

Sahney expressed concern on the statement of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau for his exaggerated allegation on India.

"Instead of giving a public statement and deporting a senior Indian diplomat without substantiate premises to it, he should have initiated a dialogue with India via diplomatic channels on his concerns or doubts about any interference of India in any of the action on their sovereign soil," Sahney said in a statement here. He also requested the government of India that hostilities "lead us nowhere". "Shutting down the issuance of visas is not a prudent step at all. There are lakhs of Punjabis who reside in Canada, one wrong

step and they will have to face the collateral damage. Canadian Sikhs by and large are pro-India and can't be demeaned for the acts of a handful of fundamentalists," Sahney, who is also the International President of World Punjabi Organisation, said he has been in touch with many progressive Canadian MPs for peaceful resolution of this issue.

Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa chapters of World Punjabi Organisation are also actively involved in the campaigns of unity and brotherhood at this difficult time. Sahney said that fundamentalists are there in every religion and "we should never ever do hasty generalisation about a community because of a few handful of people. Sikhs don't have to give any proof of their patriotism and commitment for India. The history has witnessed largest sacrifices and unparalleled contribution for freedom struggle and nation building by the Sikh community".

# New Parliament: 11 Ministers including PM Modi gets office space on first floor



MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA  
New Delhi

From the Modi cabinet, 11 ministers like Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, Piyush Goyal, S Jaishankar, Nitin Gadkari, Dharmendra Pradhan, Nirmala Sitharaman, Smriti Irani, Ashwini Vaishnav, Arjun Munda and Narendra Singh Tomar were allotted rooms on the ground floor in the New Parliament building as per sources.

The special session of Parliament has started today. On the second day of this five-day session i.e. from September 19, the proceedings of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha of Parliament are to begin in the new building from 1.15pm and 2.15pm respectively. In such a situation, where will the minister's

room be in the new building of Parliament, there is a curiosity in people's minds.

According to the information received from sources, the ground floor of the Prime Minister's office has been built in the new parliament building. Defense Minister Rajnath Singh has been allotted Room No. 34, Home Minister Amit Shah has been allotted Room No. 33, Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari has been allotted Room No. 31, Rajya Sabha Leader Piyush Goyal has been allotted Room No. 30, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has been allotted Room No.12. Foreign Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar has been allotted Room No.10, Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani has been al-

lotted Room No.08. Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has been allotted Room No.41, Railway and Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnav has been allotted Room No.17. Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has been allotted Room No.11 and Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda has been allotted Room No.09.

Similarly, 9 other cabinet ministers have been allotted offices on the first floor of the new parliament building also. MSME Minister Narayan Rane has been allotted Room No.39, Ports, Shipping and AYUSH Minister Sarbanand Sonowal has been allotted Room No. 38. Social Welfare Minister Virender Kumar has been allotted Room No.37. Rural Development Minister Giriraj Singh has been allotted Room No.36. For Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, Room No.20, Food Processing Minister Pashupati Paras, Room No.19. For Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Room No.18, Earth Sciences Minister Kiran Rijju, Room No.17 and Power Minister RK Singh, Room No.16. Apart from this some other cabinet ministers also have been given room on the second floor.

# Congress says Ramesh Bidhuri's remarks 'insult to country', demands his immediate suspension from Lok Sabha

FW CORRESPONDENT  
New Delhi

Bidhuri made certain objectionable remarks targeted at Ali on Thursday night during a discussion in the Lok Sabha on the success of the Chandrayaan-3 lunar mission.

«What Bidhuri has said is an insult to all of us. Strictest possible action should be taken against this MP. If this is not a case for suspension (then what is). Sanjay Singh and Raghav Chadha (of AAP) stand suspended for exercising their democratic right of protest inside Parliament and Mr Bidhuri has spoken in a language that is an insult not only to Danish Ali but also to every MP and every Indian,» the Congress leader said. Ramesh said the defence minister's apology is an «eyewash» and the strongest possible action must be taken against Bidhuri. The remarks were expunged from Parliamentary records and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had immediately expressed regret for Bidhuri's behaviour in the House.

Strongly condemning the remarks, the Congress leader asserted that Bidhuri must be immediately suspended and he should also tender an apology.

«During the special session, the prime minister gave various speeches, saying a «new chapter



will be opened, new energy will be infused» but Ramesh Bidhuri has shown what the BJP's intention and agenda is,» he said.

In a post on X, Ramesh also slammed former Union ministers Ravi Shankar Prasad and Harsh Vardhan for allegedly laughing at the time of Bidhuri's remarks. «Two former Union Cabinet ministers, Ravi Shankar Prasad and Dr. Harsh Vardhan, shamelessly gleeful at the hate speech made by their party colleague Ramesh Bidhuri yesterday in the Lok Sabha. They deserve as much condemnation as the most awful Bidhuri himself,» Ramesh said.

«This is the shameful level to which BJP under Modi-Shah has fallen,» he said. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Friday took «serious note» of the objectionable remarks made by Bidhuri in the House and warned him of «strict action» if such behaviour is repeated in the future, officials said.

# SFJ chief Gurpatwant Singh Pannun on top of security agencies' radar

NEW DELHI: Following the killing/death of three dreaded pro-Khalistani terrorists in the past few months, the name of designated Khalistani terrorist and chief of the banned Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, is on the top of the security agencies' radar now.

Facing 22 criminal cases in Punjab, including three of sedition, Pannun is known to be operating from Khalistani terrorists' safe heaven Canada.

On May 6, Khalistani leader Paramjit Singh Panjwar, the head of the Khalistan Commando Force (KCF), was shot dead in Lahore. On June 15, Avtar Singh Khanda, a leading exponent of Khalistan and handler of separatist Amritpal Singh, died of cancer at a hospital in the UK. Three days later on June 18, Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a Canadian citizen and chief of the banned outfit Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF), was gunned down by two unidentified gunmen outside a gurdwara in Surrey, British Columbia.

Be it the rocket-propelled grenade attack on Punjab Police's Intelligence headquarters in Mohali last year, an audio message asking Kashmiri Muslims residing in Srinagar to go



to Delhi and disrupt the G20 Summit, or assassination threats to multiple Chief Ministers and other who's who via telephonic audio messages — they all have been linked to the proscribed terrorist organisation Sikhs For Justice (SFJ) founded by Pannun. Just last week, Pannun declared to hold «ShaheedNijjar kill India referendum» on the question: Is Indian High Commissioner Verma responsible for the «assassination» of Hardeep Singh Nijjar? He also announced to hold Khalistan Referendum-II on October 29 in Surrey, British Columbia.

Pro-Khalistan leader Nijjar, who was declared a «wanted terrorist» by the Indian government, was shot dead by two unidentified gunmen on the premises of Guru Nanak Sikh

Gurdwara, of which he was the head, in the Punjabi-dominated Surrey city on June 18. Since Nijjar's killing, many radical activists have been questioning as three killings of Sikh separatists took place within one month. They say: Is there a pattern in the sudden killings of three Khalistani terrorists? On Monday, Canada, in a surprise move, expelled a top Indian diplomat amid probe into the killing of Nijjar on its soil.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau claimed «credible allegations of a potential link» between agents of the Indian government and the killing of the Khalistani terrorist. Now the question is over the role being played by Pannun of instigating a momentum on the foreign soil against the Indian government.

# New Vande Bharat Hyderabad to Bengaluru arrive ahead of time on trial run



ARUN KUMAR RAO  
Bengaluru

The new Vande Bharat Express between Bengaluru and Hyderabad trial run, managed to cover the distance between Hyderabad and Bengaluru in slightly over seven and half hours. The two destinations are 610 km apart. South Western Railway (SWR) officials said introduction of Vande Bharat on the route will help passengers in a big way as it will reduce travel time and make travel more comfortable. The train left Kacheguda at 5.30 am and reached Yeshwantpur station in Bengaluru around 1.15 pm. In the return direction, it departed from Bengaluru around 2 pm. Hanning composition of eight cars, the train can carry 530 passengers, including 390 in regular coaches, 52 in executive chairs and 88 in motor cars.

# Jamaat-e-Islami Hind supports Women's Reservation Bill but demands representation of OBC and Muslim women

KAVITA SHARMA

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind feels the Women's Reservation Bill proposed by the government was much required. However, it should also give reservations to women from the OBCs and the Muslim community.

In a statement to the media, the Vice President of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Prof. Salim Engineer said, «For a strong democracy, it is important for all groups and classes to find representation in power-sharing. Even after 75 years since we got independence, the representation of women in Parliament and our state legislatures is quite dismal. Efforts should be made to bring their numbers up to the mark. The Women's Reservation Bill is a good move in this direction. Actually, it should have come quite earlier. However, the draft form of the Bill in its current form does not address the stark social inequalities in a vast country like India by excluding women from OBCs, and Muslim women. Although the legislation does include women from SCs and STs it ignores those from OBCs and the Muslim community. Various reports and studies like the Justice Sachar Committee report (2006), Post-Sachar Evaluation Committee Report (2014), Report of the Expert Group on Diversity Index



(2008), India Exclusion Report (2013-14), 2011 Census and latest NSSO reports - all suggest that Indian Muslims and especially women lack in socio-economic indices. The political representation of Muslims in Parliament and state legislatures has been steadily declining. It is not proportionate to the size of their population.»

**OBC and Muslim Women should not be ignored.**

The JIH Vice President avered, «The proposed reservation will come into effect only after the publication of the next Census and the subsequent delimitation exercise. It means that the benefits of the Bill can be accrued only after 2030. Hence, we feel that the timing of this proposal appears to eye the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections and lacks sincerity. One of the many ways to remove inequality is affirmative action (reservation). Ignoring OBC and Muslim women in the Women's Reservation Bill would be unjust and not in tune with the policy of «Sab ka Saath, Sab ka Vikas.»

# MPs from Bengal BJs are not in the list of speakers in Parliament on women's reservation bill, anger in Bengal brigade

MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA  
New Delhi

In the history of the country, the names of Bengali women are written in golden letters, be it social change or freedom struggle. Politics or social policy, science to technology. Be it in the world of sports or education, music or in the world of cinema, the contribution of Bengali women are well known.

However, in the debate on the women's reservation bill in the parliament, the saffron camp has not included any Bengali MP in the list of its speakers. A few speakers mentioned the contribution of Sarojini Naidu, Matangini Hazra, Geeta Mukhopadhyay

or Mamata Banerjee but left out a long list. The list of names could have been longer if the MPs from Bengal had been given the opportunity to speak. Needless to say, Geeta Mukhopadhyay was the Chairperson of first Committee was set up for Women Reservation Bill in the Parliament. A BJP MP from Bengal who don't want to mention her name, admitted that the opportunity to speak on this issue was missed. Even though they did not say anything publicly, the BJP MPs of Bengal are angry with this decision of the party. The MPs of Bengal BJP camp have decided to bring the matter to the attention of the top leadership.

When the issue of women's

representation is increasing in Parliament is being discussed, Bengali MPs remained absent from the BJP's list. Saffron camp did not keep a single woman on the list of speakers. However, the name was submitted to the Parliamentary Minister Prahlad Joshi on behalf of the Banga Brigade. Sources also said that Bengal's parliamentarians raised the matter with the top leadership of the parliamentary party. A BJP MP from Bengal, who did not want to be named, expressed his anger and said, «This incident has increased the discomfort. The opposition can raise the issue. In that case, Bengali should be criticized, the top leadership should have been more careful.»

# All Zoos on high alert after leopard cubs, 15 deer die at Bannerghatta biological park

ARUN KUMAR RAO  
Bengaluru

Bannerghatta Biological Park (BBP) is witnessing shocking back-to-back deaths of spotted deer (chital) at its animal quarantine facility. Even after stepping up biosecurity measures to contain further spread of Feline panleukopenia (FP) virus among it big cats. This has been happening over the past one week. Adding to the list of growing animal casualties at the park, 15 deer

have died due to gastrointestinal problems cardiac arrest and shock, zoo officials said. Interestingly, all the chital deer that were housed in the quarantine facility were rescued from the city hospital a month ago.

The successive deaths of leopard cubs and now the sudden death of spotted deer have caught the government's attention. A day after the chief wildlife warden sought a report on the infection and status of other animals from BBP officials. Forest Minister



Eshwar B Khandre visited the park and reviewed the situation. Directing forest officials to work in tandem with veterinarians and other technical personnel, the minister ordered «High alert in all zoos of Karnataka» given the

FP virus infection among domesticated cats. Caught off guard by sudden turn of events over the last 15 days Minister Khandre visited the rescue centre, safari and elephant habitat at BBP along with senior officials of the forest department and Zoo Authority of Karnataka (ZAK). Subsequently, he held a meeting with BBP officials.

Speaking to media Minister said, «Zoo are generally the most secure conservation area. But the appalling number of deaths in the

past few days at BBP is indeed shocking. I have also directed zoo officials to immediately flag any such abnormal incidents to higher officials and the state government rather than deal with it at the zoo level on their own» he added.

Minister also directed ZAK officials to vaccinate wild cats, especially cubs, in all other zoos. «I was told by officials that chital deer (spotted deer) that were rescued from a city hospital had died due to infighting, stress and liver cirrhosis.»

# G20 reaches consensus on more power to women

INDEVAR PANDEY

NEW DELHI: Challenges countries to walk the talk in the landscape of global politics and diplomacy, there are moments that stand as beacons of hope and progress. The G20 New Delhi Leaders Declaration of 2023 is one such landmark, with the historic commitment towards gender equality and empowerment of women and girls worldwide. Under India's Presidency, leaders of the G20 agreed to the creation of a Working Group on the empowerment of women to support the G20 Women's Ministerial. This achievement resonates deeply with the recognition of the importance of gender equality and the pressing need to close gender disparities globally.

the focus for the first time from women's development to 'Women-led Development.'

For decades, advocates of gender equality have strived to push this critical issue to the forefront of the global agenda. The journey has been long and challenging, with numerous setbacks along the way. The G20's unanimous decision to include Gender Equality as a central theme in its 2023 declaration is a testament to the tireless efforts and unwavering commitment of leaders, governments, civil society and stakeholders worldwide.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development brought together women trailblazers, entrepreneurs, innovators, scientists, grassroots women leaders and frontline workers, the private sector, civil society, academia, research institutions, defence establishments and also State governments besides delegates and speakers from G20 and guest countries and International Organizations to deliberate on the most pertinent issues facing women worldwide.

The spotlight fell on four priority areas decided by the Ministry, namely Education: A game changing pathway to women's empowerment, Women's Entrepreneurship



: A win-win for equity and economy, Creating Partnerships for Promoting Women's Leadership at all Levels Including at the Grassroots and Women and Girls as Changemakers in Climate Resilience Action. Digital skilling for women's empowerment was a cross cutting theme across all these priority areas. These areas were discussed and deliberated by the G20 EMPOWER initiative and the W20 engagement group. The key takeaways from these meetings reverberated the firm commitments towards gender equality that was adopted in the Chair's Statement of the Ministerial Conference on Women Empowerment and ultimately found a firm place in the G20 Leaders' Declaration.

This was no small feat! Consensus building and ne-

gotiations with international delegates and other stakeholders was an uphill task. Issues of significance for developing countries often did not resonate equally with developed nations.

It was agreed by delegates that outcomes of health, nutrition, education and entrepreneurship cannot be fulfilled without the inclusion of women grassroots community leaders in the G20 discourse. This was further endorsed by adding a new focus area called 'Supporting women entrepreneurs and leaders at the local level' to the legacy of the 'Best Practices Playbook'.

Digital skilling for women's empowerment was a cross-cutting theme across all these priority areas. Prime Minister Modi's commitment to bridging the digital gender divide contributed to the launch of

a ground-breaking 'Tech equity' platform with a focus on digital skilling for women during the MCWE held from the 2nd – 4th August, 2023. Further, partnerships with G20 countries were forged at the MCWE to expand the reach of digital skilling platform to ensure its sustainability. Available in 120 plus languages, this platform is now open for registrations for girls and women from across G20 nations to undertake digital skilling and upskilling courses to accelerate their career growth.

Another tangible outcome is the Mentorship Platform. This can be reckoned to a global oasis where women mentors from G20 nations share their experience and expertise with mentees to implement a collective vision for empowerment of all women. Inspirational stories serve as powerful role models by illuminating the path to success through real-life examples. For the first time, under India's Presidency, the G20 EMPOWER Website has become a stage for 73 inspiring stories from 9 countries documenting remarkable journeys of women who have triumphed across G20 nations. The Indian G20 Presidency

recognised that for policies and strategies to have a true impact, the involvement of citizens in discussions is important leading to the infusion of the spirit of 'Janbhagidari' into the G20 discourse. The Ministry of Women & Child Development through the initiative and engagement groups successfully involved over 300,000 citizens through events ranging from walkathons to flash mobs highlighting Women-led Development. The Ministry organised international conferences to provide a platform for local women artisans, crafts persons and women entrepreneurs to showcase their products and skills making India's G20 Presidency a truly people's event.

The G20 New Delhi Leaders Declaration of 2023 is not only a beacon of hope, but also a call to action. It challenges countries to move beyond rhetoric and take meaningful steps towards gender equality.

Indevar Pandey, Secretary Ministry of Women and Child Development, views are personal

# Jammu and Kashmir to establish mental health authority



FW DESK

Jammu and Kashmir has announced the establishment of a mental health authority which will oversee all mental health facilities and ensure that they are registered with the proper authorities.

According to a notification issued by the Health and Medical Education Department, the Chief Executive of the Mental Health Authority will be the Mission Director of the National Health Mission (NHM) in Jammu and Kashmir.

To govern the functioning of the Mental Health Authority, a set of rules has been formulated, known as 'The Jammu and Kashmir Mental Healthcare (Mental Health Authority) Rules, 2023.' These rules will

come into effect upon their publication in the official gazette. The Mental Health Authority will comprise a Chairperson, the Head of the Department of Psychiatry at Government Medical College in Srinagar/Jammu, and the Mission Director of the National Health Mission in Jammu and Kashmir, who will serve as members for selection purposes. They will be responsible for nominating and selecting non-official members of the J&K Mental Health Authority. Non-official members selected or nominated under these rules will hold their positions for a three-year term and will be entitled to various allowances as applicable to non-official members of similar commissions and committees in the union territory.

RAJIV BHATIA EXPLAINS HOW G-20 WAS A DIPLOMATIC TRIUMPH UNDER INDIA'S LEADERSHIP



## Treading towards shared destiny



The 18th G-20 Summit produced the 'New Delhi Leaders' Declaration'. In the days building up to the summit, there was anxiety about the chances of its success. It hinged on the question of whether the summit would end in a consensus-based, full-spectrum declaration or in a 'Chair's summary', with its portions marked to show a split among the members. Yet, by the afternoon of day 1, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that a complete consensus was reached on the declaration's contents. This, together with the inclusion of the African Union (AU) in the G-20 as a member, turned concern into a joyous celebration. Now it is time to evaluate the declaration and assess its value on the three-fold yardstick of consensus, additionality, and implementability (CAI). The attempt is to dissect only the more important elements of the text.

Six paragraphs of the 'Preamble' and the last paragraph of the 'Conclusion' reveal the goals and driving motivations of the G-20 leaders. "We are One Earth, One Family, and we share One Future", they noted. The notion of unity and a shared destiny was aptly stressed to convey the gravity of the multiple challenges facing humankind today. The way out for the world is to be driven by "the philosophy of living in harmony with our surrounding ecosystem." They worked on harmonising development with the environment, stating that "no country should have to choose between fighting poverty and fighting for our planet."

Paragraph 5 lists 12 goals to which the members are fully committed. These range from securing inclusive growth and accelerating full implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda to addressing debt vulnerability, reform of Multilateral Development Banks, and integrating the perspectives of the Global South into the

"future G-20 agenda." The document's last paragraph reiterates the determination "to steer the world out of its current challenges" and build a bright future. That this will be a long-term project was evident.

Eight paragraphs were devoted to defining the grouping's view of what the preceding ministerial meetings had called "geopolitical issues." A fine balance was struck between the Russian red line and the insistence by G7 on ensuring respect for "territorial integrity and sovereignty or political independence." This middle path, crafted by Indian negotiators, with the valuable help from other countries' diplomats, was seen as the only way to save the summit.

The general verdict was that Russia gained a little more, while the G7 lost a little to prevent the summit's failure. The leaders agreed to call for "a comprehensive, just and durable peace in Ukraine." Whether their labour will have any serious effect on the two warring sides and their backers remains doubtful.

The first-ever expansion of G-20 membership was imbued with much significance. The

document depicts the AU as "a permanent member" even though G-20 does not have permanent and non-permanent members; it has only members and guests. The admission was agreed in the name of creating a more inclusive world. The leaders' commitment on what follows will be watched with real interest; they observed, "We commit to strengthen our ties with and support the African Union realise the aspirations under Agenda 2063." To begin with, G-20 may have to offer ample assistance to facilitate AU's participation in G-20 activities at the level of governments and miscellaneous Engagement Groups.

G-20's central agenda relating to economic and financial sectors, climate action and energy transitions, implementation of SDGs, technological transformation through Digital Public Infrastructure, reform of international financial institutions, trade, and taxation, and securing gender equality and empowerment of "all" women and girls is wide-ranging, ambitious, and even aspirational. Relevant domain experts are in a better position to assess the prospects of this agenda's implementability.

A question that is often asked is, from where will additional financial resources come for achieving all these goals? John Kirton, Director, G-20 Research Group at the University of Toronto, noted, "There was little new money mobilised for debt relief for developing countries, for reform of MDBs and the International Monetary Fund, for global health, or for food security, education and other social needs."

### Reinvigorating multilateralism

Paragraph 47 propounds the view that global challenges of the 21st century can "only be addressed through reinvigorated multilateralism, reforms and international cooperation." It wants the UN institutions to be "more responsive" to the entire membership. The need to make the global governance "more representative, effective, transparent and accountable" has been stated clearly. The fact that these formulations have the support of the entire G-20 leadership creates a glimmer of hope of some progress in the future, even though realism demands that the proponents of reform to remain cautious.

On the CAI yardstick, it is obvious that the declaration is not only backed by "100%" consensus, but it also breaks new grounds and records progress in terms of concepts, goals, and objectives, as compared to the Bali Declaration. The key criterion for the success of the summit is the degree of implementation of its decisions. But this will be accorded an answer only in the medium term.

Meanwhile, there should be no hesitation in recognising that the summit has been a major political and diplomatic success for G-20 and its current president, India.

Rajiv Bhatia is Distinguished Fellow, Gateway House, a former Ambassador and author. Views are personal.

DR. PRATHAP C. REDDY BELIEVES REIMAGINED HEALTHCARE MAKES INDIA AI-LEADER AND HELPS IT COMBAT NCDS



## India is at a pivotal moment in health-care journey

In the last few years, India has steadily become a strong voice for various critical issues. Whether it is climate change, electrification, new-age manufacturing or the space race, India is at the forefront and even leading the change. This has never been more apparent recently when India became the first country to successfully land a mission near the south pole of the moon and concluded a very successful G-20 presidency, fostering global alignment on a range of key issues.

It is heartening to witness a new India emerging — an India that is ambitious; an India that believes in its destiny to be the global leader; an India that is guided by the heritage of an ancient civilisation but fuelled by the energy, passion and ambition of its youth. However, this is also the same India that is now the world's diabetes capital; also, millions have hypertension, and its youth are succumbing to heart attacks, cancer, respiratory issues, depression and more.

If left unchecked, India's non-communicable diseases (NCD) burden will be nearly \$4 trillion by 2030. This is one of the biggest roadblocks to India's development and will create an 'age tax' on India's demographic dividend. We must act together, and with urgency to prevent this or else India's decade could turn into a generation of lost opportunity. I urge the healthcare industry to join hands and protect India from this menace by increasing awareness, advocating better lifestyle choices and enabling comprehensive health checks that include proper scans instead of having just blood tests that are simply inadequate to test for many early signs of diseases.

The country has come a long way from 1983 when we started Apollo and has made tremendous progress on key health metrics.



Infant mortality has improved by four times, maternal mortality has improved by seven times and the average life expectancy of an Indian is up nearly 30% from 55 years to over 70 now.

In fact, today, India has a world-class healthcare infrastructure along with incredible clinical talent that delivers the best in class clinical outcomes at an incredible scale and at a fraction of the global price. India's expertise in highly specialised areas such as organ transplants, cardiology, oncology and more has made the country a fast-growing destination for medical value travel (MVT), not just for the price but also for the speed of access and the sheer quality of care.

India has emerged as a global MVT hub, particularly in the fields of oncology, orthopaedics, and robotic surgery. A significant milestone in this journey is the introduction of proton beam therapy technology, making India a regional leader in cancer treatment. Patients from across the globe are drawn to India for its world-class medical expertise, state-of-the-art infrastructure, and cost-effective care.

Orthopaedic procedures, including joint replacements and spinal surgeries, are con-

ducted by highly skilled surgeons using minimally invasive techniques. This attracts patients seeking top-notch orthopaedic care at competitive prices. Robotic surgery has also gained popularity, with India's hospitals adopting robotic-assisted techniques for precision and faster recovery. The country's expertise in this area draws international patients seeking minimally invasive, high-precision surgical interventions.

MVT is gaining strategic importance given its ability to create employment as well as earn foreign exchange. While India is already one of the leading destinations for patients seeking care abroad, there is adequate headroom for growth.

Moreover, fostering collaboration between the public and private sectors is crucial for realising this vision. Public-private partnerships can help create a conducive environment for MVT by jointly investing in infrastructure, promoting medical tourism, and setting up international health-care accreditation bodies.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming health care worldwide, and India has the potential to be at the forefront of this revolution. The country possesses a vast pool

of talented data scientists, engineers, and health-care professionals who can drive innovation in AI-driven health-care solutions.

One of the key areas where AI can make a significant impact is in diagnostics. AI-powered tools can enhance the accuracy and efficiency of medical diagnoses, leading to faster treatment decisions and better patient outcomes. Additionally, AI can help predict disease outbreaks, analyse health-care data, and optimise treatment plans, expediting health-care procedures, and revolutionising drug discovery ultimately making health care more personalised and effective.

India has already made strides in AI applications for health care, but it must continue to invest in research and development, foster collaborations between academia and industry, and create an ecosystem that encourages innovation. Doing so can position India as a global leader in AI-driven health-care solutions, exporting its expertise to benefit health-care systems worldwide. AI expenditure in India is expected to reach \$11.78 billion by 2025. It is expected to add \$1 trillion to India's economy by 2035.

India stands at a pivotal moment in its healthcare journey. By reimagining its healthcare model, the country can position itself as the global destination for medical value travel, a powerhouse in AI-driven healthcare solutions, and a leader in combating NCDs. To achieve this vision, India must prioritise community health, foster public-private partnerships, and invest in innovation and research. With concerted efforts and a commitment to excellence, a healthier and more prosperous India can be built for generations to come.

Dr. Prathap C. Reddy is Founder and Chairman, Apollo. Views are personal.

## Empowerment awaits: Women, claim your rights!

The recent passage of the women's reservation bill in the Lok Sabha, nearly three decades after its initial introduction, is a monumental step towards dismantling the political glass ceiling that has long overshadowed Indian politics. The current representation of women in the Lok Sabha, a mere 15%, underscores a glaring gender disparity in our political landscape. The Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, or the 128th Constitution Amendment Bill, aims to rectify this by reserving a third of the seats in both the Lok Sabha and legislative Assemblies for women, albeit with a 15-year sunset clause. The commendable decision to make this the first bill introduced in the new Sansad Bhavan speaks volumes about the importance of this issue. However, the celebration is somewhat tempered by the fact that its implementation is contingent upon delimitation and the Census. Linking the bill's execution to delimitation is perplexing, as the principle of reserving seats for women transcends the territorial boundaries of constituencies. Consequently, the 2024 general election will not witness the 33% reservation for women. Furthermore, while the bill ensures that a third of the seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are allocated to women, the demand for an internal quota for women of Other Backward Classes should not be a pretext for further delays. The objective should be clear: genuine representation, not mere tokenism. As of now, the broader picture remains concerning. Women in India grapple with limited access to health, nutrition, and education, face unsafe environments, and are increasingly excluded from the workforce. Among the G-20 nations, India's female labor force participation is alarmingly the lowest. India, a nation that granted women voting rights from its inception, must not waver in ensuring enhanced political representation for them. For holistic growth and transformative change, women's voices must resonate in the corridors of power.

**LETTERBOX**  
Readers' feedback adds value to the newspaper. Please email comments on reports, features and columns to [fwletters@gmail.com](mailto:fwletters@gmail.com). We will publish them on this page.

Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow.  
Albert Einstein

**THE FINANCIAL WORLD**

RNI NO. DELENG/2011/38860  
PRINTED & PUBLISHED BY SWINDER BAJWA ON BEHALF OF FW MEDIA  
PRINTED AT JAGJIT PUBLISHING CO. PVT LTD D-12, INDUSTRIAL AREA, PHASE-1, MOHALI, PUNJAB 160059  
PRINTER & PUBLISHER SWINDER BAJWA  
OWNER : FW MEDIA  
PUBLISHED AT: BUILDING NO-23, NEHRU PLACE NEW DELHI 110019; PHONE: 9888040061  
EDITOR\* ABDUL WASEY  
(\*RESPONSIBLE FOR SELECTION OF NEWS UNDER THE PRB ACT)

### BOOKS: REVIEW

## New book unveils South Asia through echoes of the past

In "Shadows at Noon," Joya Chatterji embarks on a meticulous journey through the annals of South Asian history, offering readers a panoramic view of the 20th century. The book, laden with endnotes, is not just a historical recount but a tapestry of political, cultural, and social narratives that shaped the subcontinent.

Chatterji's narrative is punctuated with moments of reflection, such as her deep dive into the formation of Pakistan at Independence. She paints a vivid picture of a nascent nation grappling with its identity, governed by a migrant bureaucracy and adopting Urdu as its national language. Such insights compel readers to pause, reflect, and often revisit previous sections, enriched by the extensive notes and references.

The author's recommendations for films, like Satyajit Ray's "Pathar Panchali," are seamlessly woven into the narrative, serving as visual aids to the cultural and

societal norms she discusses. These cinematic interludes, combined with personal anecdotes and family stories, lend a unique texture to the book, making it more than just a historical account.

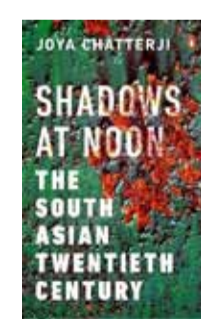
Thematically structured, Chatterji's chapters flow with a chronological undertone. She juxtaposes significant events, like the formation of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh against the backdrop of Gandhi's grassroots movement. Throughout, she highlights missed opportunities that might have prevented Partition, emphasizing the politics of compromise.

One of the book's strengths is Chatterji's observation of the "fascinating symmetry" post-Partition between India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. These parallels, more than mere coincidences, underscore the shared legacies and interconnected histories of these nations.

However, "Shadows at Noon" is not without its biases. Chatterji's personal views, especially her cri-

terji's approach to history is both academic and personal, making the book accessible to both scholars and general readers. Her meticulous research is evident in the depth and breadth of the topics she covers, from the intricacies of nation-building to the cultural nuances of cinema and leisure.

Chatterji's writing style is engaging and evocative. She has a knack for bringing history to life, making the past feel immediate and relevant. Her descriptions are vivid, and her insights are sharp, often challenging conventional wisdom and prompting readers to think critically about the events and figures they thought they knew. This is not a passive read; it's an interactive journey that encourages readers to question, reflect, and engage with the material.



Shadows at Noon: The South Asian Twentieth Century By Joya Chatterji Penguin Viking, 864 pages, Rs 1,299

One of the standout features of the book is its interdisciplinary approach. Chatterji doesn't limit herself to political history; she delves into cultural, social, and even personal histories, painting a holistic picture of South Asia in the 20th century. This multifaceted approach provides readers with a richer understanding of the region, highlighting the interconnectedness of its various aspects.

In "Shadows at Noon," Chatterji has crafted a masterful narrative that is both informative and thought-provoking. It's a testament to her skills as a historian and storyteller. Whether you're a student of South Asian history or just a curious reader, this book is a must-read. It challenges, enlightens, and entertains, making it a valuable addition to the canon of historical literature.

In conclusion, "Shadows at Noon" is a compelling read, offering a fresh perspective on South Asian history. Chatterji's blend of personal anecdotes, cinematic references, and historical events makes it a unique addition to the genre. It's a call for empathy, understanding, and a deeper appreciation of the shared history of South Asia.

## Govt to meet 70% of India's IT hardware needs through local production in next 3 years : Chandrasekhar



**NEW DELHI:** The government aims to meet up to 70 per cent of the country's IT hardware requirement through local production in the next three years, Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar said on Friday.

Speaking to reporters, Chandrasekhar said Ministry of Electronics and IT will

share a draft of IT hardware import rules with industry players later in the day as it looks to curb dependence on supplies from non-trusted sources. "At present, almost 80 per cent of our supplies to the digital ecosystem come from imports. We want to make sure whatever the sources are, they are trusted. As part of emphasising trust,

it is obvious that the Indian component of that supply chain will have to grow. Today 8-10 per cent of our supply requirement comes from India, we want to make that 65-70 per cent in the next three years," the minister said.

As per reports, around 40 companies, including Dell, HP, and Lenovo, have applied

“ At present, almost 80 per cent of our supplies to the digital ecosystem come from imports. We want to make sure whatever the sources are, they are trusted. As part of emphasising trust, it is obvious that the Indian component of that supply chain will have to grow.”

for the IT hardware PLI scheme with a commitment to make personal computers, laptops, tablets, servers and other equipment worth Rs 4.65 lakh crore during the scheme period. Although the industry players have lauded the government's PLI scheme, but they have shown concerns about abrupt restrictions on import of IT hardware. The new rules to allow restricted imports of laptop, tablets, server etc are proposed to be in place from November 1

## Raids on Sambad office trigger political storm



**ARABINDA MOHAPATRA Bhubaneswar**

Political atmosphere in Odisha has heated up following the recent raid of Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Odisha Police on the office of leading Odia daily Sambad which is owned and edited by senior Biju Janata Dal (BJD) leader and Khandapada MLA Soumya Ranjan Patnaik.

Soumya, who happens to be the son-in-law of former chief minister JB Patnaik, who was the face of the Congress party for a long time in Odisha, has been critical of the BJD government led by Naveen Patnaik for the past some time. He also wrote scathing articles targeting the chief minister's private secretary VK Pandian, questioning his visits to different districts which allegedly undermined the authority of elected public representatives.

The raid on the Sambal office was conducted by separate teams of EOW on September 18 after the investigating wing of the state police registered a case under different sections of the IPC including 420 (cheating) and 120-B (conspiracy). The raiding parties are reported to have seized important documents.

Sambad, on the other hand, has clarified that the paper fully cooperated with the enforcement agency. It also termed the entire issue as "a clear case of political vendetta and an attack on the freedom of the press." It is pertinent to mention that the

ruling BJD on September 12 had removed Soumya from the post of party's vice-president after he wrote some controversial editorial pieces targeting the government and made statements on television channels raising questions on the rising influence of bureaucrats in the government and the party.

The case against Sambad was registered following allegations that a large number of employees of the paper were forced to take personal loans under threat. The loan amount running into crores of rupees was not given to the employees but allegedly used by their employer company Eastern Media Limited. The case was registered on September 16 this year against Bajiyanti Kar (HR Manager), Soumya Ranjan Patnaik (Editor) and others following a complaint by Asim Mohapatra, an ex-employee of Sambad.

Mohapatra, in his complaint, made serious allegations of bank loan fraud involving cheating, forgery and criminal intimidation. He said he was allegedly forced by the accused to sign some bank loan forms against his will and paying capacity. He was allegedly threatened that if he did not do what he was asked to he would lose his job. Under pressure, he was forced to sign many blank forms including some blank cheques. The former employee said he did not know the details, but later came to know that a loan of Rs 5 lakh was taken in his name but it was actually used by Sambad

or Eastern Media Limited. "He did not get a single penny out of this loan. He was forced to sign for such loans on two different occasions in two different banks," the investigating agency said adding that more than 300 employees of Sambad/Eastern Media limited were forced to sign on forged documents and about Rs 50 crore have thus been fraudulently secured by Soumya Ranjan Patnaik using these forged papers. During the course of the investigation, the EOW is said to have examined some vital witnesses.

The raids have triggered a political storm since Soumya has been critical of not only the style of chief minister Naveen Patnaik's functioning but also his powerful private secretary, V.K. Pandian. The Congress and the BJD described the raid as political vendetta. "Why were the Sambad employees silent for such a long time? They have suddenly woken up. Are they being prompted by someone?" asked a veteran Congress leader.

Soumya became a thorn in the government's side after he began questioning Pandian's style of functioning and his visits to different districts at government's expense. Soumya's daughter Tanaya Patnaik wrote on social media that the government was using pressure tactics against her father and his media house.

Significantly, the raids come at a time when major parties in the state are busy preparing for the next general elections which is going to be crucial for all of them but especially chief minister Naveen Patnaik who will be seeking a straight sixth term in office. If he succeeds he will become the longest serving chief minister of the country.

Soumya, who is a media baron, carries the tag of being a party hopper. He has had stints in the Congress and the BJP and had also floated his own party. He joined the BJD much later and was nominated to the Rajya Sabha by the party.

## Mandatory to disclose weekly sugar stocks, orders Centre



**NEW DELHI:** To combat hoarding and curb unscrupulous speculation in the sugar market, the Centre has issued orders to mandatory disclose stock position of sugar for traders/wholesaler, retailer, big chain retailer, processors of sugar on the portal (<https://esugar.nic.in>) of Department of Food and Public Distribution every Monday. This proactive mandatory measure of weekly stock disclosure empowers regulatory authorities to closely monitor stock levels and take prompt action against any potential market manipulation.

This fully digital initiative will also provide real-time data on sugar stocks and help the Centre to make further policy decisions, as and when need arises, to mitigate the impact of rumours of rising sugar prices on consumers and the industry. With 83 Lakh Metric Tonne (LMT) at the end of August 2023 and expected beginning of crushing in October 2023, India has sufficient stocks for domestic consumption with no foreseeable shortage in the coming festival season. Further, the Centre is also expecting co-operation from sugar mills and traders to adhere to the relevant laws and monthly domestic quota norms. Strict action will be taken against the mills violating the same. In fact, the Centre has released first tranche of domestic sales quota of 13 LMT also which sugar mills can start selling with immediate effect. More quota is expected to be released in due course in view of market conditions.

## Vivek Katoch gets the command of IDSA Chairman, Harish Pant Vice Chairman



**FW DESK New Delhi**

Vivek Katoch, Director - Corporate Affairs, Oriflame, has been elected as the new Chairman of the Indian Direct Selling Association (IDSA), the apex body of the direct selling industry in India.

Katoch has held this coveted post for the second time. He also represents the Indian direct selling industry as a member delegate on the Board of the World Federation of Direct Selling Associations (WFDSA).

The elections to the new executive committee of IDSA were held at its 27th Annual General Meeting here on Thursday, in which Harish Pant, Director and Head of Government Relations, Herbalife International, was elected as Vice Chairman, Aprajita Sarkar, Head of Growth Office, Modicare Limited, as Treasurer, and Rajat Banerji, Vice President, Corporate Affairs, Amway India, as Secretary. The new Executive Committee will hold office for a period of two years.

On the occasion of assuming the charge of the post of chairman, Katoch said, "The direct selling industry in the country is growing at a steady pace. Apart from making an important contribution to the country's economy, the industry has provided livelihood opportunities and alternative sources of income to around nine million people working full-time or part-time. The industry has now made inroads into rural areas as well, and we are committed to taking this to every nook and cranny of the country."

## ITPO to develop 5-star hotel at Pragati Maidan in Delhi

**MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA New Delhi**

A hotel within PragatiMaidan complex will help minimise traffic disruptions and logistic challenges during large-scale events like the G20 Summit in the future. Following the recent completion of the G20 Summit at the newly developed PragatiMaidan, the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), which oversees the complex, is looking to develop a five-star hotel within the 123-acre complex, senior officials aware of the project said on Tuesday.

The initial redevelopment plan for PragatiMaidan in 2019 envisaged a state-of-the-art private hotel, built over a 3.7-acre site at



the complex, but the idea failed to materialise following the onset of Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, officials said. ITPO will float requests for proposals (RFPs) for the project to rope in private companies from the hospitality industry to develop the hotel, which will be a private sector enterprise - ITPO will monetise the land, while the developer would be able to run the facility for a lease period of 99 years.

The initial redevelopment

plan for PragatiMaidan in 2019 envisaged a state-of-the-art private hotel, built over a 3.7-acre site at the complex, but the idea failed to materialise following the onset of Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, officials said. A senior ITPO official said a hotel within the PragatiMaidan complex will help minimise traffic disruptions and logistic challenges faced during large-scale events such as the G20 Summit in the future. "A hotel within the complex will help further smoothen the process for holding large-scale national and international events at the Bharat Mandapam centre as dignitaries would be able to stay within the complex area," the official said, requesting anonymity.

## Auto dealers body FADA to form alliance with several Retail associations



**NEWDELHI:** Federation of Automobile Dealers Association (FADA) has expressed interest to partner with other apex retail bodies including CAIT (Confederation of All India Traders), and RAI (Retailers Association of India) for a better market power.

"We need to protect our members. If we work together as a retail community, we will be able to establish something on a larger scale," Manish Singhania, President, FADA, told ETAuto. The auto dealers' lobby body had earlier proposed an Automobile Dealer's Protection Act as "there is no law to protect the interest of the retailers in India". He told ETAuto that as an independent auto dealers body it is not getting the kind

of traction on the national level needed to propose such laws in Parliament.

Despite having optimism about the upcoming months, FADA said there are concerns towards regarding viability and unauthorised operation of Multi Brand Outlets (MBOs). Currently, there are only a handful of authorised MBOs in the electric two wheeler space. But a lot of dealers and OEMs are selling their petrol/diesel passenger vehicles and two wheelers to unauthorised retailers who are in turn setting up MBOs. The unauthorised sales agencies can affect the consumer buying as the vehicles they sell are usually not registered, Singhania said.

## THE STORRY BAND - so far untold story of Delhi's edupreneur couple...!

**RAJU WILLIAM New Delhi**

Shabadjit Bawa and his wife Divya Bawa are products of the Passion economy. Having been in the education field for almost two decades, they divested their profitably running chain of preschools and daycare centres founded by them and let their passion and talent give birth to the brand - THE STORRY BAND.

Born in 2020 amid Covid-19 pandemic out of a necessity to 'make learning joyful' THE STORRY BAND is a learning space that brings people with passion and varied skills to work with children to deliver curated learning experiences.

How did it actually happen? Shabadjit narrates excitedly that having spent almost 2 years with their then 5-year-old daughter Nani Caur during the pandemic and seeing how creativity and curiosity was driving her imagination led them to create an engaging learning space supported by play and stories.

"We decided to run online programs for 4-5 year old children. The biggest challenge was how do we engage with the



so small in age on the screen? We defined our objective. If a Disney movie can engage a child for 90 minutes, can we do the same in 60 minute? Having ideated on this thought, we narrowed down the puzzle to 3 pieces - passionate educators, engaging resources and training educators - to make learning joyful and engaging. All the 3 pieces had to be in place before we could move forward. And we successfully did it," explains the edupreneur couple.

To evolve a remunerative model for all the stakeholders was the next challenge to profitably sustain this venture. How did Bawas overcome this



challenge?

And the model emerged: "The educators had to be one with us - feel ownership and be excited every time they came online to teach. We did something that nobody had done before - we made them our 'partners' and not employees. They had to be treated as co-owners; needed to have the flexibility to decide. And importantly, how much they wanted to earn, which days and the time of work suited them. They are now working on a revenue-sharing basis. Their growth and ability to earn depends on quality of their contribution to retain the child."

## Sale of iPhone 15 sees 100 pc growth versus iPhone 14 series on day 1

**FW CORRESPONDENT New Delhi**

Sale of Apple's iPhone 15 is estimated to have registered a 100 per cent growth compared to that of the iPhone 14 series on the first day with high demand for made-in-India iPhone 15 and iPhone 15 Plus models, according to industry sources.

Apple has for the first time made available the 'made-in-India' iPhone on the same day it started selling the devices in the country and other parts of the globe.

Till evening, 6 pm IST, the sales of iPhone 15 series have recorded over 100 per cent growth on Day 1 compared to the sale of iPhone 14. There are



long queues everywhere and more people have started coming after their office hours," an industry source, who did not wish to be identified, told to media

An email query sent to Apple did not elicit any reply.

Apple has started selling made-in-India iPhone 15 and iPhone 15 Plus, having colour options of pink, yellow, green, blue, and black with 128 GB, 256 GB, and 512 GB storage capacities, at starting prices of Rs 79,900 and Rs 89,900,

respectively. The iPhone 15 Pro and iPhone 15 Pro Max are available in black titanium, white titanium, blue titanium, and natural titanium finishes.

The price of iPhone 15 Pro starts at Rs 1,34,900 and is available in 128GB, 256GB, 512GB, and 1TB storage capacities.

iPhone 15 Pro Max starts at Rs 1,59,900 and is available in 256GB, 512GB, and 1TB storage capacities.

iPhone 15 Pro Max with 1 TB storage is being sold for Rs 1.99 lakh apiece in India. The iPhone 15 series marks several firsts for Apple in India. This is the first time that customers are able to buy iPhones from Apple Stores in Delhi

and Mumbai.

According to another industry source, the iPhone 15 Pro series was booked by more customers but demand for iPhone 15 and iPhone 15 Plus was also high at Apple stores, and Apple Premium Reseller stores.

To woo customers, Reliance Retail has bundled six months of free Jio services and unlimited data usage for iPhone 15 customers.

Quick commerce firm Blinkit announced a partnership with Apple Premium Reseller Unicorn to deliver iPhone 15 and iPhone 15 Plus to customers within 10 minutes of placing orders in Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Pune, and Bengaluru.

## Amazon presents Multi-Channel fulfilment for sellers and Brands Across India

**NEW DELHI:** E-commerce giant Amazon on Thursday announced the launch of Multi-Channel Fulfilment (MCF) in India for buyers and sellers.

Sellers including D2C (direct-to-consumer) brands, manufacturers, and retailers from across industries can enhance their fulfilment operations and customer experience by leveraging Amazon's pan-India presence and state-of-the-art fulfilment centres.

This includes Amazon's logistics capabilities to handle customer orders received from a wide range of sales channels, including their own websites, enabling seamless fulfilment with speed and convenience.



Through MCF, Amazon democratises customer order fulfilment and enables sellers to expand their market reach in India by leveraging Amazon's extensive coverage of 100 per cent of India's serviceable pin codes (over 20,000 pin codes), opening up new business opportunities.

"The challenges of digitisation, limited reach, and

productivity constraints often hamper the expansion of medium and small-scale brands, along with other challenges like inventory tracking and high shipping costs," said Vivek Somareddy, vice president of Fulfilment Channels and Global Trade, Amazon India.

"MCF addresses these challenges through comprehensive and best-in-class solutions for all their fulfilment needs. It allows sellers to focus on core business activities like product development, marketing, and customer service," he added.

He said that the fulfilment solution ensures super-fast delivery, 24x7 fulfilment of customer orders.

# Indian Economy gains strength amid Fading Global Prospects: RBI

**MUMBAI:** India's economy is achieving power in the middle of a weakening global prospects, said an article published in the latest RBI bulletin on Monday.

The gain is led by domestic private consumption and fixed investment with strong public sector capital expenditure.

The outlook for the global economy remains ambivalent, driven by a dichotomy in macroeconomic conditions across regions, the article on 'State of the Economy' stated.

While expectations of a 'Goldilocks' soft landing in the US are strengthening, concerns about slowdowns in China and Europe are rife, it said, and added that the impact of aggressive monetary tightening is spreading, with the services sector joining housing, bank lending and industrial production in a loss of momentum.



The article authored by a team led by RBI deputy governor Michael Debabrata Patra also noted that India's G20 Presidency and its outcomes with the ethos of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' as the vision of global progress assume significance in an environment where global economic activity is experiencing a loss of momentum with a dichotomy in

macroeconomic conditions across regions.

"Amidst weakening global prospects, the Indian economy is gaining strength led by domestic drivers' private consumption; and fixed investment with strong public sector capex.

"Supply responses are improving and headline inflation has softened in August from the previous month's peak," it said.

## Vishwakarma Scheme Recipients To Undergo Three-Layer Verification: FM

**NEW DELHI:** Union Minister for Finance Nirmala Sitharaman said that the identification of local craftsmen and artisans who are eligible for credit support of up to Rs 3 lakh in two tranches under the Vishwakarma scheme will go through a three-layer verification process.

The verification process will be done each by gram panchayats, district collectors and state-appointed committees.

The Ministry of MSME will also provide skilling camps and toolkits, and facilitate access to these local products in domestic and international markets, she added at the launch of the new central scheme on Sunday.

The MSME ministry will extend collateral-free loans to recipients of the scheme. Vishwakarma scheme has an outlay of Rs 13,000 crore until FY28.

It aims to recognise traditional artisans and craftspeople, and give them recognition through Vishwakarma certificates, ID cards and collateral-free loans, apart from training and helping



them access markets. After the three-step verification process, a final list of recipients will be drawn up by the government, said the FM. They will be given credit support of up to Rs 1 lakh (first tranche) and Rs 2 lakh (second tranche) at a concessional interest rate of 5 per cent. The first tranche will have to be repaid within 18 months.

Recipients of the scheme will also be given a daily stipend of Rs 500 during the five-day skilling camps.

A toolkit with digital currency features and access to the government's e-market place will also be provided.

## TruCap, HDFC Bank enter into Co-Lending Agreement for MSME borrowers

**NEW DELHI:** TruCap Finance Limited (TRU) and HDFC Bank, on Thursday announced their partnership to offer loans to underserved borrowers such as MSMEs.

Under the pact, TRU will leverage its Lending-as-a-Service (L-a-a-S) model to offer quality credit solutions to underserved borrowers, primarily in non-urban locations.

Both HDFC Bank and TRU will extend MSME business loans and gold loans under this collaboration.

Industry estimates indicate that the MSME sector has an overall credit demand of Rs 69.3 trillion, growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 11.5 per cent. Less than 15 per cent of this demand is met by formal lending channels.

TRU, which specialises in MSME lending, focuses on offering affordable credit solutions aimed at propelling the growth of small businesses.



Rohan Juneja, managing director and chief executive officer of TRU, noted, "The partnership with HDFC Bank will serve our mission where both entities will benefit from TRU's sourcing, distribution, assessment, and collection capabilities in non-urban markets. This ensures effective deployment of capital to guarantee last-mile credit delivery."

TRU has already disbursed over Rs 2,000 crore in loans, aiding more than 190,000 customers and contributing to the credit inclusion of underserved businesses.

The company's expansive network includes more than 118 branches scattered across

over 50 cities in the MSME clusters of West, Central, and North India.

This extensive presence enables TRU to deliver timely credit solutions to small businesses for varied needs, such as availing working capital or purchasing assets, thereby enhancing revenue and livelihood generation in non-metro regions.

Sumant Rampal, Group Head - Business Banking & Rural Banking, HDFC Bank said, "The partnership with TruCap helps us in expanding financial inclusion to the last mile customer and provides them with convenience, speed and affordability. This joint work is allowing us to reach customers in semi-urban and rural markets and the mini-micro-segment of MSMEs. With quick approvals, competitive rates, and extended reach, this collaboration empowers more individuals and businesses to fulfill their dreams."

## ESIC Registers 19.88 Lakh New Workers In July



**NEW DELHI:** As per Employees' State Insurance Corporation's (ESIC) provisional payroll data 19.88 lakh new employees have been added in the month of July, 2023.

Around 27,870 new establishments have been registered and brought under the social security umbrella of the Employees' State Insurance Corporation in the month of July, 2023, said Ministry of Labour & Employment on Wednesday.

Data evidently reveals that more jobs have been generated for the youth of the nation as out of the total 19.88 lakh employees added during the month. About 9.54 lakh employees up to the age group of 25 years constitute the majority of new registrations which is 47.9 per cent of the total employees. Gender-wise analysis of payroll data indicates that net enrolment of female members has been 3.82 lakh in July, 2023. The data shows that a total 52 transgender employees have also got registered under ESI Scheme in the month of July, 2023.

## 24 carat gold seized having a market value of Rs. 68,67,654



JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

Custom officials have seized 24 carat gold purity was seized having a market value of Rs. 68,67,654 from passenger who have arrived here from Dubai by Spicejet flight.

In a statement issued here today, official stated that the staff of Shri Guru Ramdas ji international Airport (SGRDI), Amritsar intercepted one passenger coming from Dubai by Spicejet flight SG56 in the morning of the 19.09.2023. On his personal search, the passenger was found to be carrying two packets containing gold in paste form concealed in his turban. The packets were wrapped with grey adhesive tapes. The gross weight of two packets was 1632 grams (813+819). After extraction total 1159 grams (578+581) of gold of 24 carat purity was recovered from the passenger having a market value of Rs. 68,67,654 appx. The same were seized under section 110 of Custom Act, 1962. Further investigation is under process.

## India Ratings Increases India's FY24 GDP Growth Estimates to 6.2 per cent

**NEW DELHI:** India Ratings and Research on Wednesday revised India's GDP growth estimate for FY24 to 6.2% from 5.9% projected earlier.

The rating agency has quoted sustained government capex, deleveraged balance sheet of corporates and banking sector, and the prospect of a new private corporate capex cycle.

It has however cautioned that the Indian economy faces challenges from slowing exports, which contracted during the April-July period amid global headwinds and deficient monsoon.

"Tighter financial condi-



tions have led to rise in the interest rate/cost of capital, and industrial growth, especially manufacturing growth continues to be tepid," the report said.

The Indian economy grew at 7.8% in the first quarter of the current fiscal year on higher government and private capital expenditure, and strong

services growth.

"All these risks will continue to weigh and restrict India's GDP growth to 6.2% in FY24 (FY23: 7.2%), and the quarterly GDP growth, which came in at 7.8% in 1QFY24, is slated to slow down sequentially in the remaining three quarters of FY24," said Sunil Kumar Sinha, Principal Economist, India Ratings and Research.

While the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is expecting the same, it estimates the overall FY24 GDP to come in at 6.5%.

RBI has forecast Q1FY24 real GDP growth at 7.8% and full-year growth at 6.5%.

## Bitcoin logs over 700K transactions in single day after almost 2 years

Bitcoin has witnessed an extraordinary surge in transaction volume in the past week, logging over 700,000 transactions in a single day, a new data has shown.

According to the data presented by the analytics firm IntoTheBlock, the number of reported Bitcoin transactions increased to nearly 703,000, representing not only the highest number recorded in 2023, but also the highest transaction volume seen in nearly two years.

"Historic Milestone: Bitcoin processed a record-breaking 703K transactions on Friday,



the firm posted on X. Moreover, the network also saw an increase in the number of daily active addresses. According to the data from Bitinfocharts,

the number of daily active addresses reached a multi-month high on September 15, rising from 754,000 two years ago to a whopping 1.08 million.

A day earlier, Ethereum briefly crossed Bitcoin in terms of daily active addresses. In April, Bitcoin trading volume sank by almost \$700 billion, historically seen as one of the strongest months for Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies, bringing the biggest average monthly returns. Although Bitcoin topped over \$30, 400 on April 18, reaching the highest level since early June, its monthly gain was only 3 per cent, way down from 21 per cent in March and much less than gains usually seen in the fourth month of the year, according to data by BitcoinCasinos.com.

## India's Vegetable Oil Imports Rises 33% YoY: SEA

**NEW DELHI:** India's vegetable oil imports have increased by 33 per cent year-on-year to reach 18.66 lakh tonne in August. This is attributed to lower duties and a revival of demand after a decline in domestic rates, as reported by the Solvent Extractors' Association (SEA).

India is the world's leading vegetable oil buyer, and its imports for August 2022 have reached 14.01 lakh tonnes.

The total vegetable oil imports for the first ten months of the 2022-23 oil year (November to October) have grown by 24 per cent to 141.21 lakh tonne compared to 113.76 lakh tonne in the same period last year.

Of the total vegetable oil shipments undertaken in August, edible oils comprised 18.52 lakh tonne, while non-edible oils were 14,008. Palm oil imports have reached 11.28 lakh tonne in August. The SEA has released a statement indicating that the import of edible oils in the first ten months has reached 141.21 lakh tonnes.

The statement predicts that



the current oil year, which ends in October 2023, will likely see a record import of over 160 to 165 lakh tonne given the current trends. The industry body cited the drop in domestic edible oil prices despite ample domestic availability as the reason for the rise in imports, as reflected in the August data. Crude palm oil imports have rebounded, regaining competitiveness against soybean and other oils, totalling 8.24 lakh tonnes in August, slightly down from 8.41 lakh tonne in the previous month. According to the SEA, the current low duty of 5.5 per cent on crude palm oil, soybean oil and sunflower oil is responsible for the increase in imported oil supplies.

## Domestic airlines register impressive annual surge

**FW DESK**  
New Delhi

The domestic aviation industry is buoyant if surge in passenger traffic during the first eight months of 2023 is any indication.

According to the latest data analysis, the number of passengers carried by domestic airlines from January to August 2023 reached an impressive 1190.62 lakh, marking a substantial increase of 38.27% compared to the same period last year, said a release by Ministry of Civil Aviation.

August 2023 alone witnessed a significant monthly growth rate of 23.13% as well, with passengers' number soaring to 148.27 lakh. This upward trend in passenger growth reflects the industry's resilience and recovery from the challenges posed by the global pandemic. Despite the impressive growth in passenger traffic, it is worth noting that the overall cancellation rate for scheduled domestic airlines in August 2023 was a mere 0.65%.



During August 2023, scheduled domestic airlines received 288 passenger-related complaints marking a complaint rate of around 0.23 complaints per 10,000 passengers carried. This low complaint and cancellation rate is an indication of the industry's efforts to prioritize customer satisfaction and providing reliable and efficient services to passengers. Union Minister for Civil Aviation Jyotiraditya M. Scindia has said this consistent growth is a testament to the collective efforts of airlines, airports, and the ministry in ensuring customer-centric aviation ecosystem. The aviation industry remains committed to ensuring passenger safety and comfort while adapting to evolving travel demands and regulations.

## JSW Infrastructure Limited's Initial Public Offering to open on Sept 25, sets price band at Rs 113 to Rs 119 per Equity Share

**FW DESK**  
New Delhi

JSW Infrastructure Limited, a part of the JSW Group and India's second largest commercial port operator in terms of cargo handling capacity in Fiscal 2023, has fixed the price band at Rs 113 to Rs 119 per Equity Share for its initial public offering of Equity Shares.

The initial public offering ("IPO" or "Issue") of the Company will open on Monday, September 25, 2023, for subscription and close on Wednesday, September 27, 2023. Investors can bid for a minimum of 126 Equity Shares and in multiples of 126 Equity Shares thereafter. The Issue is entirely a fresh issue of Equity Shares worth Rs 2,800 crore.

The objects of the issue is to prepay or repay Rs 880 cr of its outstanding borrowings; finance capital expenditure requirements amounting to Rs 865.75 cr for an LPG Terminal Project, Rs 59.4 crs for setting up an electric sub-station, Rs 103.88 cr for the purchase and installation of a dredger and finance Rs 151.04 crs for the proposed expansion at Mangalore Container Terminal besides general corporate purposes.

JSW Infrastructure Limited is a port-related infrastructure company which received initial cargo from the JSW Group as anchor customer. In addition to partnering with JSW Group Customers, to pursue its growth strategies, the Company has diversified its customer base to include third-party customers across geographies and has expanded its cargo mix by leveraging its locational advantage and maximizing asset utilization. As on June 30, 2023, the Company's installed cargo handling capacity was 158.43 million tonnes per annum ("MTPA"). The Company provides maritime related services including, cargo handling, storage solutions, logistics services and other value-added services to its customers.

The Company's operations expanded from one port concession at Mormugao, Goa (acquired by the JSW Group in 2002) where it commenced operations in 2004, to nine Port Concessions as of June 30, 2023. It has a diversified



presence across India with Non-Major Ports located in Maharashtra and port terminals located at Major Ports across the industrial regions of Goa and Karnataka on the west coast, and Odisha and Tamil Nadu on the east coast.

The Company's Port Concessions are strategically located and well-connected to cargo origination and consumption points. This enables the Company to serve the industrial hinterlands of Maharashtra, Goa, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana and mineral rich belts of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha, making its ports a preferred option for its customers.

It also operates two port terminals under operations & maintenance agreements in Fujairah Terminal and Dibba Port in the UAE with cumulative cargo handling capacity of 41 MTPA as of June 30, 2023.

The Company plans to further expand its operations through brownfield and greenfield projects. It is also considering inorganic opportunities to further expand its capacities, customer base, service offerings and geographical footprint. The new capacity building is aimed at strengthening its presence in handling container and liquid cargo with a focus on growing its third-party customer base.

The Company's third party cargo business in India has witnessed a compounded annual growth rate of 65.58% from 11.30 million metric tonne ("MMT") in FY21 to 30.98 MMT in FY23 and by 32.29% from 7.03 MMT in the three-month period ended June 30, 2022 to 9.30 MMT in the three-month period ended June 30, 2023.

The cargo handled for the Company's third-party customers in India as a proportion of its total cargo handled by volume increased from 24.81% in FY21 to 33.37% in FY23. It emerged as the fastest growing port-related infrastructure company in terms of growth in installed cargo handling capacity and overall cargo volumes handled during Fiscal 2021 to Fiscal 2023.

The Company's business is aligned to the Government of India's thrust towards privatization of Terminals across Major Ports hitherto managed by Port Trust Authority. Government policies have provided great impetus to the Ports sector through various initiatives including Gati Shakti Scheme, National Logistics Policy, Sagarmala and BharatmalaPariyojana to improve transport infrastructure.

From operating terminals at major ports to developing greenfield projects like Jaigarh Port and Dhamaram Port, handling multi-commodity cargo including dry bulk, break bulk, liquid and gases and containers, with an aim to increase its third-party customer base, JSW Infrastructure Limited is uniquely positioned to capitalise on India's growth opportunities with a strong balance sheet and ambitious growth targets.

JM Financial Limited, Axis Capital Limited, Credit Suisse Securities (India) Private Limited, DAM Capital Advisors Limited, HSBC Securities and Capital Markets (India) Private Limited, ICICI Securities Limited, Kotak Mahindra Capital Company Limited, and SBI Capital Markets Limited are the book running lead managers and KFin Technologies Limited is the registrar to the Issue.

## India's First 'CryptoDATA Concept Store' Inaugurated in Bengaluru

**ARUN KUMAR RAO**  
Bengaluru

CryptoDATA Tech, a leading European technology company specializing in blockchain-based solutions. Launched India's first CryptoDATA Concept Store in Bengaluru. The Opening of India's first CryptoDATA Concept Store, an exclusive official distributor for CryptoDATA Tech, will make innovative products and software solutions available for Indian users that are looking for enhanced privacy and digital security.

Founded in 2013, CryptoDATA Tech has swiftly risen to prominence as a global leader in blockchain technology. The company is celebrated for its innovative solutions and unwavering commitment to data security, making it a pivotal player in advancing the adoption of blockchain-based solutions worldwide.

Ovidiu TOMA, CEO of Cryp-



toDATA Tech who inaugurated the store said, "I am thrilled to attend the opening of India's first CryptoDATA Concept Store. This launch marks a significant step in our journey to empower individuals and businesses with cutting-edge blockchain solutions as India's tech enthusiasts can now experience the future of technology up close. We support dedicated professionals that are

committed to uphold the CryptoDATA values and we'll be very well represented on the Indian market by our official distributor and partner right here in Bengaluru. We continue to look forward to helping and supporting young entrepreneurs who are passionate about innovative technologies, giving them the tools and guidance to succeed in this fast-moving field." He added.

# India suspends visa services for Canadians

NEW DELHI: India has suspended visa services for Canadians "till further notice" amid a massive international row over Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's claim that his government has intelligence linking New Delhi in the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

A notice by BLS International - an online visa application centre said, "Important notice from Indian Mission: Due to operational reasons, with effect from 21 September 2023, Indian visa services have been suspended till further notice. Please keep checking the BLS website for further updates: BLS India Visa Application Centre." The update on Thursday came after a Punjab-origin



NIA-wanted gangster Sukha Dunekke was also shot dead in Canada's Winnipeg in an inter-gang rivalry.

Sukhdool Singh, alias Dunekke, was part of Khalistan movement in Canada. Dunekke, an associate of the Devinder Bambha Gang in Punjab, escaped to Canada in

2017 on forged documents. On Wednesday, his name figured among the list of 43 gangsters released by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) which sought information about his illegal properties.

His murder on Wednesday night is similar to the killing of terrorist Nijjar in inter-gang

warfare in Surrey in June.

On Tuesday, diplomatic relations between India and Canada nosedived over the killing of Nijjar. The same day India expelled a senior Canadian diplomat based here in a tit for tat move giving a similar reply to Canada. The High Commissioner of Canada to India (Cameron Mackay) received summons on Tuesday during which New Delhi conveyed its decision to expel a senior Canadian diplomat currently stationed in the country.

The concerned diplomat has been officially instructed to depart from India within the next five days, a statement issued by the MEA said.

"The decision reflects the Government of India's grow-

ing concern at the interference of Canadian diplomats in our internal matters and their involvement in anti-India activities," the statement said.

The decision came after Canada had earlier expelled a high ranking Indian diplomat. These developments have occurred after Canada Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Monday in an emergency statement in Parliament accused the Government of India of involvement in the fatal shooting of Nijjar.

India has rejected claims by the Canadian government that it had an involvement in the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. India has dubbed the charges as "absurd and motivated".

# Biden 'highly concerned' over India-Canada diplomatic row

US President Joe Biden was reportedly "highly concerned" over the diplomatic row between India and Canada amid Ottawa's claim that its citizen Hardeep Singh Nijjar was killed on Canadian soil by agents linked to the Indian government.

The US has expressed concerns over the incident and deteriorating relations between India and Canada on the issue, US media reports said. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who had a rough time in Delhi during the G20 summit hearing accusations of harbouring pro-Khalistani terrorists on its soil, alleged that agents linked with the Indian government had assassinated a Canadian citizen Nijjar -- designated as a terrorist in India -- on its soil and expelled an Indian diplomat. In fact, both countries expelled one diplomat each from their high commissions. Nijjar is described by Indian officials as a Sikh separatist leader in Canada touting pro-Khalistan slogans and demanding separation from India in a disturbing secessionist movement.

India was deeply upset recently when pro-Khalistani elements took out a tableau through the streets of Canada glorifying the assassination of the then-Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards in 1984. She was assassinated for her operation "Blue Star" sending the army into the Golden Temple in Amritsar to flush out terrorists which a section of the Sikhs community viewed as a sacrilege on their holy shrine.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was upfront in telling his counterpart Trudeau to curb the activities of pro-Khalistani elements that were harbouring on its soil even as Trudeau said Canada "did not restrict of freedom of speech of any of its citizens". Tensions escalated between Canada and India as Ottawa alleged that New Delhi may have been behind the killing of a Sikh activist on Canadian soil, with both sides expelling senior diplomats even as India rejected the allegation as "absurd".

Trudeau said on Monday that his government was investigating "credible allegations" that Indian government agents had been involved in the death of Hardeep Singh Nijjar. Nijjar, 45, was shot and killed in June outside a Sikh cultural centre in Surrey, British Columbia, a suburb of Vancouver. "Any involvement of a foreign government in the killing of a Canadian citizen on Canadian soil is an unacceptable violation of our sovereignty," Trudeau told Parliament on Monday.

"In the strongest possible terms, I continue to urge the government of India to cooperate with Canada to get to the bottom of this matter."

Ottawa on Monday announced the expulsion of a top Indian diplomat from Canada. To which, New Delhi responded on Tuesday by saying a senior Canadian diplomat had been asked to leave India within the next five days. The Indian Foreign Ministry said that the expulsion reflected the government's "growing concern at the interference of Canadian diplomats in our internal matters and their involvement in anti-India activities", US media reports claimed. India has been accusing Canada of supporting pro-Khalistan elements as they constituted a chunk of the voter base. About 2 per cent of the Canadian population is Sikh, championing the movement to establish an independent Sikh nation they call Khalistan, derived from the word Khalsa, a holy word for them in their religion.



Modi was upfront in telling his counterpart Trudeau to curb the activities of pro-Khalistani elements that were harbouring on its soil even as Trudeau said Canada "did not restrict of freedom of speech of any of its citizens".

Tensions escalated between Canada and India as Ottawa alleged that New Delhi may have been behind the killing of a Sikh activist on Canadian soil, with both sides expelling senior diplomats even as India rejected the allegation as "absurd".

Trudeau said on Monday that his government was investigating "credible allegations" that Indian government agents had been involved in the death of Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

Nijjar, 45, was shot and killed in June outside a Sikh cultural centre in Surrey, British Columbia, a suburb of Vancouver. "Any involvement of a foreign government in the killing of a Canadian citizen on Canadian soil is an unacceptable violation of our sovereignty," Trudeau told Parliament on Monday.

"In the strongest possible terms, I continue to urge the government of India to cooperate with Canada to get to the bottom of this matter."

# Turkish president Erdogan rakes up Kashmir at UN



FW DESK

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan surprisingly once again raked up the Kashmir issue during his address at the United Nations General Assembly, advocating for a resolution through dialogue between India and Pakistan. Erdogan stressed that resolving the Kashmir conflict peacefully would contribute to regional stability in South Asia. During his speech, Erdogan refrained from mentioning United Nations resolutions or making a direct offer for mediation, aligning his position more closely with India's view that the Kashmir dispute is a bilateral matter. This marks a shift from his previous statements on the issue. In 2020, Erdogan had referred to the Kashmir situation as a "burning issue" and criticized the revocation of the region's special status. In the previous year, he asserted that despite UN resolutions, Kashmir remained besieged, with millions of people affected.

# No place for hate in Canada, says Public Safety Dept on online threats to Hindus



OTTAWA: Canada on Friday said there is no place for hate in the country amid circulation of an online video in which Hindu Canadians are told to leave the country.

Public Safety Canada, the department responsible for safety of public said, "the circulation of video is offensive and hateful, and is an affront to all Canadians and the values we hold dearly."

In a post on X (formerly Twitter), Public Safety Canada said: "There is no place in Canada for hate. The circulation of an online video in which Hindu Canadians are told to leave Canada is offensive and hateful, and is an affront to all Canadians and the values we hold dearly."

"Acts of aggression, hate, intimidation or incitement of fear have no place in this country and only serve to divide us. We urge all Canadians to respect one another and follow the rule of law. Canadians deserve to feel safe in their communities," it said.

The video was circulated at a time when India and Canada are enmeshed in a diplomatic row over Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau allegation of involvement of Indian intelligence and the state in the killing of Canadian citizen and Sikh separatist leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar, who was killed in June in British Columbia. Nijjar was declared designated terrorist by India in 2020.

India had rejected claims by the Canada government terming them as "absurd and motivated".

# Asian Games : Anurag Singh Thakur canceled his China trip after China bars 3 Athletes from Arunachal Pradesh

MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA  
New Delhi

Sports Minister Anurag Thakur has canceled his scheduled visit to China after Indian athletes from Arunachal Pradesh were denied entry to the Asian Games. He on Friday canceled his scheduled visit to China as the government lodged a strong protest over three Indian Wushu players from Arunachal Pradesh being denied entry into China for the 19th Asian Games starting in Hangzhou on Saturday.

The Foreign Ministry said Nyeman Wangsu, Onilu Tega and Mapung Lamgu were discriminated against by Chinese authorities, who refused entry to the players in a "targeted and pre-determined manner". The rest of the team, including



seven other players and staff, flew to Hong Kong and then boarded a flight to Hangzhou. The Indian players are back at the Sports Authority of India hostel at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Delhi.

On China's refusal to recognize players from Arunachal Pradesh, a statement from the Ministry of External Affairs said, "India strongly rejects

discriminatory treatment of Indian citizens on the basis of residence or ethnicity". The government stated that Arunachal Pradesh is an "integral and inalienable part of India". The Ministry of External Affairs said, "The Government of India reserves the right to take appropriate steps to protect our interests."

A top source from the Wushu team in China said that they have also raised the matter with the Asian Games Organizing Committee and the OCA (Olympic Council of Asia). Criticizing Beijing for "deliberate and selective blockade of some of our athletes", the government further stated that "China's actions violate the spirit of the Asian Games and the rules governing their conduct which are

clearly binding on member states. Prohibits discrimination against competitors". He said he hoped the matter would be resolved.

Meanwhile, in response to reports of Indian athletes being denied entry into China, the country's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning on Friday said, "As the host country, China will allow athletes from all countries to legally participate in the Asian Games." "Welcomes you to come to Hangzhou with legal documents to participate in". "As far as the so-called 'Arunachal Pradesh' is concerned, the Chinese government does not recognize it. Zangnan (the southern part of southwest China's Xizang Autonomous Region) is part of China's territory," Ning said.

# India, Brazil Agree to Resolve Sugar Related trade dispute at WTO



NEW DELHI: India and Brazil have begun negotiations to resolve a sugar related trade dispute at the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Both the countries have mutually decided to do this as part of the solution and the South American nation may share ethanol production technology with New Delhi, an official said.

Brazil is the largest producer of sugarcane and ethanol in the world. It is also a leader in the technology used for ethanol production.

"Few rounds of talks have been held as part of our efforts to resolve the dispute. We have also held inter-ministerial meetings here. Brazil is saying that they will share with us technology

for ethanol (production). It is a positive thing," the official said.

Ethanol is used to blend with oil to power vehicles. Use of ethanol, extracted from sugarcane as well as broken rice and other agri produce, will help the world's third largest oil consumer and importing country cut its reliance on overseas shipments.

India currently is 85 per cent dependent on imports for meeting its oil needs. Also, it cuts carbon emissions. There is a target of 20 per cent ethanol blended petrol by 2025.

India would also have to offer something as part of the mutually agreed solution (MAS) to resolve the dispute at the Geneva-based multi-lateral body.

# Canada has 'evidence' linking Indian diplomats to Nijjar murder case: Report

OTTAWA: The Canadian government has collected "human and signal intelligence" involving Indian officials, including Indian diplomats present in Canada linking them to killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, the media reported.

"Based on a month-long investigation into Nijjar's death, the Canadian government had amassed both human and signals intelligence which includes communications involving Indian officials themselves, including Indian diplomats present in Canada," public broadcaster Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) reported quoting government sources.

Some of the intelligence was provided by an unnamed ally in the Five Eyes intelligence alliance, that consists of the US, the UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, the CBC reported.

India and Canada are enmeshed in a diplomatic row over Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau allegation of involvement of Indian intelligence and the state in the killing of Canadian citizen and Sikh separatist leader Hardeep



Singh Nijjar, who was killed in June in British Columbia. Nijjar was declared designated terrorist by India in 2020.

India had rejected claims by the Canada government terming them as "absurd and

motivated". Both countries announced tit-for-tat expulsions of senior diplomats and issued travel advisories. Nijjar was shot dead outside a Sikh Gurdwara in Surrey, British Columbia on June 18.

motivated". Both countries announced tit-for-tat expulsions of senior diplomats and issued travel advisories. Nijjar was shot dead outside a Sikh Gurdwara in Surrey, British Columbia on June 18.

motivated". Both countries announced tit-for-tat expulsions of senior diplomats and issued travel advisories. Nijjar was shot dead outside a Sikh Gurdwara in Surrey, British Columbia on June 18.

# EU's green regulations to impact 43% of India's Exports to Trade Bloc: Report

NEW DELHI : India's exports to the European Union (EU) could be impacted due to the trade bloc's proposed Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and other green initiatives, the Centre for Energy, Environment and Water's report noted.

As per the report, the impact would translate into 43 per cent of India's exports to the EU, which is among India's key export markets after the United States (US). «IFCBAM sectors are added to the list, then the exports of at-risk sectors amount to USD 37 billion, which is approximately 43 per cent of India's exports to the EU as of 2022.» said the report authored by Prerna Prabhakar and Hemant Mallya on Thursday.

Lately, multiple non-tariff measures have been implemented by developed countries to address sustainability, environment, and climate change. These include measures for energy efficiency, carbon footprint, waste management, water management, and sustainable forestry. «With an increase in the issuance of E-NMTs by developed countries, India faces a serious challenge concerning its key export



items. While India has taken significant steps to address this challenge, it still needs to develop a structured approach to deal with these measures to ensure that its exports are not impacted.» it said, referring to European Union Non-Tariff Measure Statistics. India needs a structured approach to deal with such EU measures and ensure that its exports are not impacted. For instance, India can resort to bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) to develop mutual recognition of compliance assessment activities in the respective countries, reported Business standard quoting from the report.

"Few EU trade agreements, such as the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement, exemplify how this can be achieved," the report said.

# Malaysia Showcases Its World-Class Healthcare Offerings at Oman Health 2023

FW DESK  
Muscat (Oman)

Malaysia Healthcare is showcasing its world-class healthcare offerings to Omanis, at the annual Oman Health Exhibition and Conference (OHEC), held at the Oman Convention & Exhibition Centre in Muscat. Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC), an agency under the Ministry of Health (MOH) Malaysia entrusted to facilitate and promote Malaysia's healthcare travel industry, together with several leading private hospitals in the country are present at the Malaysian Pavillion, under the brand 'Malaysia Healthcare' from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at booth No. 5500.

Featuring medical experts and specialist consultants in fertility, oncology, orthopaedics, and rehabilitation, from award-winning private hospitals in Malaysia such as Alpha IVF & Women's Specialists, KPJ Healthcare Berhad, and Sunway Medical Centre, based in



greater Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia Healthcare invites interested individuals in seeking treatments abroad to explore the exclusive healthcare packages, as well as potential partners to network with its representatives at the Malaysia Healthcare Pavillion.

The OHEC provides a platform for valuable exchange on medical knowledge, expertise, technology, and best practices among global healthcare players. Representing the Honourable Minister of Health Malaysia, Dr. Zaliha Mustafa as one of the key speakers during the event, the Acting Chief Executive Officer of MHTC, Farizal B.

Paper, Malaysia aspires to nurture a nation of well-being by creating a healthcare system that is fair, easily accessible, and centered around the people's needs. This commitment reaches far beyond our borders and extends across all subsectors. Through healthcare travel, we aspire to provide the same quality of care to the broader global community," said Farizal B. Jaafar, Acting Chief Executive Officer of MHTC.

"MHTC has been successful in establishing public-private partnerships in various markets, fostering relations to facilitate patients to obtain quality treatments in Malaysia. Building upon the success of these partnerships, we look forward to building relationships with strategic Middle Eastern industry players to expand the reach of our quality and affordable healthcare to the Middle Easters, especially the Omanis, addressing the trend among Omanis seeking healthcare treatments abroad," added Farizal.

# Avocado imports a stepping stone for improved bilateral relations between Kenya and India

FW DESK  
New Delhi

Small domestic production opens an opportunity for the good quality imports said Swadha Rizvi, Deputy Secretary, East and Southern Africa Division Ministry of External Affairs at the Launch event of Kenyan Avocado in India jointly organised by Kenya High Commission and ASSOCHAM. This avocado launch event will definitely improve bilateral relations with robust and multi faceted partnerships. India offers immense potential for avocado consumption.

She further focused on saying that it took 8 long years for negotiations and diplomacy for Kenya to get market access in India for Avocados. So, it is definitely a moment to celebrate as Avocado represents the history, culture and emotions of Kenya and



culture is a gateway that has the power to bind countries together and its people together. This is a milestone in the diplomacy of the two countries and bilateral relationships between India and Kenya. Government of India is confident that Avocado market access will help us to strengthen our trade relations with Kenya.

Amb. Irene Oloo, Deputy High Commissioner of Kenya to India shared insights on how Kenya exports about 23% of production of avocado. (95,000 tonnes). The

increased production of avocados in Kenya calls for increased market access. It is for this reason that Kenya requested India to allow market access for Kenyan avocados.

She further added the value of trade between two countries has been growing over the years to USD 1.83 billion in 2022. Currently the Balance of trade is in favour of India. We are confident the India market access to Kenyan Avocados will help balance the trade deficit and will facilitate growth and development in this sector, she highlighted.



# Cheering crowd, giant hoarding welcome Ragneeti in Udaipur

UDAIPUR: MP Raghav Chadha and actress Parineeti Chopra were accorded a grand welcome at the airport in Udaipur as they arrived in the Lake City to get married.

In a video, which went viral on social media, the couple is seen receiving a grand welcome with dhol beats. We can also see a big hoarding on the road that reads: "Welcome to Udaipur Parineeti and Raghav". It also has an image of the beautiful landscape of the city.

On her arrival in Udaipur, Parineeti can be seen greeting

people with a big smile. She also looked at the hoarding and blushed. Raghav, who arrived separately, can be seen flashing his famous boyish smile as he acknowledged the greetings of the assembled people. Earlier in the day, Parineeti was spotted at Delhi airport, dressed entirely in red in loose-fitting casual clothes.

Raghav, looking more like the 'maa ka munda' West Delhi boy from 'Made in Heaven' than the "suspended parliamentarian" that he calls himself on X, was seen in skinny blue jeans and a figure-fitting

black Polo tee, and sporting smart dark shades. He was accompanied by his posse of Punjab Police security personnel -- after all, he's a Rajya Sabha MP from Punjab -- and his parents followed him at a distance. Udaipur is all set to host the wedding of Raghav and Parineeti Chopra at the Leela Palace. Along with the couple, members of their families and friends will also be present. At this 'royal wedding', 100 private security guards have been deployed around the venue.

Earlier, the wedding card of the couple had gone viral on social media. It read: "Divine Promises: A pearl white Indian wedding... Leela Palace, Jaipur: 3:30 p.m. Pheras: 4:00 p.m. Vidai: 6:30 p.m."

The card carries beautiful sketches of the landscape of Udaipur. The wedding festivities will start from Saturday, September 23 with Parineeti's 'choora' ceremony at 10 a.m. It will be followed by a 'Fresco Afternoon' on the terrace near the hotel's ballroom from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. On Sunday, September 24, Raghav's 'seh-rabandi' will take place at the

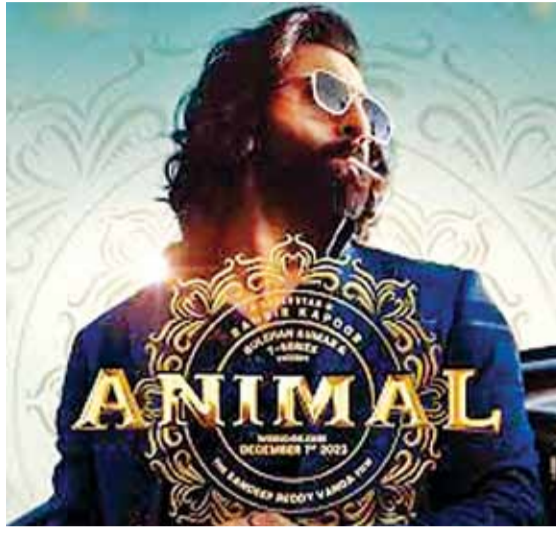
iconic Taj Lake Palace at 1 p.m. Then 'baraat' will then set off from the hotel at 2 p.m. The wedding reception, around the theme of 'A Night of Amore' will be held at the Leela Palace Courtyard at 8.30 p.m. on Sunday.

Over this weekend, a number of big personalities from politics and Bollywood will descend upon Udaipur.

Several film personalities, including Parineeti's cousin Priyanka Chopra and her husband Nick Jonas, and leaders from Delhi and other states are expected to attend the event.

## POTPOURRI

# Ranbir Kapoor looks suave in new poster of 'Animal'; fans hail it as 'blockbuster'



MUMBAI: Makers of Ranbir Kapoor starrer 'Animal' on Monday unveiled a new poster of the film, featuring the actor in a tantalising, statement look.

In the poster, we can see Ranbir donning formal attire-royal blue blazer, matching shirt, and completed the look with square shaped sunglasses. He is looking suave in a

long hairstyle, with a cigarette in his mouth, and a lighter in one hand.

The poster features Ranbir in a never-seen-before rowdy avatar. Sharing the poster, the makers wrote: "He is elegant He is Wild... You will see his rage on September 28. #AnimalTeaserOn28thSept @AnimalTheFilm #AnimalOn1stDec".

The roaring teaser of the movie will be released on September 28, ie on Ranbir's birthday.

Ranbir's character promises to be a tour de force, and the teaser is going to be a testament to the intensity, and intrigue that this film promises to deliver.

The fans couldn't contain their excitement after seeing the look of Ranbir, and wrote: "DEKHO WOH AA GYA." "Next blockbuster," another wrote.

"Can't say what is going to happen on its release. But the vibe is."

"When a director like Sandeep vanga & an actor like Ranbir Kapoor collaborates...a masterpiece is made...," commented another

"Wait and watch Ranbir Kapoor" gushed fans "Faadu poster hahi boss." 'Animal' is a classic saga that brings together Ranbir and the visionary writer-director Sandeep Reddy Vanga.

This cinematic masterpiece boasts of stellar talents- Anil Kapoor, Rashmika Mandana, Bobby Deol, and Tripti Dimri, ensuring a visual and emotional treat for all movie enthusiasts.

It is produced by Bhusan Kumar and Krishan Kumar's T-Series, Murad Khetani's Cinel Studios, and Pranay Reddy Vanga's Bhadrakali Pictures.

The film will release worldwide on December 1, in five languages - Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam.



WOMEN CELEBRITIES IN PARLIAMENT

Actors Hrishita Bhatt, Tamannaah Bhatia, Divya Dutta, and Harnaz Kaur Sandhu visited Parliament and witnessed the introduction of the Women's Reservation Bill in the Rajya Sabha. The Lok Sabha has already passed the bill with 454-2 votes.

# Indian films have always reflected the mood of society: Javed Akhtar

MUMBAI: Veteran writer and lyricist Javed Akhtar said on Thursday evening that Indian films have been faithfully reflecting the sentiments of the society.

"Indian films have always depicted and reflected what is happening in our society. The cinema comes from the society. It is the same with dreams. What is there in the conscious and subconscious mind will get reflected in dreams as well," Akhtar said at the launch of his book, 'Talking Life: Javed Akhtar in Conversation with

Nasreen Munni Kabir'. Akhtar said that in the 1930-1940s, when K.L. Saigal essayed Devdas's role, the 'khanis' (cough) had become a virtue and fashion. "Self-destruction had become a virtue because of Saigal. However, as the society grew, this self-destructive virtue also vanished," he said.

"When the Nehruvian era came, everyone thought that soon things would be fine," Akhtar continued. "But as people felt that not much was changing, cinema gave society



the 'rebel star' in the form of Shammi Kapoor. Who was this 'rebel star' fighting? He was fighting against his parents and society. In most of the cases this 'rebel star' was fighting Lalita Pawar. So, here

the virtue was the negation of the feudal system."

He said in the films of this generation the villain invariably used to be the mill owner or landlord.

"In the pre-Emergency days -- in the 1970s -- the vigilante became the hero and we saw the emergence of the 'angry young man' in the form of Amitabh Bachchan. He took the law in his own hands. He would not wait for the law or the police to take their course, but would decide himself and on spot," he said.

He said as the society evolved, the virtue and essence of the 'villain' died with it. "In this capitalist market, it is very difficult to find 'villains'. The rich are 'khandani' (from a good family), so how can they be 'villains'?" Akhtar noted.

Talking about his other favourite subject, the Copyright Amendment Bill of 2012, the veteran lyricist was all praise for the late BJP leader Arun Jaitley.

"In 2012, the government of the time and the opposition were at loggerheads on many issues. The opposition was led by Arun Jaitley .

# Pseudodementia and Memory Loss on the rise in Younger population of Delhi NCR : Doctors



YOGESH KANT  
New Delhi

Doctors across Delhi NCR are seeing rise in cases of Pseudodementia and loss of memory in younger population as young as 30-40 years. Doctors are getting around 50 cases per month related to memory loss and Pseudodementia in younger population. Doctors in Delhi NCR are highlighting how memory loss and Pseudodementia is striking younger people at an early age and said that excessive stress, depression and overwork is to be blamed for this rise.

The term pseudo dementia is used to describe the condition in which depression causes cognitive deficits that masquerade as dementia. Patients will often present with difficulties in memory and concentration and deny depressive symptoms.

Dr Praveen Gupta, Director Neurology, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurgaon, said "Cases of Pseudodementia in younger population is increasing. We get around 50 cases in month where patients less than 50 years of age, seek help related to memory loss and Pseudodementia. Factors like taking excess stress related to career, overwork, social status, and other factor is leading to pressure on brain which hinders brain from processing the information completely due to which it does not reach to permanent memory. Also processing too many information at the same time is also leading to loss of focus and memory loss."

Nidhi, a 35 year old from Delhi with corporate job in Gurgaon came to Dr. Praveen Gupta with complain of forgetting the names of people and even forgets where she has kept the house and car keys. Doctors found that due to overwork, stressful job and multitasking and struggle to balance both work and home, she has developed attention deficit disorder which can be treated with care, medicine and counselling.

# Athletes and Celebrities visit New Parliament building on the second day



NEW DELHI: On the second day, when the Lok Sabha took up discussion on the Women's Reservation Bill, a number of celebrity actors and athletes visited Parliament and expressed their solidarity with the move taken by the Modi Government for women empowerment.

Boxer and former Rajya Sabha MP Mary Kom said "we are happy that prominent athletes have been called to visit Parliament and women's reservation will play an important role in women empowerment".

Former Indian women's cricket team captain Mithali Raj congratulated Prime Minister saying 33% reservation for women will increase participation of women in governance.

Indian Hockey player Rani Rampal also expressed happiness at the prospect of greater

participation of women in Parliament and State legislatures.

Paralympic athlete Deepa Mehta called it a beautiful gift on Ganesh Chaturthi and said "Our democracy is for the people, of the people and by the people, and counting of people will be complete only when there is women's participation". Mehta also had some good words to say about the new Parliament building. "The first thing that I noticed was that there was no place in the new building where my wheelchair did not reach" she said.

Actor Bhumi Pednekar said the move will ensure that there is a female voice in debates, policies and law making, while Shehnaz Gill said women's reservation will eventually help bring gender equality in a more meaningful manner.

# Rapper Shubb's 'Still Rollin India Tour' cancelled after reported support for 'Khalistan'

Canadian rapper Shubb, whose real name is Shubhneet Singh, has landed into trouble after his alleged support for Khalistan, leading to the cancellation of his 'Still Rollin' tour in India.

Ticket booking application BookMyShow took to Twitter, formerly called X, to announce that the Punjab-born, Brampton, Canada-based 26-year-old rapper's multi-city 'Still Rollin India Tour' has been cancelled. BookMyShow also promised a complete refund of the tickets within 7-10 days. The tweet read: "Still Rollin Tour for India stands cancelled. To that end, BookMyShow has initiated a complete refund of the ticket amount for all consumers who had purchased tickets for the show." The refund will be reflected within 7-10 working days in the customer's source account of the original transaction."

Today, the hashtag #UninstallBookMyShow was trending on X, for hosting the Shubb's event in India. Shubbneet landed in soup on a day when India-Canadian ties hit rock bottom after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau accused "Indian agents" of perpetrating the June 23 killings of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar at a gurudwara in Surrey, Vancouver. It happened over an Instagram post by the rapper, which was captioned 'Pray for Punjab', along with two folded hands emojis, this baby-faced follower of the late Sidhu Moosewala ran a map of India without the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and the North-East on it.

# Bhagavad Gita: The Characteristics of an Enlightened Person

VIJAY SINGAL

Bhagavad Gita in 18 shlokas from 2.54 to 2.72 has spelled out the distinctive attributes of an enlightened person, the one who has steady intellect and who is forever situated in divine consciousness. It has also been explained as to how can such a state of blessedness be obtained.

While describing the characteristics of an enlightened person, it has been stated that when one gives up all his selfish desires and when his soul is content in itself; then he is called a man of steady intelligence (sthitapragnya). The one whose mind remains unperturbed in the midst of sorrow, who does not crave for pleasure; and who is free from attachment, fear and anger - such a person is called a sage of steady wisdom (sthitadhih). The one who remains unattached under all conditions and is neither delighted by good nor dejected by evil, he is firmly fixed in perfect knowledge (pragya-pratishtitha). The one who having brought all his senses under full control fixes his consciousness upon the Supreme Lord, he is also known as pragya-pratishtitha.

Sri Krishna in these shlokas has further explained as to what are the obstacles in achieving the steady wisdom and spiritual liberation, and how can these obstacles be overcome. Attachment towards objects of the senses gives rise to afflictions of the mind like desire, anger and greed etc.; which, in turn, results in destruction of intelligence. The cravings of the senses are so strong that they can forcibly carry away the mind even of a wise man. Citing the example of a boat on water which is swept away by strong wind, it has been stated that even one of the senses, which is wandering on the objects and on which the mind is constantly fixed, can carry away a man's intelligence. He whose senses are all withdrawn from their objects, certainly remains steady in intelligence (pragya-pratishtitha). Therefore, the one who wants his wisdom to be stable has been advised to withdraw his senses from their objects in every respect, as a tortoise draws its limbs, on all sides, into its shell.

Sri Krishna in these shlokas has also talked about peace and joy. Just as sea remains motionless even while rivers are entering it, similarly only those who remain unmoved by desires can attain peace; and not the slaves of desires. For the one who does not have a disciplined mind, there can neither be any stability in intelligence nor any power of concentration. There can be no peace or happiness for such a person.

It has been stated that a spiritual aspirant may restrain the senses from the sense objects, but the taste for their enjoyment still remains. However, even this taste vanishes, when the Supreme is seen. But how can one see the Supreme? The one who has abandoned all desires, who is free from longing, who has no sense of ownership; and who is devoid of any false ego - only such a person can attain perfect peace. This is stated to be the divine state (brahmisthiti), having attained which one is not bewildered. Being established in that till the end, one attains the bliss of God (brahmanirvana). In other words, a realised soul obtains not merely an outer abstinence but also inner renunciation. He remains in full control, not only of the body but also of the mind. He is always guided by vivek (spiritual discrimination). Bhagavad Gita does not



promote a life of isolation or otherworldliness. It does not look down upon the worldly enjoyments. It only advocates self-control. It has been stated that the one who even while experiencing sense objects keeps senses under control by shunning likes and dislikes, he attains purity of spirit. And the purity of spirit erases all sorrows. Intelligence of such a joyful person quickly gets firmly established (buddhiparyavasthithata).

An enlightened person does not suffer pain because he does not hanker after pleasure. His joy is from within. His delight is long lasting as it does not depend upon outside objects or external circumstances.

A question is often asked as to whether the ideals described in the above shlokas can serve any real purpose in day to day life of a common man. Is it humanly possible to achieve such

an equanimous and steady state of mind, even while remaining physically and mentally competitive, in this world of fierce competition? The one who internalises the essential meaning of these shlokas and tries to follow them to the extent possible, he can himself vouch for the practical benefits of the Gita teachings. When one has a clear mind, is free from attachment, fear and anger, is endowed with patience, whose senses are under control and whose mind is focused, who remains content in himself - such a person of illumined intelligence and unwavering resolve puts in his hundred percent in whatever he does. He is likely to excel in all his endeavours.

To conclude, Bhagavad Gita has laid down, in clear terms, the principles of a self-disciplined, focussed, even-tempered, intelligent, aware, tranquil and joyous living. The one who subdues his ego, he is freed from the troubles of earthly existence. When one fixes his consciousness on the Supreme; he obtains divine love, divine knowledge and divine bliss. The wisdom of the Gita is equally applicable for all, without any consideration of class, creed or gender etc. One is benefitted, to the extent he adheres to these mantras of leading a meaningful and purposeful life.

# Asian Games to begin on September 23

SUNIL THAPLIYAL  
New Delhi

The opening ceremony of the 2023 Asian Games will be held on Saturday, September 23 and will last until October 8. However, some competitions for this major event have already started. However, the opening ceremony will take place on Saturday. The 19th Asian Games was supposed to be held in 2022, but because of Corona, the schedule got messed up and the Games were postponed to 2023. This time cricket has been included, which is also the focus of interest. Indian hockey team captain Harmanpreet Singh and star boxer Lovlina Borgohain will be India's flag bearers at the grand opening ceremony on 23 September in Hangzhou.



After stellar performances at the Tokyo Olympics and the 2022 Commonwealth Games, fans this year are hoping their athletes can win more medals for their country than last time. At the 2023 Asian Games, Indian athletes will compete

for medals in 39 sports. The Indian cricket team is participating in this competition for the first time. The men's team will be led by Rituraj Gaikwad and the women's team by Harmanpreet Kaur. Weightlifter Mirabai Chanu, boxer Lovlina

Borgohain and wrestler Bajrang Punia, all Olympic medallists, will also compete in Hangzhou.

There will be 74 quotas for the Paris Olympics that will be awarded for the Paris Olympics. Of these, six will be given in archery, 10 in swimming, 34 in boxing, two in break-down, two in hockey, 10 in pentathlon, six in sailing, two in tennis, and two in water polo.

A total of 655 Indian athletes are participating in the Asian Games this time, which is the country's largest contingent so far. However, these five Indian athletes, including javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, are the ones who have legitimate hopes of winning a medal. Boxer Nikhat Zareen is also high on this list.

At the last Asian Games, held in Jakarta in 2018, India

equaled the record of 1951 in terms of gold medals and also achieved its best record in the history of these Games in terms of total number of medals. With 15 gold, 24 silver and 29 bronze medals, India's total medal tally reached 69. Earlier, India had achieved its best performance with 65 medals at the 2010 Asian Games in Guangzhou, China. So far, India has won a total of 672 medals at the Asian Games, including 155 gold, 201 silver and 316 bronze. Among all countries, India ranks fifth while China tops with 3187 medals. China has won 1473 gold, 994 silver and 720 bronze medals. At the 2018 Asian Games, India won a total of 70 medals, including 16 gold, 23 silver and 31 bronze. India was ranked 8th in the medal table of the 2018 Asian Games.