

REGION

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## VILLAGE DEFENSE' COMMITTEES WILL BE FORMED IN PUNJAB, SAYS GOVERNOR



# Punjab to set up midwifery led care units at public healthcare facilities

**CHANDIGARH:** With an aim to provide the best possible maternal and newborn healthcare services in the state as desired by the Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, Punjab Government is all set to establish Midwifery Led Care Units (MLCU) at the public healthcare facilities soon.

Disclosing this here Thursday, Punjab Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Balbir Singh said that MLCUs will be established to promote natural birthing as WHO has also proposed an ideal rate for deliveries through caesarean (C-section) between 10% and 15%. Presently, this rate is quite high, he added.

An MLCU is already operational in Mata Kaushalya Hospital, Patiala on a pilot basis, he said, while adding that a total of 138 normal births have been facilitated by Midwives in the labour room and Midwifery led birthing unit till date.

Dr Balbir Singh informed that Health Department has set up a Midwifery Training Institute in Patiala to expand this programme throughout the state. This institute has been set up as per the Indian government's "Guidelines on Midwifery Services in India" to prioritize investment in a dedicated cadre of professional midwives, through bringing in a new cadre - the Nurse Practitioner in Midwifery (NPM). In this institute, training would be provided to Midwifery Educators who, in turn, would develop the cadre of NPM.



The Health Minister said that this initiative will lead to a compassionate and respectful birth experience for a pregnant woman in government health facilities. NPM will provide skilled, maternal, reproductive and newborn child-related healthcare services in a respectful manner to accomplish the sustainable development goals for maternal and newborn well-being.

Underlining the importance of midwifery, Director Health Services (Family Welfare) Dr Hitinder Kaur said that all across the world midwifery plays a critical role in providing childbirth care. All normal uncomplicated deliveries in Punjab will be handled by trained midwives and this will certainly help in decongesting higher level of healthcare facilities, she added.

CORPORATES & INDUSTRY

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## INDIA NOTICES A STEADY DECREASE IN FUEL PRICES OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS DESPITE GLOBAL VOLATILITY: HARDEEP SINGH PURI



# Retail Inflation down to Three-Month Low in September : Report

**NEW DELHI:** India's retail inflation is down to a three-month low of 5.02 in September, mainly due to food prices, according to the government data released on Thursday.

As per the data, inflation has come back to the Reserve Bank's comfort level of below 6 per cent after a gap of two months. The inflation based on the consumer price index (CPI) was 6.83 per cent in August and 7.41 per cent in September 2022. The previous low was in June this year when the reading stood at 4.87 per cent.

According to the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), the inflation in the food basket came down to 6.56 per cent in September



from 9.94 per cent in the preceding month. India's factory output, as measured by the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), has meanwhile come in at 10.3 per cent for the month of August 2023. A year ago for

the same period, the reading was at 0.7 per cent. The data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) showed that the manufacturing sector's output increased by 9.3 per cent in August 2023.

POTPOURRI

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## WORLD, OLYMPIC AND ASIAN CHAMPION NEERAJ CHOPRA APPOINTED LAUREUS AMBASSADOR



# Stricter scrutiny of firms doing Business with China & Pak



**NEW DELHI:** The central government has stiffened economic security regulations by barring direct participation of both domestic and overseas corporate entities having any "commercial arrangement" with hostile countries such as China and Pakistan, two people aware of the matter told to media on Wednesday.

According to the officials this information has been communicated to all states.

The government has already amended its July 2020 order, making prior screening and registration mandatory for all those bidders who have any commercial arrangement with entities of countries that share a land border with India, they told to media requesting anonymity.

Without naming any particular country, the government on July 23, 2020 restricted purchases for public projects from companies in countries that share a land border with India, citing national security.

The Union government has recently sent a missive to all states, directing them to seek approval before having any business relationship with hostile neighbouring countries due to increased security concerns, they said.

The communication has been sent to all chief secretaries recently after it was noticed that some private firms located in certain states were trying to engage Chinese contractors in infrastructure projects, one of them said. The chief secretary is often the top bureaucrat and principal executive officer in a state. The decision was taken on the basis of security inputs received from agencies much before the October 7 terror attack in Israel, a second person said.

## 'No frenzy on Israel Hamas conflict', warns Yogi Adityanath

**NEW DELHI:** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has ordered stringent action against any person who tries to whip up a frenzy by making comments contrary to India's stand on Israel-Hamas conflict. The chief minister also warned the district police chiefs of action in instances of obscene songs and loud music being played in Shobha Yatras and at religious places. Yogi gave the directives while reviewing the government's preparation for the festive season and Mission Shakti rollout on Thursday evening.

Referring to the ongoing Israel-Palestine war, he told the police officials to stay in touch with religious leaders to ensure that no statements or action is done against the Indian stance on the issue. He asked the officials to monitor statements being made on social media or from places of worship. "If somebody makes a deliberate statement on this issue not in line with the stand of India, then strict action should be taken against him/her immediately," he said. In the wake of upcoming festivals of Navratri, Durga Puja, Dussehra, Diwali and Chhath, Yogi Adityanath said, all staff - from beat constable to electricity in charge and every officer, including the district police chief - must remain in the field. The people must be assured of their security. He added that due to planned efforts in the past years, loudspeakers installed at religious places were removed, but information about their re-installation is being received from some areas. "If obscene songs or loud music is played during the festivals and the guidelines of the Supreme Court are not met, then the district police chiefs will be held accountable," the chief minister stated.

# Special Vidhan Sabha session on Oct 20-21 illegal : Punjab Governor

**CHANDIGARH:** Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit has described the special session of the Punjab Vidhan Sabha scheduled for October 20-21 as "illegal" and any business conducted during the session "unlawful."

Punjab summoned the two-day Assembly session to clarify the government's stand on the Satluj Yamuna Link (SYL) canal dispute. Last week a three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court came down heavily on the Punjab Government for not finding

a solution for the completion of the canal. It further directed the Centre to survey the portion of the land in Punjab that has been allocated for the project. A communication to the Vidhan Sabha Secretary by the Punjab Raj Bhawan dated October 12 pointed out the earlier objection raised by the Governor over holding the special session on June 19-20.

"Based on legal advice, the Governor had pointed out on July 24 that calling of such a session was illegal, against the accepted procedures and practice of the legislature, and against the provisions of the Constitution," it says. It said the budget session was adjourned sine die on March 22 after completion of the agenda for the business of the session.

The communication said, "In the present case also the calling of 'A Special Session of the 4th Budget Session of the 16th Punjab Vidhan Sabha', suggesting that it is a continuance of the fourth session, which was adjourned sine die on June 20, is nothing but an attempt to extend the budget session which was summoned by the governor for March 3, and which stood concluded on March 22, after the completion of the agenda for business of the said session."



## Contribution of Sikh Gurus cannot be repaid for thousands of years says Amit Shah

**NEW DELHI:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah attended the felicitation programme held by the Delhi Sikh Gurudwara Management Committee (DSGMC) on Friday. Lauding the Sikh community at the event, the minister said the contribution of Sikh Gurus to the country cannot be repaid for years.

Addressing the gathering at the event, Amit Shah said, "Be it India's freedom struggle, fight against the Mughals or fight against Britishers, partition or sacrificing for the country, the Sikh community has always been one number one." He said the whole world today is following the teachings given by Guru Nanak Dev at a time when all religions were fighting for their respective sects. He praised the Sikh community for moving forward taking both religion and Karma equally.

"Under CAA, PM Modi



gave citizenship to those Sikh brothers who wanted to come here from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, or Pakistan. This Panth has done so much for the country, society, and humanity. The contribution of Sikh Gurus for this country cannot be paid back for thousands of years," Shah said.

The Delhi Sikh Gurudwara Management Committee also felicitated the Home Minister at the event. Amit Shah said that it is only Sikh community around the world whose Gurus from Guru Nanak Dev ji

## There is no reason why India cannot take back 'Sindhu': Yogi Adityanath

**LUCKNOW:** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has said that if Shri Ram Jannabhoomi can be taken back after 500 years, there is no reason why India cannot take back 'Sindhu' - the Sindh province, now in Pakistan.

According to a press statement issued by the state government late on Sunday night, the Chief Minister, while addressing the two-day National Sindhi Convention, said: "After 500 years, a grand temple of Lord Ram is being constructed in Ayodhya. Ram Lalla will be seated again in his temple by the Prime Minister in January. If Ram Jannabhoomi can be taken back after 500 years, there is no reason why we cannot take back Sindhu."



Yogi Adityanath's remarks drew a resounding applause, the statement said.

The Chief Minister also said the Sindhi community needs to let its present generation about its history and added that the community suffered the most after the partition.

He further said that the stubbornness of just one person led to the partition. "When the partition of the country took place, lakhs of people were massacred. A large area of India became Pakistan. The Sindhi community suffered the most as it had to leave its motherland. Even today, we have to bear the brunt of the tragedy of partition in the form of terrorism."

He said: "If we have to move forward on the path of the welfare of humanity, then the evil tendencies of the society will have to end. Our religious scriptures also give us the same inspiration. Be it respected Jhulelal or Lord Shri Krishna, everyone has talked about protecting the good and eliminating the evil for human welfare."

## E-commerce MSMEs from Non-Metro cities receive higher Diwali orders this season

**NEW DELHI:** MSMEs from non-metro cities are clocking more Diwali orders this year than sellers from metro cities, as per a report by Tech-enabled logistics platform and unicorn Shiprocket.

The report unveiled that the e-commerce opportunity could be at a staggering USD 13 billion for the Indian MSMEs during the festive season. It noted that with e-commerce gaining traction, it anticipates around 10-15 per cent of the total order volume to be attributed to first-time shoppers. Shiprocket estimates the Indian e-commerce opportunity will be at a staggering USD 13-billion for the festive season, it said.

Observing that as much as 56 per cent of its order volume originates from non-metro cities, the platform said this underscores the rapid adoption of online shopping and digital transactions in smaller towns and rural areas. In this spirit, MSMEs from tier-2, tier-3 and tier-4 cities are expecting higher Diwali gift orders than sellers from metro cities, it stated.

Shiprocket said it anticipates



that around 10-15 per cent of the total order volume will be attributed to first-time shoppers, adding that Delhi NCR leads the charge with a commanding 28 per cent share of festive sales, closely followed by Mumbai at 13 per cent and Bengaluru at 7 per cent, as observed in the festive sales data. With Delhi NCR being a thriving business environment, including a high number of MSMEs, this economic activity is fuelling consumer spending during the festive season, the platform said.

Shiprocket further said it is also witnessing a rise in festive exports from India with leading categories for global exports including artificial jewellery, beauty and grooming, clothing and accessories, healthcare, books, automotive accessories, home furnishings and decor, and pet supplies.

# Fast increasing rift between civil and police officers in Haryana : DGP

SATISH HANDA

After the Haryana Chief minister Manohar Lal Khatter has given green signal to wipe out corruption in government offices completely in the state, Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) in the state has rounded large number of corrupt senior officers and other employees working in government offices, demanding zero tolerance against corruption as a result several high profile government officers including of the IAS, IPS, IFS and other in the ranks of gazetted officers have been trapped in the vigilance net in past sometime, which including two IAS officers Vijay Dahiya, Managing Director Kaushal Rogzar Nigam and Jaiveer Arya, Managing Director Haryana Warehousing Corporation, both were arrested by the ACB in past couple of days while accepting Rs 5 lakh and Rs 3 lakh bribe respectively, as a result a rift has been seen



between IAS and IPS lobby in the state. DGP Haryana Shrutijit Kapoor, also holding the charge of ACB chief said that chief minister has given green signal to wipe out corruption in government offices in the state, desiring a zero tolerance policy against corruption in Haryana.

According to information, nearly four dozen senior bureaucrats in Haryana state are facing investigation in the state which include IAS, IPS, HCS, HPS and officers holding senior positions in other cadres.

Information also reveals that investigation by the ACB is going on at present against 12 IAS officers, 2 IPS officers, 3 IFS officers, 4 HPS officers and 20 HCS officers out of them 4 IAS and 3 IFS officers have already been retired from the services. There are few officers undergoing investigation in several corruption cases against them. Information also reveals that in past two years as many as 56 gazetted officers allegedly involved in corrupt practices have been trapped in the ACB net.

# Delhi High Court dismisses plea by NewsClick founder Prabir Purkayastha

**New Delhi:** Delhi High Court on Friday dismissed the pleas moved by NewsClick founder and editor-in-chief Prabir Purkayastha and HR head Amit Chakravarty challenging their arrest and remand in a Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) case following allegations that the news portal was given money to spread pro-China propaganda.

A single-judge bench of Justice Tushar Rao Gedela, after considering the contents of the remand application, said, "It appears that the substratum of the allegations which would comprise the reasons for arrest is indeed contained in the said application." The court said that it was undisputed that the remand application was given in writing to Purkayastha's counsel during the remand proceedings within 24 hours of his arrest. The court also said that it was not disputed that Purkayastha's counsel had participated in the remand proceedings and had opposed the same "though telephonically



directly to the special judge".

The high court further observed that nothing was placed on record to demonstrate that the timelines averred in Purkayastha's plea were factually correct. The court said that while Purkayastha was given that the FIR copy was sent to him only after he filed a plea making such a request before the special judge, who allowed the same on October 5, there is "not a single whisper" on what transpired in respect

of the plea raising objections against the remand which was filed on October 4. The high court said that grounds of arrest were conveyed to Purkayastha "as soon as may be" after the arrest. The court said that there was no "procedural infirmity or violation of the provisions of the Section 43B of the UAPA or the Article 22(1) of the Constitution of India" and the arrest was in accordance with the law.

The court was also of the

view that while there may be similarities in certain portions of the language, however, Section 19(2) of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) is not "pari materia" (on same subject/matter) with Section 43B of the UAPA.

The high court said that as per sections 19(1) and (2) of the PMLA, unless the reasons are recorded in writing the arrest would be void. "It is pertinent to observe that no such provision is present in section 43B of UAPA, where "reasons to believe", for the purposes of arrest, need not be recorded in writing. This is the distinction drawn between provisions of section 19(1) & (2) of PMLA on the one hand and section 43A & 43B of UAPA on the other," the high court said.

The court said that the Supreme Court's decision in the case involving M3M directors Pankaj Bansal and Basant Bansal came in the particular facts of that case on the "disparate procedure conveying the grounds of arrest".

## Centre Govt asks Punjab and Haryana Officials to accelerate PM Vishwakarma Scheme

**NEW DELHI:** Secretary, Department of Financial Services (DFS), Union Ministry of Finance, Dr. Vivek Joshi on Thursday chaired two meetings with the officials of Punjab and Haryana & UT of Chandigarh respectively in connection with prompt implementation of Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma Scheme.

The meeting was held at the Regional Office NABARD, Chandigarh, which was attended by senior officials of Govern-



ments of the two states and the UT, said the official government statement. Dr. Joshi emphasised that in order to serve the

needs of individuals engaged in traditional crafts and skills and in furtherance of the Prime Minister's vision of Sabka Vikas (inclusive development).

The PM Vishwakarma Scheme has been designed to extend end-to-end holistic support to traditional artists and craftspeople engaged in 18 identified trades through access to skill training, collateral free credit, modern tools, market linkage support and incentive for digital transactions.



# 'Village Defense' Committees will be formed in Punjab: Governor

With the coordination of police and security agencies, the recovery of drugs increased by 50% says Governor

JAGMOHAN SINGH  
Amritsar

Governor Punjab Banwari Lal Purohit after holding a marathon meeting with the Punjab chiefs of all the agencies involved in the security of the country, including the Punjab Police, at Guru Nanak Dev University, said that due to better coordination between the police and security agencies in the state, the recovery of drugs increased by 50 percent.

Addressing the press conference, he said that drones were big challenges for the state as smuggling activities from Paki-



stan were being done through drones. To counter such challenges, preparations are being made to install an anti-drone system on the international Indo-Pak border.

He said that after the success of the security committees formed within 15 km radius of the border, instructions have been given to the Chief Secretary Punjab to form such defense security committees of civilians in the entire state, which he has

accepted.

He said that 21-member defense committees will be formed in all the villages of Punjab, which will work for the eradication of drugs and illegal mining from its root.

He said Pakistan, the neighboring country, was behind the drug trafficking, which cannot fight directly with us, but was stabbing us in the back by smuggling drugs to ruin our young generation. But here we

all have to stop such a nefarious act of Pakistan to prevent drug smuggling effectively.

On this occasion, in reply to a question, DGP Punjab Gaurav Yadav said that Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Maan has announced to end drug addiction by 15th August 2024 and we are working continuously to achieve this goal.

He said that on the issue of drugs, we are working with a policy of zero tolerance and any police officer or employee found guilty of having contact with drug dealers to be dealt with in the same manner as is done with criminals.

On this occasion, Chief Secretary Punjab Anurag Verma, Special Chief Secretary Sarjit Singh, Additional Chief Secretary K Shiva Prashad, Police Commissioner Naumihal Singh, DIG Narendra Bhargava were present.

# Punjab LSA, Deptt. of Telecom and Director General Telecom HQs organizes an Annual North Zone Conference on Security related matters



FW DESK  
Chandigarh

Punjab LSA Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and Director General Telecom HQs organized an Annual North Zone Conference on Security related matters for the officers of DoT, delegates of Central LEAs including MHA, NCB, CBDT, DRI, IB and State Police of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir,

Delhi, Chandigarh, Ladakh, Uttar Pradesh. Representatives of Telecom Service Providers viz Airtel, Reliance Jio, BSNL, Vodafone Idea Ltd., COAI, ISPAI and C-DOT at Taj, Sector 17, Chandigarh, Punjab. More than 100 participants attended the workshop.

The event witnessed the presence of Ajay Kumar Sahu, Member (Services), Digital Communication Commission (DCC), Satinder Kumar Jain,

Director General Telecom, Naresh Khanna, Addl. Director General, Punjab and Addl. Director General Telecom. from 6 LSAs of DoT (Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Delhi, UP (East), UP (West)) along with DDGs of DoT and very senior representatives from all stakeholders.

The importance of telecom security cannot be overstated. Every day, we witness attempts to breach, misuse, and exploit our telecom resources. These threats not only jeopardize our personal and financial information but can also pose significant national security risks. Hence, the Conference was organized with the aim of covering important subjects on Security related matters and to provide a platform for closer interaction and better coordination among all the stakeholders.

# Justice Ritu Bahri appointed acting Chief Justice of Punjab and Haryana HC

ADITI CHAHAR  
Chandigarh

Justice Ritu Bahri has been appointed as acting Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court after the retirement of Chief Justice Ravi Shanker Jha. Born in 1962 in Jalandhar, Justice Bahri is from a family of third generation lawyer. She has completed her Law from Panjab University, Chandigarh, in 1985 and enrolled as an Advocate in 1986 with Bar Council of Punjab and Haryana. She was elevated as Judge of the Punjab and Haryana High Court on August 16, 2010. Before her elevation to the high court, Justice Bahri was appointed as Assistant Advocate General of Haryana in 1992. Thereafter, she was appointed as a Deputy Advocate General and Senior Advocate General of Haryana in 2009.

# Drug smuggler arrested in Punjab, Rs 4.94 Cr seized



CHANDIGARH: In a big blow to inter-state narcotic network, the Jammu and Kashmir Police and Punjab Police in a joint operation have apprehended one drug smuggler from Mullanpur Dakha in Punjab and seized Rs 4.94 crore along with 38 fake vehicle number plates and one revolver, Punjab Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said here on Wednesday.

He is one of the key accused in 30 kg heroin recently recovered in Jammu. Investigations were on-going to establish the backward and forward linkages, Yadav added. Punjab Police have arrested 20, 979 drug smugglers, including 3, 003 big fish, since July 5, 2022. The police have registered 15, 434 FIRs of which 1, 864 are related to commercial quantity, Inspector General of Police Sukhchain Singh Gill told the media here on Tuesday. He said the police have recovered 15.10.55 kg heroin from across the state after carrying out cordon and search operations in drug-affected areas, besides laying checkpoints at vulnerable routes.

Additionally, 147.5 kg heroin was recovered by Punjab Police from seaports of Gujarat and Maharashtra, taking the total effective recovery of heroin to 1, 658.05 kg in just 15 months, Gill added.

# National Postal Week celebrated with the theme "Together for Trust"

CHANDIGARH: Department of Posts celebrates National Postal Week every year which begins with World Postal Day on 9 October to commemorate the anniversary of the foundation of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) on 9 October 1874 and aims to spread awareness among people around the world about the role of postal services in everyday lives of people and business as well as its contribution to global, social and economic development. In this sequence, special events were organized by Chandigarh Postal Division during National Postal Week from 9th to 13th October for wide publicity of postal services and increase in revenue.

To commemorate the anniversary of "World Postal Day" on 9th October, school children visited post offices to understand



the working of postal services. October 10 was celebrated as "Vittiya Sashaktikaran Day" in which Dak Chaupal was organized at many places in Chandigarh Postal Division and all the facilities like opening accounts, obtaining insurance policies were made available to the public in one camp. 11th October was celebrated as "Philately Day". On this day,

quiz competition, stamp design, Dhai akhar letter writing competition, seminar and workshop were organized and the students who performed excellently were honoured. October 12 was celebrated as "Mails and Parcel Day", in which Mail and Parcel Customer Meet was organized under the chairmanship of Shri Harjinder Singh Bhatti, Senior Superintendent of Post

Offices, Chandigarh Division and suggestions were received from bulk customers to further improve the mail service facility. Further, customers are made aware about the new advancements/initiatives taken by the Department of Posts like parcel tracker, Dak ghar niryat kendra (DNK) portal, etc. which are one stop solution for all export needs.

Today, 13th October, was celebrated as "Antyodaya Diwas", in which awareness camps for Aadhar enrollment and updation were organized at many places in Chandigarh Postal Division in rural and remote areas and urban slums. Awareness was also created about various social security schemes like Jan Suraksha scheme, social security pensions, direct benefit transfer etc.

# Three workers found dead in chemical tank at Panipat textile industry

SATISH HANDA  
Panipat

Three workers of a Panipat textile unit were found dead in a chemical tank of the factory in the Jalalpur Industrial area. FIR was registered against three owners of the unit under Sections 302, 34 and 323 of the IPC on Sunday. Family members of workers found dead staged a protest outside the factory on Sunday. The family members held a protest outside the factory and demanded the police to book the owners of the factory on charges of murder. The family members also damaged the window glass of the ambulance at the civil hospital. The family members alleged that the victims were murdered and later their bodies were dumped into the tank to divert police



attention. Later, police officials managed to pacify the protesters and they agreed to allow the postmortem of the bodies. The police said that on the complaint of the family members, an FIR has been registered against the three owners of the unit under Sections 302, 34 and 323 of the Indian Penal Code. Additional superintendent of police Ma-

yank Mishra assured the family members of fair investigation in the case. The actual cause of the death could be ascertained only after postmortem examination. A probe into the matter is underway, Panipat superintendent of police Ajit Singh Shekhawat said that the FIR has been registered against the owners and the investigation is going on.



Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) President Sukhbir Singh Badal along with other leaders and workers marching towards Gero Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's house over the Sutlej Yamuna Link (SYL) canal issue in Chandigarh on October 10. PHOTO-PRABHJOT GILL



Punjab Congress workers marching towards the Punjab Raj Bhawan over the Sutlej Yamuna Link (SYL) canal issue in Chandigarh on October 9. PHOTO-PRABHJOT GILL

# Punjab Police avert possible target killings; three members of BKI-backed terror module held with 2 pistols



Police invokes sections of UAPA : SSP Satinder Singh

JAGMOHAN SINGH  
Amritsar

Punjab Police have averted a possible target killings in the state with the arrest of three members of Babbar Khalsa International (BKI)-backed terror module. The module is being operated by Harpreet Singh alias Happy—a close aide of designated terrorist Harwinder Singh alias Rinda, along with his two associates identified as Harbeer Singh

and Navroop Singh from the USA.

In a press statement issued here, Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav has identified the arrested persons as Jaswinder Singh, Lovepreet Singh and Gurpartap Singh, all residents of village Ramdas in Amritsar. Police teams have also recovered two .32 bore pistols along with three magazines and 11 live cartridges, one Maruti Swift car (PB46AD6236) and one Splendor motorcycle from their possession, he added.

He said that following reliable inputs, Police teams

from Amritsar Rural, Commissioner Amritsar and SSOC Amritsar laid a special naka in the area of Ajnala and arrested the trio accused persons.

The DGP said that the probe revealed that the arrested accused persons were tasked to carry out target killings in the state to create panic in the society.

Sharing more details, SSP Amritsar Rural Satinder Singh said that preliminary investigations suggested that accused Harpreet Happy has been radicalising the youth and motivating them to carry out anti-national activities in the state. The Police have invoked sections of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and further investigations are on, he added.

Meanwhile, a case FIR no. 209 dated 10.10.2023 has been registered under sections 13, 17, 18 and 20 of the UAPA, section 25 of the Arms Act and sections 109, 115 and 120B of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) at Police Station Ajnala.

# Students of Chandigarh Defense Academy visited Chandigarh Air Force Museum on National Air Force Day



KULBIR SINGH KALSI  
Chandigarh

The country's first air force museum in Chandigarh is special in many ways, telling stories from the Kargil War to the present day, about 70 students of Defense Academy Chandigarh on National Air Force Day. Detailed information about the activities of Lee Air Force. Brigadier J Singh, SSB trainer of Chandigarh Defense Academy, told the students through the museum that through this museum we can see the role of air force in

various wars. In which 1965, 1971 and Kargil war, and Balakot air strike are depicted through murals and memorials. The Brigadier said that its performances will be a source of inspiration for the future generations and showcase the indomitable spirit of the Indian Air Force, which will once again inspire the youth to serve the country in the Indian service, especially the Air Force. It is significant that Chandigarh Defense Academy is considered as the gateway of NDA for the youth in North India.

# Seminar on 'Pakistan crisis: Impact on India & South Asian region' at PU

Department of Defence and National Security Studies in association with Forum for Awareness of National Security is organizing a Seminar on the theme - "Pakistan crisis: Impact on India & South Asian region" on Friday Panjab University, Chandigarh.

The topic of seminar is of national importance and the current situation in Pakistan needs deliberation to analyse and assess its impact on India and the South Asian region at large. Admiral Sunil Lanba (ret.) will be the chief guest at the event. Indresh Kumar, Executive Member, National Working Committee, RSS will be the keynote speaker at the event. Other speakers at the event will include R. K. Kaushik, Col. Jaibans Singh (ret.), Prateek Joshi (Oxford University), Ashish Shukla (IDSA), Ashish Kaul (Author) and Prof. Mahatab Alam from Jamia Millia Islamia University. National security is as fundamental as any other social issue, and we aim to shape the collective perspective of the nation's mind. We cordially invite the media to cover the event as the deliberations by distinguished speakers will be invaluable in advancing the cause of national security awareness.

# Punjab government should immediately release post-matric scholarship amount of SC students: Harjinder Singh Dhami

FATEHGARH SAHIB: Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President Harjinder Singh Dhami asked Punjab Chief Minister (CM) Bhagwant Mann to immediately release the outstanding amount of crores of rupees of the post-matric scholarship scheme of the government for the Scheduled Caste (SC) students receiving education in the institutions of SGPC especially Sri Guru Granth Sahib World University, Fatehgarh Sahib.

Harjinder Singh Dhami said that the Punjab Government has also ignored the orders of the Hon'ble Punjab and Haryana High Court to immediately release 40% of the outstanding post-matric scholarship amount for the academic session 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 and no amount of the pending has been released to many organizations so far. The non-seriousness of the Punjab Government is reflected in the fact that it has failed to appoint a Principal Secretary in the Social Welfare Department after August 31, 2023, due to which the payments to the institutions have stopped.

He said that the government had started a post-matric scholarship scheme for SC students to support them to pursue higher education, in which 60% is contributed by the Centre government and the remaining 40% by the state government. He said that many institutions have been pushed into financial crisis due to non-release of due amount under this scheme by the Punjab government.

He said it is unfortunate that on one hand the Punjab Government has started accepting applications from eligible students for the academic session 2023-24, on the other hand the scholarship amount for the session 2022-23 has not yet been released to most of the higher education institutions. As per the guidelines of the scheme, the post matric scholarship for the session 2022-23 was supposed to be released by the government by February 2023, but it



has not been released till date. Apart from this, institutions are already facing financial loss due to low fee capping in many courses by the government, so the unnecessary delay in release of capped fee will not only add to the problem for the institutions but also to every employee and due to this, the education sector of the state of Punjab has been pushed further into a deep financial crisis.

He said that Sri Guru Granth Sahib World University provides financial assistance to poor and needy students who are not eligible for any government scholarship, due to which a large number of poor students are getting education, but the government has turned a blind eye to its responsibility in helping such charitable organizations.

Harjinder Singh Dhami said that the SGPC is making its due contribution to establish the reputation of Sri Guru Granth Sahib World University Sri Fatehgarh Sahib at the international level. The faculty is striving for international standards, which is quite evident from the placement of its students in reputed companies in India as well as abroad. The SGPC also provides financial assistance to the university from time to time. "But the post matric scholarship amount of about Rs 16 crore has been withheld by the Punjab government. The Punjab government should release this amount immediately as this university has been established with the aim of inculcating moral values among the youth of Punjab, which is the need of the hour. I insist that the Chief Minister should consider on priority", said SGPC President Harjinder Singh Dhami.



INDIAN SPACE CONCLAVE 2023

Exploring opportunities for Indian downstream spacetech

FW CORRESPONDENT  
New Delhi

India's space programme has made significant progress in the past few years with successful missions to the Moon and Mars, and the launch of various commercial satellites, driving growth and innovation.

Deep diving into the potential growth prospects of the Indian space sector, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP, in collaboration with Nasscom and the Indian Space Association (ISPA), launched the "Exploring opportunities for Indian downstream spacetech" report at Indian Space Conclave 2023. The report talks about India's booming space economy and collaboration opportunities for the private sector and the government specifically focusing on downstream spacetech.

It offers an in-depth, multi-dimensional perspective on the country's space sector. It highlights ways to bridge the gap between space technology and real-world applications while recognising the strategic and dual-use facets combining commercial possibilities with implications for national security and strategy. Primarily sub-segmented within three core



satellite commercial application areas - Remote Sensing/Earth Observation (EO), Positioning, Navigation, and Timing (PNT), and Satellite Communication (SATCOM), the report identifies more than 200 use cases. It also deep dives into ~25 strategic use cases, focusing on earth observation, satellite communication, and positioning/navigation services. These services are poised to drive growth and innovation in the Indian spacetech sector in the next five years.

For example, earth observation has found critical applications in agriculture (ranging from crop insurance, yield monitoring, disaster management), and biodiversity conservation

(such as natural resource extraction mining and urban development). Similarly, SATCOM-as-a-service can create multiple applications in areas such as in-flight and remote area connectivity, DTH broadcasting, and augmenting healthcare in the form of telehealth, and tele-education. India's PNT programme, including NavIC, can assume a pivotal role in transportation, communication, and defence. Focusing on comprehensive data aggregation and analysis of space-based data, along with a cross-sectoral and cross-segment approach, has an immense business potential to address real-world problems and unlock value hitherto considered

impossible. The government's role of acting as a catalyst cannot be understated. As technology matures and newer business models are explored to service demands in various sectors within a commercially viable framework, newer service delivery/business models will enable more applications across sectors.

Expressing his aspirations towards the Indian space sector, Sreeram Ananthasayanam, Partner, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP, shares, "The India Space Policy 2023 heralded a pivotal moment, unlocking private capital to bolster public initiatives and igniting a dynamic, competitive space industry. Private enterprises, start-ups, and gov-

ernment initiatives are converging to reshape India's thriving space economy. The downstream space sector has the potential to make a significant impact on India's economy and society. By working together to address the challenges around awareness and adoption to bring an impact at scale, India can position itself to become a global leader in this sector and reap many benefits that it has to offer." Downstream applications are key to generate revenue and impact in the space economy that can support and sustain advancements in other areas. With a focus on innovation, cost-effectiveness, and dynamic growth prospects in areas such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning, the downstream space sector is a promising frontier for forward-thinking investors.

Marked by the participation of private enterprises and capital in core space activities, the launch of NewSpace in India is primed to redefine industry norms and goals. Lt. Gen. Anil Kumar Bhatt, Director General, ISPA, states, "In the dynamic space arena, India's dual-purpose mission prioritises safeguarding national security and strengthening defence capabilities.

"Indian space economy could grow to \$44 billion by 2033"

FW CORRESPONDENT  
New Delhi

India's space economy has the potential to reach USD 44 billion by 2033 with about eight per cent of the global share. Presently, the country's share in the global space economy is 2 per cent, said a top government official on Tuesday.

IN-SPACE (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre), the single-window autonomous agency under the Department of Space (DOS) today unveiled the decadal vision and strategy for Indian space economy.

Addressing mediapersons, IN-SPACE Chairman Pawan Goenka said, "As we unveil the decadal vision for the Indian Space Economy, we emphasise that the future of the Indian space sector is a shared endeavour. Hence, our strategy fosters an era of collaboration between all stakeholders to accelerate growth." He said ISRO is opening its doors wider than ever to private sector participation, so that together, we can successfully boost the space economy for a resurgent 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (self-reliant India).

At present, the Indian space



economy is valued at around USD eight billion with a two per cent share in the global space economy. India's space economy has the potential to reach USD 44 billion by 2033 with about eight per cent of the global share, Goenka explained. The decadal vision and strategy has been developed by IN-SPACE and ISRO along with other stakeholders. IN-SPACE said in a statement.

The strategy defines India's vision as a dominant global space power, which accelerates India's growth through space applications, strengthens capabilities in space, creates socio-economic benefits and capabilities for growth to meet the country's ambitions for the

space sector, it added.

The vision focuses on achieving its goal through key strategic and enabling capabilities, such as demand generation, earth observation platform, communication platform, navigation platform, R&D, ecosystem, creation of talent pool, access to finance, international synergy and collaboration, policy and regulation.

Goenka said the decadal vision addresses creation of demand, local manufacturing capabilities, infrastructure and provides a clear and comprehensive regulatory framework that will encourage and facilitate NGE (non-governmental entities) participation in the growth of the space sector.

Mamata Banerjee called Rahul Gandhi, next meeting of 'INDIA' may be on November 4 or 5



MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA  
New Delhi

Trinamool Chairperson Mamata Banerjee was called and spoke to privately Rahul Gandhi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and NCP leader Sharad Pawar. According to sources, Rahul enquired about health and the physical fitness of the Chief Minister of West Bengal, there was talk about the next meeting of "INDIA", between them. Congress and NCP leaders were reportedly interested in the meeting later this month in Nagpur (where the RSS headquarters is situated). Then Mamata said that it would not be possible for her to go because of Lakshmi Puja at that time. But she can attend if the meeting is held by November 4 or 5. By the way, assembly election in Mizoram on November 7. If everything goes well after this phone conversation, the next meeting of 'INDIA' will be held in Nagpur on November 4-5 and Mamata will attend it.

Two LeT terrorists killed in Jammu and Kashmir's Shopian



FW DESK

Security forces killed two terrorists belonging to the proscribed terror outfit Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in the Alshipora area of Shopian in South Kashmir. Acting on credible intelligence, the security forces launched a targeted operation, leading to the encounter with the terrorists.

The encounter resulted in killing of two LeT militants, identified as Morifat Maqbool and Jazim Farooq, also known as Abrar. One of them believed to have killed a Kashmiri Pandit, Sanjay Sharma. Sharma was killed in a militant shootout at his home in Achan (Pulwama) in February. This led the family to migrate for the first time since 1989. The State Investigating Agency is probing the murder case. The encounter took place after intelligence inputs pointed towards the presence of terrorists in the Alshipora area. The security forces, including local police and army units, cordoned off the area and initiated the operation, leading to a fierce gun battle with the militants.

Rahul Gandhi to visit poll-bound Mizoram and Telangana

NEW DELHI: Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi will be touring the states of Mizoram and Telangana for almost five days ahead of the crucial assembly elections.

A party source said that Rahul Gandhi will be travelling to Mizoram on October 15 and 16. The source said that Gandhi will be attending the meeting of the party's Central Election Committee (CEC) on October 17 and then leave for Telangana in the evening. Rahul Gandhi will be participating in the bus yatra programme of the Congress in Telangana for next three days on October 18, 19 and 20. The source said that Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is also likely to participate in the bus yatra on October 18. The source further said that party



chief Mallikarjun Kharge will be addressing a public meeting in Rajasthan on October 16. He will also kick off a yatra in Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project (ECRP) areas from Kota's Baran. The source said that yatra will be hybrid, at some place it will be pad yatra at some places it

will be on vehicle. The polling for 118-member Telangana assembly is scheduled on November 30, while 40-member Mizoram and 200-member Rajasthan assemblies will vote on November 7 and November 25 respectively. Counting of votes will take place on December 3.

Center govt may extend free ration scheme for 6 months

MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA  
New Delhi

Five state assembly polls are announced followed by the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. In that context, the Modi government first reduced household cooking gas and increased the amount of subsidy given to Ujjala consumers. According to the sources of the Ministry of Food, Hence the speculation has started, the period of free ration 'Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana' may be extended even after December.

However, so that this free ration does not go into the hands of ineligible citizens, the center wants to link Aadhaar with ration card to 100 percent as soon as possible. States have been asked to step up initiatives. Also, the deadline for ration



card-Aadhaar linking has been extended till December 31. The Center claims that only after hundred percent Aadhaar linkage is done, the government will know exactly how many people are getting ration and how much money will be spent for it. However, even after Aadhaar linking is done, there are al-

legations that there are many fake ration cards are still there. So there is a demand to install 'anti-cloning machines' in ration shops. General Secretary of All India Fair Price Shop Dealers Federation Biswambar Bose has written to Union Food Minister Piyush Goyal in this regard. He wrote in it, 'In many cases

even after linking Aadhaar, phone number and ration card, fraud is also happening in many places. Therefore, an anti-clone device should be installed along with the e-pos machine in the ration shops. It is known that the center will look into this proposal of the shopkeepers and take action. The central government provides free rice and wheat to 81.35 million citizens in the entire country. Earlier, it was bought at the rate of rupees two and three per kg, but it is free from January this year. The poor get this food grain because of the National Food Security Act. Five kg per head per month is given to the common poor through ration shops. 35 kg per family per month under 'Antyodaya Anna Yojana'. But this free ration is effective till December.

Kashmiri woman and family trapped in Gaza appeals for help

FW DESK

A Kashmiri academic, Lubna Nazir Shaboo, along with her family, is currently stuck in Gaza amid the ongoing conflict and has made an urgent plea to the Indian government for rescue. Lubna, a resident of Srinagar, explained that the bombardment has made movement impossible, and the Gaza Strip is completely surrounded, leaving no safe exit. "We are not able to go anywhere because there is no safe place for us anywhere and the Gaza Strip is too small and it is closed from every side. There are no exit points over here," she said in a social me-



dia video. The situation in Gaza is dire, with over 1,100 people, including 326 children, reported killed in Israel's retaliatory airstrikes, and thousands more injured. Lubna and her family find themselves in a perilous situation, and their internet access is unreliable, making communication challenging.

BJP in crisis in all four of the 5 states, Cong ahead, according to ABP-C Voter Survey

MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA  
New Delhi

On Monday, the Election Commission announced the results of voting in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Mizoram. Just after that, a famous psephology organization published a public opinion survey of these 5 states. According to the BJP voter survey, four of these five states are likely to be swept by the BJP. There could be a big rise for Congress. Madhya Pradesh: The survey indicates a neck-to-neck fight in Madhya Pradesh. But Congress is slightly ahead in that fight. According to the ABP-C Voter survey, Congress is likely to win 113 to 125 seats out of 230 seats



and BJP can get 104-116 seats. RAJASTHAN: Congress is currently in power in Rajasthan. According to the survey, the power will change in the desert this time too, keeping the pattern of the last few decades. Saffron Brigade will snatch Rajasthan from Congress. There BJP can get 127-137 seats. Congress can be stuck with only 59-69 seats. Among the five states, only Rajasthan has good news for the BJP.

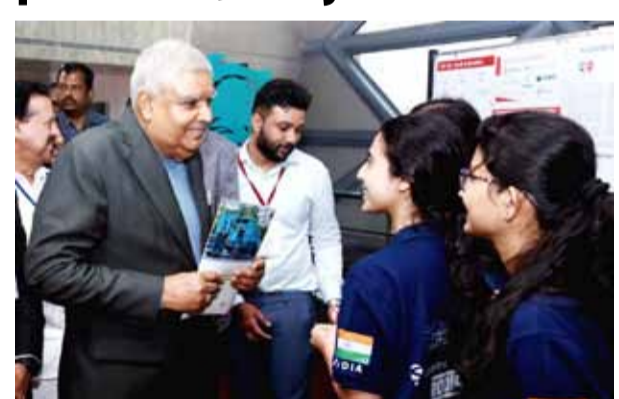
BJP has produced many extremists like Godse in last ten years: Mehbooba



FW DESK

Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister and PDP president, Mehbooba Mufti, on Friday criticized the BJP and its alleged promotion of individuals with extremist ideologies. She claimed that the BJP had produced many individuals with ideologies similar to Nathuram Godse, the assassin of Mahatma Gandhi, in the last decade. Mufti's comments came in response to a BJP poster portraying Congress leader Rahul Gandhi as a 'new age Ravana,' which she viewed as a sign of BJP's frustration with the opposition and their divisive tactics. She expressed concern over the rise of individuals with Godse-like ideologies in recent years and contrasted this with Rahul Gandhi's efforts to promote Mahatma Gandhi's ideals. She stated, "You (BJP) produced the army of Godse. He tries to become Gandhi. We could not produce Gandhi in the last 70 to 75 years, but they produced a number of Godses in the last 10 years." Mufti stressed the importance of the principle of Vasudev Kutumbakam, which means "the entire world is one family," and criticized the BJP for not adhering to this principle. She questioned whether the BJP, which claims to uphold the values of Sanatan Dharma, truly understands the teachings of this ancient philosophy, given their portrayal of political opponents as Ravana.

Vice President asks farmers' children to become job providers; not job seekers



FW DESK

New Delhi The Vice-President, Jagdeep Dhankhar today felicitated the progressive farmers from Haryana by calling them to the Parliament House as he had promised and had lunch with them. It may be noted that on the 8th of October, 2023, Dhankhar had visited Haryana, where he inaugurated the Krishi Vikas Mela at Chaudhary Charan Singh Agricultural University. While addressing the farmers in Haryana, he had invited them to Delhi to visit the new Parliament building. Acting on his words, today more than fifty award-winning farmers from Haryana visited the Parliament House today. The Vice President interacted with the farmers and honoured them with certificates and shawls. It is noteworthy that these farmers were awarded by the Haryana Government for their excellent performance by using innovative technologies in various fields like agriculture, horticulture, dairy and fisheries. Addressing the farmers, the Vice-President described them as the backbone of country's economy and said that being a farmer is a matter of pride. Underlining the importance of agriculture in our economy,

he said, "When the farmer is happy, it brings happiness to the whole country & all sections of the society enjoy prosperity!" Expressing delight at the visit of the farmers in the Parliament House, he remarked, "Today is a special day as the parliamentarians from around the world & from the G-20 nations are in our country. Your visit to the Parliament coincides with this momentous day. This Parliament stands as the largest Panchayat in the country, and today, the rightful individuals have gathered here. Discussions regarding farmers & farming should take center stage in this forum." Expressing his happiness over the Prime Minister introducing him in the Rajya Sabha as 'Kisan Putra', the Vice President said that he has been diligently visiting the institutions which are related to farmers' welfare." Congratulating the farmers on receiving awards from the Government of Haryana, he said that they are a source of inspiration for others and people should emulate them. The Vice-President also highlighted that there is a huge trade & business opportunity in agricultural products and food items, and today's youth educated from IIT, IIM are also coming into this area.

CWC passes unanimous resolution for Caste Census

KAVITA SHARMA  
New Delhi

The Congress Working Committee passed a unanimous resolution for conducting the caste census across the country, which it said will set a new paradigm of development.

Addressing a press conference after a four-hour long CWC meeting presided over by the Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi said, his party will force the Prime Minister to conduct the caste census or will make him get out of the way. Rahul Gandhi said, all the four Chief Ministers of Congress ruled states, who were also present at the press conference, have decided to get caste census done in their respective states. Describing 'Caste Census' as a very-very progressive and powerful step for the emancipation of the poor people in our country, the senior Congress leader said that it will set a new paradigm of development in the country as it will establish the actual status of the OBCs, Dalits, the Adivasis and the poor. He



said, otherwise right now there are "two Indias", one represented by people like Adani and the rest the others. He said, a new political and economic model will be built in the country based on the caste census. To a question whether other INDIA bloc partners were also supporting the caste census, he said, by and large everybody was in agreement. 'Most of the parties in the INDIA alliance are unanimous that the caste census should be implemented. There might be a few, who might have a slightly different position and that's fine, we are quite flexible', he added. On the Prime Minister's observation about giving proportionate representation to people

according to their population, Mr Gandhi maintained that he (the PM) was used to resorting to distracting the issues and he was doing precisely the same thing. "The Prime Minister is making unconnected statements. What the caste census has to do with representation of the south is very difficult to understand now", he asked. He said that the PM will resort to such distracting tactics more and more in the coming days. He said, out of four Congress Chief Ministers, three were OBCs, while out of ten BJP Chief Ministers only one was an OBC and even he will no more be the Chief Minister very soon, while referring to Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj

Singh Chauhan, suggesting that the BJP was going to lose from there in the assembly elections scheduled for next month. Responding to the charges of the Prime Minister that caste census would divide people, he retorted, how does it divide people? He said, it is about due participation of people in the government based on their numbers. He pointed out, of the 90 most powerful officers, only 3 were from among the OBCs. Rahul Gandhi expressed confidence that the Congress party will win elections in all the five states for which dates were announced today. He said, there was an overwhelmingly positive atmosphere in favour of the Congress.





## GST Council's decisions are a step forward

The recent decisions by the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council have brought clarity to a number of long-standing tax ambiguities. Notably, the resolution of the tax treatment on corporate and personal guarantees for bank loans and the significant reduction of GST on molasses from 28% to 5% are commendable moves. The latter, in particular, is expected to ease the financial burden on sugar mills, thereby accelerating payments to farmers. However, the Council's decision to abstain from taxing extra neutral alcohol (ENA) used in alcoholic beverages is particularly noteworthy. Given that alcohol for human consumption remains outside the GST purview, taxing ENA would have complicated matters, especially since the tax couldn't be offset against State levies on the final product. The industry's plea for clarity on this matter has finally been addressed, marking an end to years of legal wrangling and inconsistent court rulings. The increased frequency of the Council's meetings this year, compared to the previous year, is a positive sign. Looming large is the Council's upcoming discussion on the future of the GST Compensation Cess and its potential replacement. While the initial intent of this Cess was to compensate States for revenue losses during the first five years of GST, the pandemic-induced economic downturn led to its extension till March 2026. While discouraging the consumption of certain goods through taxation is a valid strategy, any new cess should be introduced as part of a broader GST rationalization effort. Despite the commendable steps taken by the Council, the GST regime still requires comprehensive reform. The ongoing exclusion of items like electricity, petroleum, and alcohol from the GST net is a glaring omission. While addressing immediate concerns is crucial, the Council must also focus on a holistic reform plan for the GST, ensuring it truly becomes the 'Good and Simple Tax' it was envisioned to be.

### LETTERBOX

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*If you want to see different results, do things differently.*

*Agenda*

## THE FINANCIAL WORLD

RNI NO. CHAENG/2001/03736

PRINTED & PUBLISHED BY SWINDER BAJWA ON BEHALF OF FW MEDIA

PRINTED AT JAGJIT PUBLISHING CO. PVT LTD D-12, INDUSTRIAL AREA, PHASE-1, MOHALI, PUNJAB 160059

PRINTER & PUBLISHER SWINDER BAJWA OWNER\* : FW MEDIA

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

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



KALEESWARAM RAJ EXPLORES HOW PARLIAMENT ERRED LINKING WOMEN'S RESERVATION WITH DELIMITATION.

## Women's quota — rhetoric and reality

The celebration of the passing of the Women's Reservation Bill by both Houses of Parliament glosses over certain realities about this conditional legislation. The conduct of a census in the country followed by a delimitation of constituencies based on this census are the conditions for this legislation to take effect. Once it is accepted that reservation for women in legislative bodies is a progressive measure, there is no legal or political justification to prolong its implementation.

Speaking in the Lok Sabha, Home Minister Amit Shah justified these conditions saying that there could be legal challenges against the legislation if it is passed without relying on criteria fixed by way of a process of delimitation. No doubt, a legislation should be based on a solid foundation, and have valid reasons for existence. In the case of the Women's Reservation Law, the reality is that about half of the population are women and they are under-represented in Parliament and State legislative bodies. Reports show that, of the maximum allowed 550 seats in the Lok Sabha, only 82, i.e., 15% are represented by women, and out of the 250 members in the Rajya Sabha, only 31, i.e., 12% are women. The Global Gender Gap Report places this in a macroscopic context by showing that India ranks 141 out of 185 in its list.

### Contentious issue

Article 81 (2) (a) of the Constitution states that the number of seats in the Lok Sabha for a State should have a co-relation with the population of the State and "so far as practicable", the criteria should be the same for all States. Article 170, concerning the legislative Assemblies of States, also takes population as the basis for designing constituencies.

However, delimitation in India is a con-



tentious issue. It acts as an incentive for population expansion with scant regard to development and family planning. This was why a full-fledged delimitation was kept in abeyance in India since 1976. It is now expected to be carried out after the Census which will only be held by 2026 at the earliest.

But, as scholar Nilakantan R.S. predicts, this "demographic detonation" will cause "another big fork in the future allocation of political power and associated resources between the north and south". In his book South vs North (2022), Mr. Nilakantan has demonstrated how South India has performed well in sectors such as health, education, economy etc. in comparison to the North. South Indian States reduced their population by scientific means whereas North Indian States in general and States such as Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in particular have failed to do so. The South Indian States have raised concerns about this proposed delimitation. This could lead to two outcomes: the delimitation would get prolonged by years which in turn will defer the materialisation

of the women's quota law, or it might happen based on population which in turn could translate to undue advantages for certain States in the North.

These are situations that the relevant provisions in the Constitution, namely Articles 81 and 170, failed to foresee. Thus, Parliament has committed an egregious folly in fusing women's reservation with delimitation.

Articles 330 and 332 of the Constitution deal with the reservation of the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST) in the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assembly of States respectively. Though these Articles mention the relationship between reservation and the population of the SC and ST groups, such a parameter is irrelevant to women's quota. That their share in the total population is almost 50% is undisputed. Further, there cannot be a drastic variation in their population from one constituency to the other, as it could happen with SC or ST.

### Unwarranted conditions

A census to understand the population

of women for the purpose of reservation is also unwarranted. The criteria, process and purpose of the Women's Reservation Bill are qualitatively different from those of the delimitation exercise. And, reservation for women in local bodies, which materialised through the 73rd and 74th Amendment Acts of the Constitution, and came into effect in 1993, was not contingent on any delimitation exercise for that purpose. Parliament, however, has lost sight of these aspects.

How far a constitutional Amendment can be done by way of contingent legislation is an issue too, as certainty is regarded as one of the hallmarks of modern constitutions. In Hamdard Dawakhana vs Union of India (1959), the Supreme Court hinted that in conditional legislations, for the statute to take effect, there could be a further dependence on the executive or even on the legislature of the future day, among other things.

Such enactments might be needed on various occasions for multiple reasons. But, by amalgamating the demand for women's reservation with the uncertainty of a future delimitation process, that too in the case of a constitutional amendment, Parliament has made populist rhetoric at best or committed a constitutional blunder at worst. The secrecy maintained on the subject till the commencement of the special session was also thoroughly undemocratic, which in turn, prevented the exposure of the follies of the legislation.

Therefore, with regard to the future of the women's quota in the legislature, one can only have the pessimism of the intelligence and optimism of the will, as Antonio Gramsci famously put it, in a different context.

*Kaleswaram Raj is a lawyer at the Supreme Court of India. Views are personal*



JAG MOHAN THAKEN

## Haryana Public Service Commission Results: Has Haryana land become intelligentsia barren?

Haryana Public Service Commission (HPSC) declared the final result of state's prestigious 'Haryana Civil & Allied Services' examination, commonly known as 'HCS', in which all the 61 candidates who appeared in the interview have been selected. Why and how, we shall discuss, but it's strange and record breaking.

HPSC had invited applications for 95 posts for 'HCS Examination-2022' on February 9, 2023, for which more than ninety thousand candidates had applied. Only half of the applicants appeared in the preliminary examination and out of those who were successful in this examination, 1190 candidates appeared in the main examination held on 12-13 August. According to the main examination result released by the Commission on September 25, only 61 candidates for 95 posts have been considered eligible for interview as per the condition of the commission. And now on October 11, 2023, HPSC has released its final result and all the 61, who appeared in the interview, have been selected.

So, the remaining 34 posts will remain vacant now. Why has the commission not found even the least required eligible candidates for interview? What are the conditions which the youth of Haryana are not able to fulfil?

The minimum qualifying marks requirement for HCS main examination remains a hindrance for the candidates. Four papers have to be passed in the main examination - English (100 marks), Hindi (100 marks), General Knowledge (200 marks) and any one optional paper (200 marks). It is mandatory to score minimum 33 percent marks in Hindi and English papers and minimum 45 percent marks in aggregate of all four papers combined. It is a very gloomy picture that in this main examina-



tion, out of 1190 candidates appeared, only 61 candidates were able to fulfil these conditions and the remaining 1129 candidates failed to cross this hurdle. What would be more ironic than this that some of the candidates could not even score minimum 33 percent marks in English and Hindi.

Such a situation has not arisen for the first time. Earlier, in the recruitment examination for 600 posts of Agricultural Development Officers (ADO), only 59 candidates were able to pass the examination. That is, 90 percent posts were left vacant due to unavailability of qualified candidates, whereas Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University located in Hisar in the state is considered a leader in agricultural education and the students of this university have earned their name and fame in foreign countries also.

### Why are the sufficient or efficient candidates not being found?

In the state of Haryana, which is consistently included in the statistics of top unemployed states, a long army of unemployed youth is always found standing in the queue to get jobs. During the recent Legislative Assembly session on August 29, 2023, in response to a question asked by Meham MLA Balraj Kundu, the Chief Minister of Haryana had said that at present 5.4 lakh unemployed youth are registered in the state to get jobs. He also informed that

as on July 31, 2023, a long queue of 1,03,265 graduates, 29,998 post graduates and 21,569 professional degree holders were registered in various employment offices of the state.

It is clear from the above government data that in Haryana alone, more than 1.5 lakh youth possess the prescribed eligibility for 'HCS' examination, who are registered in the employment offices. It is not that these people do not fill the forms for the posts. More than 90 thousand applicants had filled the forms for 95 posts of HCS recruitment alone, which means an average of one thousand applications for one post. Still, even 95 candidates could not pass the recruitment exam, why so?

Has the education system in the educational institutions of Haryana become so poor that the students coming out from here are not able to score only 33 percent marks in English and Hindi papers and even 45 percent marks in aggregate? Or have students become so discouraged after seeing the long lines of unemployed that they have given up hope and studying? Do they not believe in the slogan of Chief Minister Manohar Lal "No expenditure - No slip" (No Kharahi—No Parchi)? Is it not the effect of 'Eating Milk and Curd' of Haryana that by drinking buffalo milk, the bodies of the youth are becoming strong, but the mind is becoming incapacitated? Is that why wrestlers and players of Haryana are winning medals, but students are lagging behind in ability? But it is not so at all, because every year the youth of Haryana are securing places in the first line of successful candidates in the country's highest and most difficult 'IAS' examination. Then what is the reason?

It seems that the recruitment examination system of the state itself is faulty. The government should pay more attention to this so that the youth of the state can get jobs and lakhs of vacant posts in the state can be filled, so that the public can get relief.

### What the leaders of opposition parties allege?

Kumari Selja, a former Union Minister and Ex-President of Haryana Congress, says, "In this examination for HCS, a total of 61 candidates have been shown to have passed the main examination for 95 posts of HCS, it smacks of rigging, rules are being changed for their favourites. The rule says that three times the number of candidates is called for an interview against the total number of posts."

Attacking the poor education system of Haryana, Kumari Selja states in a statement issued on September 25 that more than 28 thousand posts are lying vacant in government schools. She says that 60 percent posts of professors and assistant professors are lying vacant in government colleges. The condition of the universities is even worse.

Haryana State President of Aam Aadmi Party and Rajya Sabha MP Dr. Sushil Gupta said that there should be a high-level inquiry into the matter as to how only 61 candidates out of 1190 candidates appeared in the main examination were considered eligible for the interview. After all, on what basis was the interview list prepared?

### What the solution should be?

There is definitely some truth in the allegations being made by the opposition leaders, the government must improve its education system. Along with this, the examination system of HPSC and Staff Selection Commission also should be under investigation as to how the papers are being set at such a difficult level or paper checking is being done on such a strict scale that candidates are not able to even get passing marks.

*Jag Mohan Thaken is a Haryana based retired Senior Bank Manager, views are personal*

### BOOKS: REVIEW

## Yerawada diaries: A glimpse into women's lives in incarceration

In "From Phansi Yard," Sudha Bharadwaj offers a poignant and intimate account of her life, choices, and experiences as a trade unionist and activist. The narrative is a testament to her unwavering commitment to the upliftment of the marginalized in Chhattisgarh and her brave stance against the concentration of wealth.

Bharadwaj's journey is nothing short of remarkable. From her early years in the U.S. and U.K., her return to India, and her eventual renunciation of American citizenship, she paints a vivid picture of a life shaped by strong socialist values. Her mother, Professor Krishna Bharadwaj, played a pivotal role in molding her worldview, exposing her to an environment where social awareness and the fight against poverty and discrimination were paramount.

The book delves deep into her transition from the academic

comforts of Cambridge to the gritty realities of Chhattisgarh. Bharadwaj's descriptions of her immersion in union work and the camaraderie she found among her peers are both heartwarming and enlightening. Her reflections on the challenges faced by unions, particularly the Chhattisgarh Mines Shamik Sangh, underscore the complexities of grassroots movements and the sacrifices made by their leaders.

A significant portion of the book is dedicated to her arrest in connection with the Bhim-Koregaon case and her subsequent time in prison. Bharadwaj's portrayal of her fellow inmates in Yerawada Jail's Phansi Yard is both harrowing and hopeful. Through her eyes, we see the resilience of the human spirit, even in the face of adversity. The bonds formed in prison, the shared struggles, and the acts of kindness shine a light on the often-overlooked humanity

**The bonds formed in prison, the shared struggles, and the acts of kindness shine a light on the often-overlooked humanity within prison walls**

within prison walls. Bharadwaj's narrative is a powerful commentary on the state of democracy and the shrinking spaces for dissent in contemporary India. Her story is a clarion call for the protection of democratic values and the importance of standing up against injustice.

In "From Phansi Yard," readers are not only offered a glimpse into the life of a fearless activist but are also challenged to reflect on their own roles in upholding justice and equality. This book is a must-read for anyone interested



FROM PHANSI YARD: My Year with the Women of Yerawada By Sudha Bharadwaj Juggernaut Publication; 264 pages; Rs 799

in understanding the complexities of activism, the human cost of dissent, and the indomitable spirit of those who fight for a better world.

Beyond the personal narrative, "From Phansi Yard" serves as a mirror reflecting the broader socio-political landscape of India. Bharadwaj's experiences, both as an activist and a prisoner, shed light on the systemic challenges that plague the nation. The book raises pertinent questions about the role of the judiciary, the media, and other institutions in safeguarding or, at times, undermining the democratic ethos of the country. Her observations on the concentration of power and the conflation of dissent with criminal activity are particularly thought-provoking, urging read-

ers to critically evaluate the state of democracy in India.

Bharadwaj's writing style is both evocative and accessible. She masterfully weaves together personal anecdotes with broader socio-political commentary, making the narrative both intimate and universal. Her descriptions of the women she encountered in prison, from those who committed crimes in self-defense to those abandoned by their families, are especially moving. These stories highlight the multifaceted nature of crime and punishment, challenging readers to look beyond black-and-white narratives and understand the complex socio-economic factors at play. Another commendable aspect of the book is its emphasis on hope and resilience. Despite the challenges and injustices she faced, Bharadwaj's narrative is imbued with a sense of optimism. Her belief in the power of collective action, the importance of solidarity, and the potential for change is palpable. This underlying message of hope serves as a beacon, encouraging readers to believe in the possibility of a better future, even in the face of overwhelming odds.



# InCred Financial Services Limited public issue of NCDs of Rs 300 cr

DOMINICK RODRIGUES  
Mumbai

InCred Financial Services Limited announced here recently a public issue of secured, rated, listed, redeemable, Non-Convertible Debentures (NCDs) with Base size of Rs 150 crores with an option to retain over-subscription up to Rs 150 crore -- aggregating up to Rs 300 crores. The NCD issue opens on October 25 and closes on November 7, 2023. The NCDs are proposed to be listed on BSE Limited, which is the designated stock exchange for the issue.

InCred Financial Services Limited is a non-deposit-taking, systematically-important, NBFC registered with RBI. Bhupinder Singh, Whole-Time Director and Chief Executive Officer, InCred Financial Services Limited, said "We have established ourselves as a diversified lending NBFC with a business model rooted in cutting edge tech and analyt-



ics and focused on risk metrics reflected in the strength of our asset quality." Describing this as a consequence of a tried and tested approach to credit risk and collections, he said the company continuously leverages technology and data science to make lending quick, simple and hassle-free. "A key component of

our growth so far has been the success of our liabilities strategy, and this public issuance of NCDs will play a role in further diversifying and strengthening our borrowing mix." Noting that success in this business is dependent on risk-taking, Singh said that the company has a very high Capital

Adequacy Ratio and its model gives it far greater resiliency during adverse times. "Technology is playing a great role in measuring risks on an ongoing basis," he said. Highlighting market segments that are still highly under-penetrated, he said "student loans+ presented a big market for bright students wanting to study abroad. "One student, whose father was earning barely Rs 15,000 monthly salary, went abroad such a loan and is today earning around a crore rupees salary," he said, adding "Schools too are our customers as banks don't have a last-mile touchpoint." The fiscal year 2023 highlighted the company's consolidated total revenue from operations at Rs 864.58 crores and consolidated net profit before tax at Rs 203.17 crores. For the three months ending June 2023, total revenue from operations stood at Rs 266.94 crore and Profit before tax at Rs 83,000 crore. InCred

Financial Services Limited caters to lower middle class to middle class Indian households for their personal finance needs like education loans and personal loans. It also offers secured and unsecured business loans to small business, secured loan to K12 Indian schools for their expansion plans, supply chain financing, lending profitable financial institutions and micro-finance companies and escrow-backed lending through its SME vertical. As on June 30, 2023, the asset under management for the Company was Rs 6,483.50 crore while also catering to 4,18,794 customers. JM Financial Limited and InCred Capital Wealth Portfolio MANAGER Private Limited are the lead managers to the issue, CRISIL Ratings Limited is the Credit Rating Agency, while Catalyst Trustee Private Limited is the Debenture Trustee to the issue and link Intime India Private Limited is the Registrar to the issue.

# India notices a steady decrease in fuel prices over the past two years despite global volatility: Hardeep Puri

FW DESK  
Chandigarh



Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs and Petroleum and Natural Gas, Hardeep Singh Puri, recently participated in a significant interaction with members of the media during his visit to Shri Guru Gobind Singh College in Chandigarh. This momentous occasion coincided with the vibrant celebration of the Zonal Youth and Heritage Festival, providing the perfect backdrop for the Minister to share his insights on various topics of national and global importance.

Addressing a query on the recent middle east crisis, Minister Puri firmly condemned acts of terrorism in the Middle East and said, "India stands firmly committed to global peace, security, and stability."

When questioned about the impact of the Middle East crisis on petroleum prices, Hon'ble Minister assured the public that India's fuel supply remains secure and affordable. He emphasized India's diverse sources of

oil supply and its position as the world's third-largest consumer of oil. Minister Puri pointed out the resilience of India's energy policies, stating that "India has witnessed a steady decrease in fuel prices over the past two years, providing economic relief to our citizens."

Furthermore, the Union Minister emphasized the effectiveness of the Jan Andolan approach, where government policies transform into a mass

movement. He highlighted that this approach enables policies to reach the grassroots level, ensuring a direct, positive impact on the lives of citizens. Minister Puri expressed his belief that initiatives like Swachh Bharat can achieve full success when they become a Jan Andolan, bridging the gap between policy-making and practical implementation, and enhancing the overall quality of life for the people.

# VNG Digital Business unveils cutting-edge solutions for business digital transformation at Tech4Life

VIETNAM: VNG Digital Business has recently introduced two offerings at the Tech4Life Exhibition & Summit: the Cloud Camera AI solution for Smart City operations and the VNG Cloud Computing platform designed to empower businesses in their digital transformation journey. Representing the latest addition to VNG's quartet of core business segments, VNG Digital Business is dedicated to driving B2B technology solutions that facilitate seamless and secure digital transformation for organizations.

Cloud Camera AI, an advanced AI system developed by Veka.ai (formerly vCloudcam), is designed to address the specific requirements of diverse enterprise sectors, including Banking, Retail, Security, Traffic Management, Building/Apartment Complexes, Factories, and Industrial Zones. This robust system boasts a comprehensive feature set centered around analytics, alerting, security enhancement, and risk prevention. It excels in optimizing operational efficiency and management for various entities, such as retail chains, residential and urban areas, ultimately enhancing the customer experience. In essence, Cloud Camera AI serves as a catalyst, expediting the digital transformation journey for businesses and municipalities throughout Vietnam.

According to Market Research Future, the global Camera AI market has surged to a substantial USD 20.1 billion in 2022 and is projected to further expand to USD 23.1 billion by 2023. Annual growth rates are expected to reach an impressive 15.2% during the period of 2023 to 2032. This remarkable ascent results from the escalating demand for surveillance and management solutions in commercial settings, aimed at bolstering operational efficiency and enhancing the overall customer experience.

Vu Van Tiep, Head of Veka.ai, VNG Digital Business, shared his view on the market prospect: "In Vietnam, the scope for AI Camera development remains significantly expansive. In addition to capitalizing on the domestic market and an in-depth understanding of customer needs, Veka.ai leverages the robust foundation of VNG's Cloud and Data Center infrastructure. This combination empowers us to develop AI-powered features and products catering to the diverse demands of numerous sectors, thereby serving tens of millions of individuals."

During the Tech4Life 2023 Exhibition & Summit, Veka.ai representatives further offered insights into their solutions. These include the management of remote security barriers, automated vehicle and personnel checks through precise detection, and early warning capabilities for fire and explosion risks, aided by a heatmap for enhanced operational quality and utmost safety for both property and human life.



# IRM Energy Limited coming out with Rs 541 crore IPO for natural gas network

DOMINICK RODRIGUES  
Mumbai

IRM Energy Limited a city gas distribution (CGD) company engaged in laying, building, operating and expanding a city or local natural gas distribution network -- has come out with its maiden Initial Public Offering (IPO) with price band of Rs 480 to Rs 505 per Equity Share. The IPO will open for public issue of 1,08,00,000 equity shares - totaling Rs 541 crores on October 18, 2023 and close on October 20, 2023 with no 'Offer for Sale' component. The equity shares are proposed to be listed on BSE and NSE.

Noting that Rs 541 crores is expected to be raised through this IPO, Harshal Anjaria, CFO, IRMEL, said the company's focus is mainly on CNG and Rs 42 crores contribution came from its Japanese partner "whose technology partnership is valuable."



The company intends to utilize about Rs 307.26 crore for funding capital expenditure requirements for development of the City Gas Distribution network in the geographical areas of Namakkal & Tiruchirappalli (Tamil Nadu) in coming years, while Rs 135 crore will be used for prepayment or repayment of all or a portion of certain outstanding borrowings availed by the company, and for general

corporate purpose. The company has operations at Banaskantha (Gujarat), Fatehgarh Sahib (Punjab), Diu and Gir Somnath, and Namakkal & Tiruchirappalli - serving 184 industrial customers, 269 commercial customers, 52,454 domestic customers as at June 30, 2023. Banaskantha GA: is highlighting: CNG demand from floating vehicles, western dedi-

ated freight corridor and an upcoming Indian Air Force base in Deesa.

Fatehgarh Sahib GA: is witnessing over 90% demand and opportunities with industries (as per NGT order) switching to PNG. Mandi Gobindgarh has over 400 industries (of which the company is catering to 180 of them), besides the upcoming Pharma and Textile Park expected to drive PNG volume.

Diu and Somnath GA: is highlighting the upcoming Chhara LNG terminal that is expected to reduce transportation costs of CNG. The company operates 15 CNG stations here.

Namakkal and Tiruchirappalli GA: highlights five company-operated stations, besides the area having 6 industrial estates, one industrial complex, and also being a Hub for Transportation and Manufacturing of engineering goods, alongside being connected to 5 national highways.

As of October 9, 2023, IRMEL has established a network of 69 CNG filling stations including 2 CNG stations owned and operated by the company itself (the "COCO Stations"), 36 CNG stations owned and operated by dealers (the "DODO Stations") and 31 CNG stations owned and operated by oil marketing companies (the "OMC Stations").

To capitalize on synergetic business opportunities, the company has entered into a strategic and technical partnership with Shizuoka Gas Co. Ltd, Japan ("Shizgas") - the fourth largest gas company in Japan by natural gas sales volume - by infusing capital through a private placement in IRMEL.

It has signed an MoU with Mindra EV Private Limited for setting up an electric vehicle charging infrastructure at DODO and COCO stations for a period of five years - with a vision of becoming an energy-oriented company.

# Gujarat Govt woos Punjab Traders to Invest in State



CHANDIGARH: The Gujarat Government has reached out to Punjab's industrialists with the aim to woo them to invest in the state, according to a report in the Tribune.

As per the report, senior government functionaries met with industry leaders across sectors such as textile, apparel, engineering and medical equipment, and urged them to invest in Gujarat for expanding their operations.

The Gujarat government delegation led by Consumer Protection Affairs Minister Kunvarjibhai Bavaliya visited Ludhiana-based Avon Cycles and Ganga Acroworks and interacted with prominent industrialists in Chandigarh.

# MoneyHero Group Successfully Completes Business Combination with Bridgetown Holdings Limited

FW DESK  
Singapore & Hong Kong

CompareAsia Group Capital Limited, a market leading financial products platform in Greater Southeast Asia, completed its previously announced business combination with Bridgetown Holdings Limited, a special purpose acquisition company formed as a collaboration between Pacific Century Group ("Pacific Century") and Thiel Capital LLC on October 12, 2023 (Eastern Time). The business combination was approved by Bridgetown share-



holders in an Extraordinary General Meeting of Bridgetown Shareholders held on October 10, 2023.

MoneyHero Limited's ("PubCo") ordinary shares and public warrants are expected to begin trading on the Nasdaq Stock Market under the ticker symbols "MNY" and "MNYWW" on October 13, 2023.

The completion of the business combination values MoneyHero at an enterprise value of

-US\$310 million and an equity value of -US\$283 million after reflecting net proceeds from the transaction.

MoneyHero received -US\$100 million in gross proceeds entirely through the contribution of cash held in Bridgetown's trust account, after taking into account redemptions of approximately 36% of Bridgetown's public shares.

"We are proud to have achieved this significant milestone in our journey," commented Prashant Aggarwal, Chief Executive Officer of MoneyHero.

# Infinity Learn's Leap into AI-Powered Education, 'Launches VISTA - The Vertical AI for Education'



ARUN KUMAR RAO  
Bangalore

Taking a pioneering step in the realm of education built on new age tech platform, Infinity Learn by Sri Chaitanya, fresh off its announcement of joining the 100cr club and achieving profitability, proudly unveils its magnum opus: IL VISTA: Virtual Intelligent System for Tailored Academics. This landmark initiative is underpinned by an impressive investment of close to a million dollars, with an anticipated commitment of an additional 4-5 million dollars set aside for its upcoming phases.

IL VISTA is a groundbreaking tech initiative in the world of education. The Virtual Intelligent System for Tailored Academics, aims at leveraging the full potential of AI, to resolve the challenges faced by educators and learners alike. The vision is brought to life for the users through unified mobile and web applications in the form of various tools, ensuring that cutting-edge technology is always at their fingertips.

Sushma Bopanna, Academic Director of Sri Chaitanya Educational Institutions and Founder Director/Infinity Learn by Sri Chaitanya said, "It's truly amazing to see our dreams come to life, where technology is like a friendly guide, making teaching easier

for educators and learning more fun for students. I imagine a future where countless teachers feel supported and countless students benefit from our latest offering, VISTA by Infinity Learn. This launch is our big step into creating that brighter, more inclusive world of learning for everyone", she added.

Unique and innovative approach to conversational AI-enabled scaffolding is the core of VISTA's commitment to a personalized approach towards learning. Traditionally, a teacher caters to learners guiding them with hints to develop the right approach until they are independent to resolve the questions on their own. In VISTA's world, scaffolding is taken up by Doubts AI, a new-age ally of educators with traditional values. It will comprehend and steer the student's learning, guiding them step-by-step, in a way that they grasp the concept and not just the answer.

Ujjwal Singh, the Founding CEO of Infinity Learn by Sri Chaitanya, further elaborated, "Beneath the surface of IL VISTA lies a powerful AI engine, diligently analysing every interaction, every query, and every feedback from learners and educators. This isn't just about streamlining the learning process but elevating the entire educational ecosystem", he added.

# Hat-trick win: Trident Group's Branding Studio bags India's 'Best In-House Design Studio' Award



KULBIR SINGH KALSI  
Chandigarh

Trident Group's Branding Studio has been honored with 'Best In-house Design Studio' Award at India's most prestigious design show 'India's Best Design Awards' (IBDA) initiated by Design India Magazine. This marks the third consecutive year that the conglomerate has secured this coveted recognition. IBDA is a reputable platform that honors Design Studios for their expert work, ethical business procedures, and transparency. It recognizes India's best and brightest design teams and projects. Trident's Branding Studio comprises artists from different parts of India. Coming from India's most prestigious Design Institutes like NID and NIIFT, each member is a skilled professional and upholds the core brand essence of Trident's values in their communication and design efforts. Their recent campaign 'Passage to India' has received appreciation from stakeholders across the globe. From accomplishing distinctive projects to creating campaigns that impact audiences on a larger scale, Trident's design team always stands out with their creativity, technical knowledge and deep understanding of market trends. Congratulating the team, Chairman Emeritus Padma Shri Rajinder Guptasaid 'Our aim is to provide innovative products with exemplary experience to our customers across the globe. This recognition reaffirms Trident's unwavering commitment to excellence and innovation in each step of a product journey. I also thank IBDA for recognizing the efforts that the team has made in their amazing campaigns.'

# eské Raises \$1.5 Mn in Pre-Series a funding led by Mistry Ventures to build a global lifestyle brand from India



MUMBAI: eské, a Mumbai-based Direct-to-Consumer (D2C) lifestyle brand that offers premium handbags, briefcases and accessories has raised a total of \$1.5 Mn (INR 12 Crores), in a pre-series A round of funding led by Mistry Ventures. This round also witnessed continued support from Fluid Ventures, one of eské's existing investors.

Having been a key supplier for international luxury brands, eské was launched five years ago, and has seen tremendous traction in a short span of time. Born in India, and made for the world, eské offers a range of handbags, briefcases, and accessories for the global modern consumer in the price range of Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 10,000.

# Quantum AMC launches Quantum Small Cap Fund

DOMINICK RODRIGUES  
Mumbai

Quantum AMC announced here recently the launch of a "new fund offer" (NFO) with Quantum Small Cap Fund that opens for subscription on October 16 and closes on October 27, 2023.

The Fund - which is an open-ended equity scheme predominantly investing in Small Cap Stocks and will have a Direct and Regular Plan --will be managed by Chirag Mehta - Chief Investment Officer and Abhilasha Satele, Quantum AMC.

The scheme will be benchmarked against S&P BSE 250 Small Cap total return index (TRI) with its investment objective being generation of capital appreciation by investing in Small Cap Stocks.

The scheme will have a Direct and Regular Plan. The Fund managers will allocate 65%-100% to the equity and equity-related instruments of Small Cap Companies.

The Scheme Investment Philosophy features: True to Label Fund (Disciplined about fund capacity to prevent large size becoming a hindrance to performance); Prioritizing Liquidity (Minimum Rs 2 Cr Average Value per day in all stocks);



High-Conviction Portfolio: (comprising of 25 to 60 Stocks for optimal diversification to avoid becoming a "Closet" Small Cap Index); Agile Portfolio Construction (Track Record since 2006 of judiciously building portfolios); Ensuring Limited Ownership (General limit of 5% of market capitalisation holding in all stocks); Sizeable Stock Exposure (Minimum weight of 2% at cost in each stock).

"Our Small Cap Fund is meant for investors who are looking for long-term capital appreciation," Chirag Mehta, Chief Investment Officer & Fund Manager, Quantum AMC, said. "We have seen that in the long term, Small Cap stocks have demonstrated the capability of giving good returns potential."

He said "To ensure good

returns for our customers, we will make investments in lesser-known, smaller businesses with growth prospects. Over a period of time, these companies increase their revenue and earnings, which can ensure good returns for our investors."

"However, the biggest challenge in the small cap mutual fund space today is a large asset under management (AUM) size," Mehta said while noting that funds with large AUM tend to face liquidity issues if they end up owning a big part of a small-cap stock's market capitalization.

"They may be compelled to have a long tail of stocks with unsubstantial weights or they may be forced to either sit on cash or to invest incremental inflows into mid or large-cap names, which is not what a

small-cap fund's objective is," he said, adding that the Quantum Small Cap Fund will limit its AUM size to an optimal level, which will enable it to hold a high-conviction, liquid portfolio of promising small cap businesses.

I. V. Subramaniam, MD & Group Head- Equities, Quantum Advisors - Sponsor to Quantum Small Cap Fund, said, "Many of the new startups that have sprung up to solve many problems faced by the population could eventually list as small-cap companies and then eventually grow into sizable companies in the mid-cap or large-cap space."

Noting that the growth of the economy will be led not only by the large companies but by the rapid growth of the many startups that have sprung up in the last few years, he said Quantum's proven track record since 2006 demonstrated judicious portfolio management and adaptability to market conditions.

"Quantum Mutual Fund is well-positioned to enhance its investors portfolio with Quantum Small Cap Fund. This scheme aims to provide exposure to companies through a meticulously curated and diversified portfolio."



# G20 ministerial for swift implementation of roadmap to deal with crypto assets

**NEWDELHI:** The finance ministers of the G20 nations have called for swift and coordinated implementation of the G20 roadmap to deal with the issues related to crypto assets.

The G20 Roadmap on Crypto Assets adopted by the G20 Finance Ministers was spelt out in a Synthesis Paper prepared jointly by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Financial Stability Board (FSB).

"We adopt the roadmap proposed in the Synthesis Paper as a G20 Roadmap on Crypto Assets... We call for swift and coordinated implementation of the G20 Roadmap, including implementation of policy frameworks; outreach beyond G20 jurisdictions; global coordination, cooperation and information sharing; and addressing data gaps," said a communique issued during the fourth meeting of the FMCBG on Thursday.

The Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FM-CBG) of G20 nations met on the sidelines of IMF-World Bank annual meetings in Marrakesh, Morocco.



However, the communique made no mention of the ongoing Israel-Hamas war. At least 2,800 people in Israel and Gaza have been killed in the conflict, with thousands of others injured since October 6.

Asked why there was no reference to the Israel-Hamas war as it has global economic implications, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said, "The communique was released last evening after the first session and there were not very many discussions on the conflict and therefore it didn't find a place on the communique."

On the impact of the conflict on the global economy, she said, "The recent crisis in the

Middle East and the concerns about fuel (price rise) is back again. These are worries that many countries do hold and they expressed these as well. The concern and uncertainties are about the peace...fuel concerns affecting the food security aspects and fragmentation of supply chains.. Asked about the impact on the ambitious India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), Sitharaman said this India initiative is for long-term benefit and short-term development will not have any bearing on this.

Talking about the G20 Roadmap on crypto assets, she said it is a detailed and action-oriented roadmap that will help coordinate global policy as well as develop mitigating strategies and regulations on such assets while also taking into consideration the specific implications on Emerging Markets and Developing Economies (EMDEs).

Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FM-CBG) under the Indian Presidency in Marrakesh, Morocco on the sidelines of the IMF-WB Annual Meetings. The G20 or Group of 20 is an intergovernmental forum of the world's major developed and developing economies. It comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, the US and the European Union (EU). The ministers appreciated the work undertaken by the G20 Independent Expert Group (IEG) in preparing Volume 2 of their report.

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# Haryana signs memorandum of agreements with RBI to boost MSME sector

SATISH HANDA

While presiding a meeting at Chandigarh in which Dushyant Chautala Deputy Chief Minister, State Employment Minister Anup Dhanak and Additional Chief Secretary Anand Mohan Sharan were also present, Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar said emphasised over the current need of boosting the MSMEs ecosystem by active participation of suppliers, buyers, bankers etc there is need of industries and commerce department to exchange memorandum of agreements (MoAs) with three Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved TReDS (trade receivables discounting system) entities. The MoAs were exchanged in the presence of all on chief minister on Wednesday.

Speaking on the occasion, Khattar said that Haryana primarily relies on agriculture, but the scope of this sector is limited due to decreasing land holdings. At the same time Khattar said there is a pressing need to diversify into industries and other sectors. He said the gov-



ernment is actively pursuing various schemes to promote and nurture the growth of MSMEs. He also emphasised the present need of boosting the MSMEs ecosystem through active participation of suppliers, buyers, bankers etc.

Deputy chief minister Dushyant Chautala said the industries in Haryana have experienced significant growth in recent years, fostering various forms of industrialisation. He highlighted the increasing number of MSMEs in the state and assured that the government is committed to providing enhanced security and support for these enterprises. Khattar made an

appeal to the private industry sector for 75% reservation in jobs in their organization to youths belonging to Haryana state as per policy 2020. During the meeting, permission was granted for four schemes having Rs 1041 crore investment in Haryana state. Permission was also granted for sanction of 100 acre land in IMT Rohtak for developing R&D centre.

Speaking on the occasion, Khattar said Haryana primarily relies on agriculture, but the scope of this sector is limited due to decreasing land holdings. Consequently, there is a pressing need to diversify into industries and other sectors in the present.

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## Reliance, HDFC Bank and FMCG stocks could drive Nifty higher: Analysts

**MUMBAI:** The Nifty rallied in the last couple of days as fears around geopolitical concerns were absorbed by the market.

At close on Wednesday, Nifty was up 0.62 per cent or 121.5 points at 19,811.35, while Sensex settled at 66,473.05, up 394 points or 0.60 per cent.

The Nifty gained 1.5 per cent for the week driven by front-line stocks like Reliance and HDFC Bank, said Jaykrishna Gandhi, Head of Business Development, Institutional Equities, Emkay Global Financial Services. The market also found support by the comments from Fed officials who hinted at a lower probability of rate hike going forward.

"The Indian market will kick off the earnings season on Wednesday. Near term, the market, despite geopolitical concerns, seems to be on a strong footing and we believe front-line stocks like Reliance, HDFC bank and FMCG names could drive the Nifty higher," Gandhi said.

## HDFC Bank to report Q2 result on Oct 15



**MUMBAI:** India's biggest private lender, HDFC Bank, will announce the quarterly financial result of the merged entity for the first time on Sunday, October 15, for Q2-FY24.

Led by portfolio gains from erstwhile HDFC Ltd, analysts expect the lender to clock up to 44 per cent year-on-year (YoY) growth in net profit. Net interest income (NII), meanwhile, may increase in the range of 33 per cent to 40 per cent YoY, they project. "Q2-FY24 will be the first quarter post the merger and, thus, there is likely to be a fair degree of volatility over estimates. Key variables to watch would be opening

cost of funds, yield on loans, and impact of incremental cash reserve ratio (ICRR) to understand the net interest margin (NIM) profile of the merged entity," said analysts at Kotak Institutional Equities. On October 4, HDFC Bank informed the exchanges that its gross advances grew 57.7 per cent YoY to Rs 23.54 trillion at the end of the September quarter, rising from Rs 14.93 trillion last year. Its deposits, meanwhile, aggregated to Rs 21.73 trillion at the end of Q2-FY24, clocking a growth of around 30 per cent over Rs 16.73 trillion as of Q2-FY23.

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## Imports from Russia up 67 pc to USD 30.42 bn in Apr-Sep

**NEW DELHI:** India's imports from Russia rose by about 67 per cent to USD 30.42 billion during the April-September period this fiscal on higher shipments of crude oil and fertiliser, according to the commerce ministry data.

With this, Russia has become India's second-largest import source during the first half of this fiscal. The imports were USD 18.24 billion during April-September 2022. From a market share of less than 1 per cent in India's import basket before the start of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Russia's share of India's oil imports rose to over 40 per cent. India, the world's third-largest crude importer after China and the United States, has been buying Russian oil that was available at a discount after some countries in the West shunned it as a means of punishing Moscow for the invasion of Ukraine.

The ministry's data showed that imports from China dipped

to USD 50.47 billion during the period against USD 52.42 billion in the same period last year.

Similarly, imports from the US declined to USD 21.39 billion during the period under review from USD 25.79 billion in April-September last year. Imports from the UAE contracted to USD 20.7 billion during April-September 2023 compared to USD 27.8 billion a year ago. During the first half of this fiscal, imports also dipped from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Indonesia, Singapore and Korea. Among all the top ten import source nations of India, imports from Hong Kong increased to USD 10.21 billion as against USD 10 billion in April-September 2022.

On the export front, India's exports to seven of its top 10 destinations have recorded a negative growth rate during



the period. During the first six months of this fiscal, the country's merchandise exports to the US, the UAE, China, Singapore, Germany, Saudi Arabia, and Bangladesh have dipped. However, exports to the UK, Australia and the Netherlands have recorded positive growth.

India's merchandise exports contracted by 2.6 per cent to USD 34.47 billion in September even as the country's merchandise trade deficit narrowed to USD 19.37 billion during the month under review, according to the government data released on Friday.

# Initiative to Accelerate Development



SATISH SINGH

To maintain the pace of growth, it is important that the repo rate is not increased further. Therefore, in the monetary review concluded on October 6, the Reserve Bank maintained the repo rate at 6.5 per cent for the fourth consecutive time. Earlier, the Reserve Bank had increased the repo rate to 6.5 percent in the monetary review of February 2023.

The repo rate was increased by 2.50 percent in 6 times during May 2022 to February 2023, due to which inflation, global geopolitical crisis, high price of crude oil etc. in the international market, but except inflation, there is not much impact of other factors on growth, because the lethality of other issues has reduced significantly. However, an increase in the scope of the war between Israel and Hamas may increase some problems. Therefore, the Reserve Bank wants to implement various measures to accelerate the growth rate. In this sequence, in the recent monetary review, all the members of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) voted unanimously in favour of keeping the repo rate unchanged.

By keeping the repo rate unchanged by the Reserve Bank, the loan instalments of existing borrowers will not increase, and businessmen and the public will be able to get loans at cheaper rates. Due to fluctuations in the repo rate, the loan instalment increases or decreases, whereas if it is kept constant, the loan rate generally also remains the same. The Reserve Bank tries to fight inflation by increasing the



repo rate. When the repo rate is high, banks get loans from the Reserve Bank at higher interest rates, due to which banks also give loans to customers at expensive rates. By doing this, the liquidity of currency in the economy reduces and due to people not having money in their pockets, the demand for goods decreases and due to high prices of goods and products, their sales decline, which leads to softness in inflation.

Similarly, when the economy is weak, efforts are made to increase the liquidity of currency in the market to accelerate the developmental works and for this the repo rate is cut, so that banks can get loans from the Reserve Bank at cheaper interest rates and after getting the loan, banks can also give loans to the customers at cheaper interest rates.

In the monetary review, the Reserve Bank Governor also released inflation and gross domestic product (GDP) estimates. According to the Central Bank, inflation may be 5.4 percent in the financial year 2024. Earlier the Reserve Bank had estimated inflation to be 5.1 percent. The Reserve Bank has projected real GDP to grow at the rate of 6.5 percent in fiscal year 2024 and 6.6 percent in fiscal year 2025. The Reserve Bank had earlier also predicted

the GDP to grow at the same rate in the financial year 2024 and financial year 2025.

According to Reserve Bank Governor Shri Shakti Kant Das, the fight against inflation will continue, because the pace of inflation has still not reduced. The Central Bank has set a target of keeping inflation at 4 percent instead of lower-level 2 percent & higher-level 6 percent, but for this the Reserve Bank will have to depend on many reasons like, weather movements, international factors like Global Geo-Political crisis, price of crude oil in the international market etc. It will not be easy for the Reserve Bank to achieve this target, because inflation rate of many food items are still high.

Retail inflation came down to 6.83 percent in the month of August, which was at the level of 7.44 percent in the month of July. However, due to lower prices of vegetables in the month of September, retail inflation came down to 5.02 percent, which is within the upper limit of 6 percent tolerance limit set by the Reserve Bank. In the month of September, the inflation rate in rural areas was 5.33 percent. Although retail inflation has come down in the month of September, the inflation rate of many food items has increased. The inflation rate

of sugar has increased to 4.52 percent, which was 3.8 percent in the month of August. The inflation rate of pulses has increased to 16.38 percent, which was 13.04 percent in the month of August. In September, the inflation rate of spices reached above 23 percent. Despite all efforts by the government to control the price of wheat, its price is increasing, and its inflation rate has reached a level of more than 4 percent in October. The price of rice has also increased by 22 percent in one year. The inflation rate of grains is around 11 percent. The inflation rate of fruits is 7.30 percent. Retail inflation in Rajasthan was the highest in the country at 6.53 percent, while Haryana was at second place with 6.49 percent and Karnataka was at third place with 6 percent.

There has also been an improvement in the industrial production rate in the month of August. This month this rate has been 10.3 percent, whereas in the month of July it was only 6 percent and in the month of June it was 3.7 percent. The improvement in industrial production rate shows that demand and supply have picked up and economic activities are mounting.

Retail inflation came down to 6.83 percent in the month of August, which was at the level of 7.44 percent in the month of July. The main reason for the decline in inflation was the weakening in the prices of vegetables. Wholesale inflation reached minus -0.52% in the month of August. In the month of July, it was 1.36 percent. This is the fifth consecutive month when wholesale inflation remained negative i.e., below zero. The main reasons for the difference between retail

and wholesale inflation are transportation expenses, level of city, area of city, price of fuel in the international market, etc. Therefore, the government can reduce the difference between wholesale and retail inflation through its machinery. Inflation is directly related to purchasing power. For example, if the inflation rate is 7 percent, Rs 100 earned will be worth just Rs 93. Therefore, people should invest only keeping inflation in mind. Otherwise, the value of your money will reduce. Therefore, it is important to keep inflation under control to maintain the pace of growth.

Inflation has remained at a high level for the last few months, which is hindering development. In such a situation, the Reserve Bank has kept the repo rate unchanged. If the Reserve Bank had increased the repo rate to control inflation, then inflation would have reduced, but it would have also reduced the pace of growth, because the increase in repo rate. Reserve Bank by doing; Gives loans to banks at higher interest rates and due to this, banks also give loans to the public and businessmen at higher interest rates, due to which the prices of various products increase and their demand decreases. Such a situation slows down the pace of development. Therefore, the Reserve Bank wants to move forward by maintaining a balance between inflation and growth, so that the Indian economy remains strong, and the common people and businessmen do not have to face much difficulties.

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

## World Bank President Ajay Singh Banga arrives in Morocco

**RABAT:** President of the World Bank Group Ajay Singh Banga arrived in Morocco on October 8 to attend the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank annual meetings.

Upon his arrival, Minister of Economy Nadia Fetah Alaoui welcomed the World Bank President, who will attend the annual meetings alongside high-profile officials from across the world, including IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva. The event, which will kick off tomorrow in Marrakech, will mark the attendance of over 14,000 attendees from across the world.



## Risk monitoring helps Air India prevent revenue loss of over Rs 3 cr

**MUMBAI:** Full-service carrier Air India has prevented revenue loss of over Rs 3 crore in the last 18 months owing to its risk monitoring and fraud prevention mechanism, the airline's Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Campbell Wilson said on Friday.

Wilson in his weekly Friday message to Air India employees, also said that the airline has taken delivery of its second wide-body A350 aircraft, which is expected to arrive in January next year. Air India announced the acquisition of its first A350 plane late last month. Airlines are a high-profile target for fraudsters, whether it be attempts to use stolen credit cards on our websites, to fraudulently claim frequent flier miles, or other scams, Wilson said.

The airline has a risk monitoring and fraud prevention unit and preventing fraudulent transactions is one of its important works, he said. Thanks to the unit's vigilance and close liaison



with airport staff, it has prevented revenue loss of over Rs 3-crore in the last 18 months, Wilson informed employees. "Erstwhile Air India was somewhat of an easy target in the past but, as we completely modernise our systems, this is no longer the case and with our continued investment in state-of-the-art capabilities, we will increasingly be able to turn the tables on criminals, he said."

Wilson also said the airline received this week the first of 21 A320neos (VT-RTF), of the 25 narrow-body planes that airline had announced to lease last year, adding that four new A321neos from this batch are already in service, with the remaining 20 A320neos progressively arriving between now and August 2024.

## IT Raids former Corporator residence recovered Rs 42 cr cash

ARUN KUMAR RAO  
Bengaluru

Income Tax (IT) department have recovered Rs 42 crore cash from the residence of former Bengaluru corporation Ashwathamma and her husband Ambikapathy. Sources said, The couple have close ties with congress.

The Income Tax Department found cash amounting to crores beneath the bed at a flat in Bengaluru, sources stated on Friday. The IT officers are questioning a former woman corporator and her husband in connection with the case. Sources said that vast amount of money is being collected from gold jewellers and other sources in Bengaluru to fund coming



Assembly elections. On getting tip offs in this regard, the IT Department is conducting raids in the city. The cash, amounting to Rs 42 crore, was found during a raid conducted late on Thursday night at a flat located in Atmananda Colony near RT Nagar. According to sources I-T department conducted raids and searches at 25 places in Bengaluru belonging to two civic contractors over

suspected tax evasion. Sources said that the large sum in Rs 500 denominations was stored in 23 cardboard boxes at the house of an ex-corporator of Ward 95. The officials raided the house in Atmananda Colony in RT Nagar belonging to Ashwathamma and R Ambikapati, sources added.

The cash was likely to be transported to a neighbouring state but an official statement is awaited. A local resident said the I-T officials arrived at around 7 am and asked them to stay inside the house. I-T sleuths raided the offices of two contractors - BSR Infratech and Star Infratech - in Sahakar Nagar, Sanjaynagar, among others, besides searching the homes of the people concerned.



# P-20 Summit : World is facing crises due to conflict, it is not in anyone's interest says PM Modi

MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA  
New Delhi

PM Modi said that about 20 years ago terrorists had targeted our Parliament. At that time, Parliament was in session and the terrorists' intention was to abduct and eliminate the MPs. The world is also realizing now how big a challenge, terrorism is for the world.

'Stop supporting Hamas', EU raised the issue of terrorism in P20 conference. European Union's Vice President Nicola Beer said that political and financial support to Hamas should be stopped. The recent terrorist attacks by Hamas on Israeli citizens have shocked the world. This is an expression of the unimaginable violence that terrorists commit against innocent people. It shakes our sense of security and sense of trust.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday inaugurated the 9th conference of the Presiding Chairmen of Parliaments of G20 member countries (P20) at the Yashobhoomi Convention Centre. During this, he



said that this summit is in a way a "Mahakumbh of different parliamentary practices" from around the world. All of you representatives are experienced in different parliamentary working styles. It is a great pleasure for all of us that you are coming to India with such rich democratic experiences.

Without naming anyone, the crisis arises in Israel, PM Modi said that no one is untouched by whatever is happening in different corners of the world today. Today the world is facing crises because of conflict. This

is not in anyone's interest. A divided world cannot provide solutions to the great challenges facing humanity. This is a time of peace and brotherhood. It's time to move forward together. This is the time for everyone's development and welfare. We have to overcome the global trust crisis and move forward on human-centric thinking. We must move the world forward with "One Earth, One Family and One Future". Presiding officers of the parliaments of G20 countries are participating in the conference. 25 Speakers,

10 Deputy Speakers, 50 Members of Parliament and others are going to participate during this two-day global event. The Pan African Parliament is also participating in the G20 event in India for the first time.

PM Modi said, 'Next year, general elections are going to be held once again in India. I extend an advance invitation to all of you delegates at the P20 Summit to watch the general elections to be held next year. India will be very happy to host you again.'

He said that in India we consider general elections as the biggest festival. Since independence in 1947, 17 general elections and more than 300 assembly elections have been held in India. India not only conducts the world's largest elections, but also its participation in it is also increasing. The countrymen have made my party victorious for the second consecutive time. The 2019 general election was the biggest human exercise in human history. 60 crore voters took part in this.

# Israel-Hamas war to have Major Impact on Trade if Conflict Widens: WTO Chief



**NEW DELHI:** World Trade Organization's (WTO) Chief Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala has warned that Israel-Hamas conflict could have a "really big impact" on already weak global trade flows if it widened throughout the region.

Hoping the Israel-Hamas conflict could be ended quickly, Okonjo-Iweala made this statement while she in Mo-

rocco to attend this week's annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

"Middle East violence could add to factors throttling trade growth, including higher interest rates, a strained Chinese property market and Russia's war in Ukraine," said the chief.

"We hope this ends soon and it's contained. Our biggest

fear is if it widens, because that will then have a really big impact on trade," she said in an interview. "Everybody's on eggshells and hoping for the best," she added.

Okonjo-Iweala said global uncertainty was already limiting growth in trade, but that would be exacerbated by the sudden onset of war between Israel and the Islamist Hamas group that controls the Gaza Strip.

The Geneva-based trade body last week halved its growth forecast for global goods trade this year, citing persistent inflation, higher interest rates, the slowing Chinese economy and the war in Ukraine. The WTO said merchandise trade volumes would increase by just 0.8% in 2023, compared with its April estimate of 1.7%.

For 2024, it said goods trade growth would be 3.3%, a forecast virtually unchanged from its April estimate of 3.2%.

# P20 summit : Canada kept away from any further discussion on Khalistan!



MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA  
New Delhi

After the grand event of G20 conference, P20 conference has gone on in Delhi. It is being organised at India International Convention and Expo Center - Yashobhoomi in Dwarka from 12 to 14 October. Speakers and presiding officers of the parliaments of G-20 countries are participating in this conference. However, Canada has maintained distance itself from it to avoid further controversy.

It is believed that Canada has decided not to attend the conference to avoid discussing this matter after the souring of relations with India after the killing of Khalistani terrorist Nijjar. Regarding this, it has been told by the Ministry of External Affairs that Canadian representatives will not attend P20. All leaders and all countries have been invited to participate in it.

Let us tell you that earlier Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla had said that India will raise all the issues with the Canadian President of the Senate during the upcoming Parliament-20 meeting of the presiding officers of G20 countries. It was believed that he would also raise the issue of Khalistanis thriving in Canada. Canadian speaker Raymonde Gagné had also confirmed her participation in the conference. But now his spokesperson said that he will not be able to attend the conference. They were not even told the reason for this also.

# Indo-Canadian Foreign Ministers held a secret meeting in America to resolve the crisis : Report



MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA  
New Delhi

Though, neither Canada nor India's foreign ministry has confirmed the meeting of two countries' diplomats but according to the British newspaper Financial Times, Canadian Foreign Minister, Melanie Jolie had a secret meeting with Indian Foreign Minister, S Jaishankar in Washington a few days ago, amid a diplomatic standoff between the two countries over Canada's allegations of India's involvement in the killing of Khalistani activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

The report also stated that the Canadian government was making efforts to resolve the tense diplomatic situation with New Delhi, following the reports said that Canadian diplomats were given a deadline to leave India or take risk losing their diplomatic immunity. The Canadian foreign minister said earlier this month that they were trying to resolve the issue privately.

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau also said that his country does not want to "escalate the strain situation" with India and affirmed that the Canada will continue to "engage responsible and constructive relationships with India".

A recent report by Canada's CTV News mentioned that the country also has transferred around 30 diplomatic embassy staff members from India to either Kuala Lumpur or Singapore. Needless to mention, relations between India and Canada deteriorated after Trudeau alleged that the Indian security agents' "possible" involvement in the killing of Khalistani criminal Hardeep Singh Nijjar in British Columbia on September 19. On June 18, Nijjar was shot dead by two masked gunmen and Hardeep Singh Nijjar was a Canadian citizen.

Rejecting the allegations, India's Ministry of External Affairs reacted strongly and described the allegations as "absurd" and "influenced". In a sharp reaction to Canada's expulsion of an Indian embassy official, New Delhi had also expelled a senior Canadian diplomat.

# Jamaat-e-Islami Hind voices concern over eruption of hostilities between Israel and Palestine

**NEW DELHI:** Jamaat-e-Islami Hind has voiced concern over the recent large-scale eruption of hostilities between Israel and Palestine. In a statement to the media, the President of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Syed Sadatullah Husaini said, "We are deeply concerned over the recent large-scale eruption of hostilities between Israel and Palestine. It must not be forgotten that the current spate of violence is the result of Israeli aggression unleashed by the most right-wing Netanyahu government against the Palestinians that has claimed the lives of hundreds of people including children, so far.

The continued Israeli policies of occupation and settlements and the provocative desecration

of Aqsa mosque are depriving the region of any serious opportunity for peace and stability in the region. The United Nations and the international community must immediately spring to action, de-escalate the situation and immediately stop the expansion of Jewish settlements. We also call on the international community to prevent Israel from using these events as an excuse to launch a disproportionate war against Palestinian civilians in Gaza. Jamaat-e-Islami Hind believes in the famous saying of Gandhiji that has been the basis of India's age-old policy that 'Palestine belongs to the Palestinians just as England belongs to the British, or France belongs to the French' Jamaat wants the Indian government to support the Palestinians, help the Palestinians establish their own state, and use its global influence to bring peace in the region."

# New funding, to protect 370 million children from polio every year, puts world on verge of eradicating polio once and for all

**BRUSSELS:** European Commission, the European Investment Bank and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation announced a new financing partnership to address critical global health opportunities: eradicating polio and ensuring that innovations in health are more accessible to the people who need them most. The World Health Organization and UNICEF, as implementing partners for the polio funding, will deploy the resources to eradicate polio, support the distribution of other childhood immunizations and strengthen health systems so they are better able to respond to emerging health threats. The expected €1.1 billion financing package aims to provide new funding to eradicate a human disease for only the second time in history and help solve the health and development challenges faced by the world's most vulnerable people, who otherwise do not get fair access to healthcare services and innovations.

President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen said: "We are about to wipe polio off the face of the Earth. The European Commission, the EIB and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation are partnering to get through the final stretch. With 1 billion euros supported by our European investment strategy Global Gateway, we will invest in stronger health systems globally and local vaccine and medicines production, manufacturing and administration, where it is most needed. Global cooperation has helped us put an end to the CO-



VID-19 pandemic. Now it will help us get rid of polio once and for all." The partnership marks a significant increase in funding for global health and human development under the European Commission's European Fund for Sustainable Development plus (EFSD+) and is expected to include a match of new complementary funding for global health by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, maximising the impact of every Euro committed by the EU and the European Investment Bank.

"Today we are united to write the final chapter in the history of polio. The European Investment Bank is playing its part in a unique partnership with philanthropy and health partners, by providing EUR 500 million for investment in support of the Global Polio Eradication Programme. This initiative will be a milestone in scaling up immunization and strengthening healthcare, ensuring that every child, regardless of their circumstances, can be protected against polio," said Werner Hoyer, President of the European Investment Bank.

To promote swift progress towards eradicating wild poliovirus, the partnership aims to deliver €500 million in payments to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative - specifically the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

# India gets ready to host G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit



OM BIRLA  
Speaker,  
lok sabha

The unprecedented success of the G20 summit chaired by India has been praised all over the world. It is a matter of pride that this Summit concluded with a Joint Declaration strengthening our concept of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" - One Earth, One Family, One Future". G20 also underlined India's growing global influence, as it successfully played the role of a consensus builder.

Coming on the heels of the G20 Summit, the Parliament of India is getting ready to host another important congregation, i.e. the P20 or the G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit on 13th and 14th October in New Delhi. P20 brings together the Speakers or the Presiding Officers of Parliaments of G20 and invitee nations. Parliament is the supreme legislative body of every nation, through which the public representatives present aspirations and expectations of the people in the Houses and formulate laws and policies.

India is one of those ancient civilizations of the world with a rich cultural heritage. Democracy is an ingrained concept in India since ages. Even in our ancient texts, there is mention of participatory institutions like Sabha and Samiti, which existed as public representative institutions in Vedic age.

Democracy, diversity and democracy have been our strengths during the 75 years journey since independence. With the power of democracy, we have created harmony among all sections of the society and ensured social and economic

development for all. It must be said that people-centric development and inclusive development are at the centre our democratic journey.

Even in our Parliament, public representatives form a collective view on issues after extensive discussion. This helps us find collective solutions to challenges. Therefore, in the P20 conference also, the Parliament of India will try to develop a common vision to address the important contemporary issues facing the world and humanity. The importance of organizing the P20 Conclave in India increases because the consensus on global issues is related to the common future of humanity. The focus of the P20 conference will be on Sustainable Development Goals, climate change, women-led development and shared future of humanity. It will also discuss the topics related to Lifestyle of Environment i.e. Mission LiFE.

**Sustainable Development Goals :** The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have certainly given impetus to efforts to realize the concept of holistic human development in the world. As we approach the year 2030, it becomes even more important to assess the achievements made under this initiative and accelerate efforts to realize them. Among the SDGs, there are many whose impact is universal. There is a need to discuss and dialogue on these issues in the parliaments and reach consensus to eliminate all contradictions. Policy consensus needs to be developed while maintaining the sovereignty of nations.

**Sustainable Energy:** Towards a Green Future : India has attempted to adapt its development process to the needs of a green future even while facing the challenges of huge population and



ONE EARTH • ONE FAMILY • ONE FUTURE

maintaining the aspiration of becoming a developed nation. Today, India is in a leadership role in the field of alternative energy. Policy initiatives like the International Solar Alliance, International Bio Fuel Alliance championed by India have received wide global support. Environment related issues have also been discussed continuously in our Parliament. Through this dialogue, a consensus has been formed in the country on policy making for renewable energy beyond political differences.

**From Women Empowerment to Women-led Development :** Women have been considered the embodiment of power and devotion in India's ancient culture. Women have proved their capability and strength in all fields, be it science and technology, defence, space science or in the field of sports. Our Constitution has empowered women by giving them equal rights in all spheres, including voting rights. As our journey of democracy progressed, policy decisions were taken to provide political and economic empowerment to women and to give them leadership opportunities. Initially, laws were made for reservation for women in Gram Panchayat and municipal level elections. Taking this forward, laws have since been made for reservation for them in Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. There has been a consensus on this law among every political party in the entire country. We will

share our positive experiences on this topic at the P20 conference and strive to make women-led development a global movement.

**Transforming people's lives through public digital platforms :** India has been at the forefront of digital transformation, leveraging technology to improve the lives of its citizens. Initiatives like Aadhaar, the world's largest biometric identification system, have streamlined access to government services. UPI (Unified Payments Interface) has become one of the largest financial inclusion tools that brought digital banking to the masses. The Digital India programme aims to provide digital access to all citizens and is revolutionizing governance at grassroots level. Lives of millions of Indians have been transformed with the adoption of digital technology across various sectors like education, agriculture, finance, etc. At the P20 summit, we will share this landmark achievement with the parliaments of the world so that India's success in digital transformation becomes a model for the entire world.

India's Parliament has played a big role in shaping the destiny of the world's largest democracy. Our Parliament has made public welfare laws after extensive discussion always keeping the interests of the public in mind. Despite having a multi-party system, we have reached consensus on issues. In this way our Parliament has presented a model of meaningful discussion and dialogue to the world.

I am confident that just as the G20 summit achieved consensus on global challenges, the P20 summit will also underline the essential role of parliaments in addressing contemporary challenges and usher in a new era of cooperation between parliaments on global issues.

# New Delhi Condemns Tactics of Hamas, Israel Must End Revenge Approach



GOPAL  
MISRA

India's peace plan is expected to be announced within next few days asking for the immediate ceasefire, returning of the hostages, estimated to be 100 or more, including American and some Belgian citizens. Meanwhile, the death toll on the ongoing conflict is rising with the passage of each day, which had begun on Saturday, October seven.

The peace initiative may stress for completing the unfinished task of the setting up of an independent Palestine state immediately as per the Oslo Accords of 2004. It is believed that while the Israelis were not keen to implement the Accords, Hamas leadership, perhaps, prompted by its own political ambitions, had rejected the Award signed between Yasser Arafat, the chief of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and the then Israeli PM Peres. Indians have great respect or the legendary leader, who have had personal friendship with the Indian leadership, especially PM, Indira Gandhi.



The suggestion asking to return the hostages might prevent any direct American intervention, as the reports pour-in of massive naval build-up in the region. The apprehension is that an afghan-likesituation may develop in the region for a prolonged war.

For any peace, it is imperative that all the concerned parties must work for restoring the trust deficit between the Hamas, a faction of the Palestinian leadership, and Israel. It is also being claimed that the present Israeli leadership did not implement the Accords seriously, if not sabotaged it deliberately.

With the failure of UN Security Council to initiate peace

process gets, Indian initiative gets significance. It is believed that the Indian proposals might be including a request to the four key players, Iran, Israel, Qatar and Lebanon in this ongoing conflict to begin their discussions without any further delay.

Indian authorities, according to sources, have debunked the allegation that PM, Narendra Modi's statement supporting Israel facing the unprecedented terrorists attack masterminded by Hamas, has brought him to an untenable position of being partisan in the conflict.

It may be recalled that Modi is the first Indian PM, who visited Israel and Palestinian territories in 2017, asking them to work for

peace together. Only a month ago, Hamas had suggested talks with Israel for peace, but it violated its own promise by invading Israel. In this ongoing surprise attack, the terrorists are killing innocent civilians, violating women, and even abducting young boys and girls to be enslaved. It is estimated that nearly 5000 Hamas terrorists armed with the state-of the art weapons obtained from the USD seven billion dollar paid by South Korea to Iran, it had bought the petroleum products. They payments were frozen following the sanctions imposed on Iran. However, it is also stated that since the money was deposited in the Qatar banks, it was used for funding Hamas

to obtain weapons.

The war strategy adopted by Hamas has shocked the strategic planners across the continents. It is stated that Hamas terrorists had stormed Israel by hanging even on big drones, motor bikes or walking into Israeli territories by cutting the barbed wires. On its part, Hezbollah, a terrorist outfit supported by Iran, has not only supported Hamas's military campaign, but claimed that it would be cooperating with Hamas in its war against Israel. It, however, did not confirm how it is helping Hamas by allowing infiltration from the areas of Lebanon under its control.

Meanwhile, Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh, who was just

talking peace with Israel only a month ago, has boasted that the Palestinian group was on the "verge of a great victory". He also claimed that his forces would soon be liberating Gaza from Israeli control.

## ISI Collaborates with Terrorists

For quite some time, the Special Force trainers believed to be a part of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of the Pakistani army has reportedly been training the Hamas. It might have led to India's prompt reaction to the terrorists' invasion of Israel. India herself being a victim of the ISI-sponsored 2008 Mumbai attack remembered as 9-11 operation of Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists nurtured in the training camps of Pakistan, could immediately notice the similarities between the two aggressions.

In fact, the Hamas operations are much more professionally organized and being conducted on a much larger scale. The initial reports suggest that the recent visits and exchanges of the army officers and intelligence exchanges between Pakistan and Iran could also have further empowered the Hamas operation. The terrorists have

adopted immaculate precision strategy in their current operations generally evolved in the war rooms by professional armies. It could be a cause for envy to any regular force.

In its bid to camouflage the impending operations, Hamas had offered an olive branch to Israelis only a month ago, announcing its intention to negotiate permanent peace. Indians recall that when Pakistan talks about peace, it is generally followed by terrorists' attacks. It appears that adopting the same tactic, soon after its peace overtures, Hamas chooses a Jews festival, Simchat Torah, to start the well-planned attack. It was a surprise for Israelis, who were holidaying. Initially, Hamas and Hezbollah were opposed to each other, but their joint aggression against Israel on the morning of Saturday October seven reaffirms the rumours of a new tie-up between the two arch-enemies.

*Gopal Misra has been associated with national and international media. His books on journalism and geo-politics have been well-appreciated. Views are personal.*



# World, Olympic and Asian Champion Neeraj Chopra appointed Laureus Ambassador

**WORLD NO.1 IN MEN'S JAVELIN JOINS THE LAUREUS TEAM**

**ARUN KUMAR RAO DELHI**

Neeraj Chopra, the reigning Olympic, World and Asian champion in men's javelin, was today named a Laureus Ambassador, pledging his support to Laureus Sport for Good, the global foundation supporting over 300 programmes that use sport to eradicate inequality and discrimination for young people around the world.



Neeraj Chopra goes back to 2022, when he was nominated in the Breakthrough of the Year category at the Laureus World Sports

Awards, following his gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics – the first won by an Indian track and field athlete. Learning more about Laureus, Neeraj was attracted to the athlete-led organisation which celebrates the power of sport.

This year, Neeraj has climbed to the World No.1 ranking with golds at the World Championships and, earlier this month, the Asian Games. His gold medal run has catapulted him to an incredible level of fame in his home country. August 7, the date of his winning throw in Tokyo, is now celebrated as National Javelin Day and he is in constant demand for endorsements and media appearances.

New Laureus Ambassador Neeraj Chopra, said, "It's a big honour for me to join Laureus as an Ambassador. To use my platform and the power of sport to help young people in India and around the world is something I am looking forward to doing. To see the many legends that have been a part of this program and the difference they have made in the world is inspiring, and I share the same belief; that sport has the power to change

the world."

"I've heard about the many programmes that Laureus supports in India, and the stories remind me of the many ways in which we can help young people. Every athlete knows that sport can be a big part of that story. People are watching and following my sport now more than ever and I believe that, working with Laureus Sport for Good, I can use that platform to change lives," he added.

As a Laureus Ambassador, Neeraj joins a unique team of elite athletes from across the generations, including Academy Members and icons of Indian sport Kapil Dev, Rahul Dravid and Sachin Tendulkar.

Laureus Ambassador and former Indian cricket all-rounder Yuvraj Singh, said, "As a fellow Laureus Ambassador, I am looking forward to talking to Neeraj about our ideas to make a difference in India and beyond. It is so impressive to see an athlete at the peak of his powers, with his best years still to come, already looking beyond his own sporting ambitions and considering the ways he can use his platform for good."

## POTPOURRI

### Rise in knee osteoarthritis in younger population



**INTAKE OF CAFFEINATED DRINKS, UNHEALTHY LIFESTYLE, OBESITY, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE ARE MAIN REASONS**

**YOGESH KANT New Delhi**

Healthcare experts across the country are reporting a sharp increase in knee Osteoarthritis in the younger population, a condition typically associated with ageing. While joint pain at any age is known to negatively affect the overall well-being and productivity, early onset is bringing an altogether different set of challenges to deal with.

"Of late I have been receiving patients as young as 40-41, complaining of severe knee pain and work absenteeism. Unlike elderly knee osteoarthritis patients, who are more into pain management, this young working lot is focussed on complete and quick recovery so that they could resume work as soon as possible. In cut-throat competition, they cannot afford low productivity in their working age," says Dr L. Tomar, Director, Dept. of Orthopaedics, Max Super Speciality Hospital, New Delhi.

In younger age, knee pain is reported to cause loss of productivity and a poor career growth at the prime of career, it also increases apprehension concerning financial obligations and makes it difficult for the patients to sustain a normal family and social life.

Rise in knee osteoarthritis in the younger population is surprising as it is a condition which develops due to wear

and tear of weight bearing joints, mostly due to ageing.

According to the doctors, Knee Osteoarthritis triggers due to some morphological and biochemical changes in the knee joints, creating a gap between the joints that leads to abrasion and joint degeneration, a classical symptom of ageing. And even in the older age, doctors believe that regulating certain modifiable risk factors, like increasing physical activity, maintaining a healthy weight, ensuring an optimum sun exposure and refraining from substance abuse, like tobacco and alcohol, could help delay or completely eliminate the chances of knee pain.

So a rise in knee osteoarthritis at an unusual age seeks explanation, Dr Tomar says, "An early onset of degenerative joint disease simply means that factors like unhealthy lifestyle, obesity, lack of sun exposure and substance abuse played their part way too well."

According to the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, another reason for weak bones in young age is an excessive intake of caffeinated drinks, especially in childhood and adolescence. According to a study published in PubMed, more than ninety percent of total bone mineral content (BMC) is generated before the age of 17 years, so technically the stage for weaker joints is set at an early age.

Clearly, we are falling short in ensuring bone health at almost every front, leading to a sharp rise in knee arthritis in working age.

As far the treatment of knee osteoarthritis in younger patients, it depends entirely on

the stage of the disease, explains Dr Tomar, "At an early stage we prefer medication and lifestyle modification. Usually attaining a healthy body weight, ensuring doctor-assisted physical activity and improving bone density by diet and supplements helps with pain, and sometimes even stops joint degeneration. However, for the patients with chronic pain and advanced osteoarthritis, when such interventions are late to work, knee replacement surgery offers a sustainable solution."

With advanced technologies like computer navigated knee arthroplasty and customised surgical plan for knee replacement, the procedure has become very safe and long lasting. An article published in PubMed states that KA is remarkably effective, with a mere 1% of annual failure and revision rates and a whopping 85% rate in symptom relief. However, despite all its benefits, knee replacement is still considered an optional procedure in India. It is always up to the patients whether they want to go on with the severe pain and its effects on their wellbeing or seek a permanent solution.

Dr Tomar says, "We need to understand that unlike the heart or other vital organ surgery, joint replacement at any stage is never a lifesaving procedure. Knee osteoarthritis, despite being disabling in most sense, is not a life-threatening condition in itself. It is the health issues rising due to immobility, like obesity, heart disease, hypertension, bed sores and kidney problems due to prolonged use of analgesics etc. which eventually proves fatal. Patients especially in their working age, opt for Knee Replacement to remove pain, ensure mobility and to restore normal routine, productivity, overall health and of course to save treatment cost in the long-term."

### Drake disappoints fans for allegedly shading ex Rihanna on new song



Rapper Drake appeared to have disappointed his fans due to his remarks on one of his new songs. Shortly after his track 'Fear of Heights' was released, the 'Hotline Bling' rapper was alleged to have thrown shades at his former girlfriend and singer Rihanna, reports aceshowbiz.com. The 36-year-old rapper became a hot topic on X, formerly known as Twitter, as his fans voiced their thoughts on the new single. One of them wrote: "Drake rapping about Rihanna in 2023 and sounding as mature as he did in 2013 is as disappointing as it is predictable." Meanwhile, another candidly penned: "Drake dissing Rihanna on the album is crazyyyy [a laughing emoji] he's so salty I'm weaaaaaak."

### Breast cancer cases rising alarmingly in Indian women

**DOMINICK RODRIGUES Mumbai**

Breast cancer cases have registered an alarming increase among younger Indian women aged between 25 and 50 with tragically 60% of these cases being diagnosed at advanced stages that reduce their survival rates considerably.

October is observed as Breast Cancer Awareness month.

SBI Life Insurance in its fifth year of its "Thanks-a-Dot" initiative recently launched here an innovative tool to promote self-breast examination for women by using a 'hot water bag' with 'special lumps engraved' on it.

Ravindra Sharma, Chief of Brand, Corporate Communication & CSR, SBI Life Insurance, said "The lumps help women to experience how a real breast cancer lump would feel during self-examination, besides also training, educating and reminding Indian women about making self-breast-examination a regular habit and importance of early detection."

Expressing SBI Life's commitment to spreading this initiative far and wide -- especially among the country's rural areas, Sharma also urged all organisations to join this cause by producing and



distributing these specially-designed bags +free-of-cost to their customers and employees thus making this life-saving tool a part of every household alongside making self-breast examination a regular habit among Indian women. Indian actress Mahima Chaudhry, who is a breast cancer survivor, narrated briefly her successful journey in battling this cancer and emphasized the importance of early detection.

Breaking down in tears as she began her narrative, the Bollywood filmstar said she was crying in happiness at having overcome this killer cancer in the face of its deadly strike, while also having to provide positive assurance to her worried child.

"I used to always do these tests but they always were negative for breast cancer. One day when they were found positive,

I strangely felt no fear but prepared in battling it towards my successful recovery," she said while reiterating the need for early detection and step-by-step treatment. She also narrated the case of Hollywood star Angelina Jolie, who went in for breast mastectomy since her family members too had died of breast cancer. Devieka Bhojwani, Vice-President, Womens Cancer Initiative Tata Memorial Hospital, recalled her encounter and success in overcoming this cancer 20 years ago when it was discovered in its early stages. However, those years also revealed a sad part of life among other cancer-struck women who queued in hospitals for treatment.

abandoned by their families to their own fate still remained in hope for recovery."

Furious over this discovery, Bhojwani vowed that when she got better, she would do everything possible to help these women in battling and overcoming breast cancer. She is now making such efforts as the Vice-President, Womens Cancer Initiative Tata Memorial Hospital.

However, the need of the hour is to create awareness about breast cancer as these affected women "hide their (breast cancer) lumps" and come to the hospitals for treatment when it's too late, she said while noting that SBI Life's latest initiative would greatly help such women.

Oncologist Dr Nita Sukumar Nair said "We are catching up with the Western countries where one-in-eight women have breast cancer, while one-in-22 Indian women suffer from it due to lack of awareness."

"Picking up symptoms early is important and, as we have reached a point of getting good survival rates, we are trying to teach women how to look for lumps in the breasts. Menstruating women should do a self-breast examination on the 10th day of periods, she said.

### India shines at the Asian Games

**SUNIL THAPLIYAL New Delhi**

India excelled at the 2023 Asian Games, winning a total of 107 medals. At the same time, Pakistan could win only three medals in the competition. In 1958, India won only 13 medals while Pakistan bagged 26. Since then, India's performance has steadily improved while Pakistan's has deteriorated.

The 2023 Asian Games have been finished. The Indian athletes have returned to their country where they were warmly welcomed by their countrymen.

Pakistan has won a total of three medals at the 2023 Asian Games. These include one silver and two bronze medals. Pakistan had last won gold in this competition in 2014. At the same time, India won 28 gold medals that year. Currently, Pakistan's performance may be very poor compared to India, but there was a time when



Pakistan won twice as many medals as India.

The Asian Games were held for the first time in 1951. India had won 51 medals in the competition held in New Delhi.

Pakistan did not participate in this competition. Thereafter, India's performance declined and the number of medals was above 30 from then on. At the 2006 Asian Games, India won 53 medals.

At the same time, Pakistan received only four medals. Since then, India has won more than 50 medals every time.

Pakistan won 26 medals, exactly twice as many as India. After that, in 1962, Pakistan won 28 medals and India 33 medals. Pakistan's performance started to decline in 1970, and India's performance continued to improve.

Until 2002, Pakistan always won about 10 medals, but this number never exceeded 17. At the same time, India continued to improve its performance during this period. India, which usually wins 20 to 30 medals, won 57 medals in 1982. This was the country's best performance at that time. From 1998 onwards, India's medal consistency improved and the number of medals was above 30 from then on. At the 2006 Asian Games, India won 53 medals.

At the same time, Pakistan received only four medals. Since then, India has won more than 50 medals every time.

### Symbolic Significance of different animals at the Gates of New Parliament Building

**MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA New Delhi**

Different animals have been installed on the 6 doors of the new parliament building. What is their importance and why have they been established? Let's know what is its religious and mythological significance and what are the idols of these animals. The new Parliament building has already attracted world with its headlines due to its unique architecture. What is the spiritual, mythological significance of the animals on all 6 doors of the new building? All these are inspired by where they are installed here. Thus, in the new building, the three doors of knowledge, power and karma have been discussed more. Meaning, three gates are discussed. In fact, there are six entrances and exits in this building. Gyan Dwar, Shakti Dwar and Karma Dwar will be used by Prime Minister, Vice President and Speaker of Lok Sabha. The remaining three Makar, Hans and Shardul gates will be used by members of Parliament,

common people and officials-employees etc.

Acharya Swami Vivekananda of Ayodhya says that all the animal statues installed at the door of the new parliament building have great spiritual and mythological significance. All these are symbols of our culture and knowledge in the scriptures. Give motivation to keep going. It is a symbol of happiness, peace and prosperity. Red sandstone idols of auspicious animals have been established as guardian idols in Indian culture based on their importance, their aesthetic appearance, positive qualities and the study of Vastu Shastra. Let's know what is the connection of the 6 doors of Parliament with the names of different animals.

**GAJDWAR:** It is in the north direction of the building, Gaj means elephant. Two statues of elephants are installed here. Elephant represents knowledge, progress, wealth, wisdom and memory. It is also a symbol of aspirations. Gaja is the representative of Lord Ganesha, fresh more finance or income are



also symbols. The north direction is related to the planet Mercury, which is the source of high intelligence.

**ASHWADWAR:** At the southern entrance is always alert and ready ashwa, Ashwa means horse. The horse is a symbol of patience and power, strength and speed. In the scriptures it has been considered a symbol of prosperity. It is also a symbol of continuous movement. From this, the representative of the quality of the Indian Parliament can also say that it will never stop, it will continue to run in public interest. The statue of the horse represents the Sun Temple of Odisha. It is inspired from there.

**GARUDWAR:** This statue is installed at the eastern ceremo-

which represents unity in diversity among the people of the country. In the scriptures, Makar is said to be the symbol of Cupid's flag. It is also the vehicle of Lord Varun and Mother Ganga. Makar is said to be inspired by the Hoysleswara temple in Karnataka.

**SHARDULDWAR:** It is known as another mythical creature, which is said to be the most powerful, foremost among all living beings, which symbolizes the strength of the people of the country. Shardul means kind of Lion, is a symbol of victory, Maa Durga rides on it. The statue of Shardul is said to be inspired from Gujar temple in Gwalior.

**HANSDWAR:** Hansa or swan at the public entrance in North East will attract people's attention. In the scriptures, swan is the vehicle of Mother Saraswati. It is a symbol of peace, knowledge and harmony. Hansavator is also one of the 24 incarnations of Lord Vishnu. It is inspired by the Vijay Vittala Temple in Hampi, Karnataka.

nal entrance, which symbolizes the aspirations of the people and administrators of the country. In scriptures it represents hope, glory of victory and success which are the vehicles of Lord Vishnu. It is mentioned in the scriptures that the sound of Vedas comes out from their wings while flying. These are also called Vish-Harta. They are invoked by playing it in the temples while offering food to the Lord, so that if there is any toxic substance in the food, its effect will be eliminated. This statue is influenced by the 18th century Nayaka era in Tamil Nadu.

### Former PGI Prof gets NAMS fellowship



**KULBIR SINGH KALSI Chandigarh**

PGI former professor Dr (Prof) Ramesh Sen has been conferred with prestigious fellowship by The National Academy of Medical Sciences (NAMS) during the 63rd annual conference of NAMS at Ramaiah Medical College, Bengaluru on Saturday.

The honour was bestowed upon Dr. Sen in the presence of Governor of Karnataka Thawar Chand Gehlot, Minister of State for the Ministry of Science and Technology Jitendra Singh and Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Satya Pal Singh Baghel.

Dr Sen who is presently principal director and head of ortho-

surgery at Max Hospital Mohali for the year 2023 in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the field of orthopedic surgery.

Dr Sen has expertise in joint replacement surgery, including the rich experience of handling revision hip and knee arthroplasty surgeries. In the past he has also the honour of being the first President of 'Association of Pelvi acetabular surgeons of India' and President of 'North Zone Orthopaedic Association'.

During his 35 years long career, he has authored about 250 research papers with over 20 book chapters, 500 guest lectures, over 100 in foreign countries and five research patents to his credit. His extensive expertise has also led to five research patents, more than 30 Oration awards, and over 10 Fellowship awards, including the prestigious SAARC Countries Golden Award and the 1st Golden Jubilee Oration Award by the Indian Orthopaedic Association.

### Ikshana's Remarkable Bicycle Marathon: Pedaling for a Brighter Future



**KULBIR SINGH KALSI Chandigarh**

Chandigarh witnessed a truly unforgettable morning, as cycling enthusiasts of all ages converged at the picturesque Sukhana Lake to participate in Ikshana's Bicycle Marathon. This event was more than just a race; it was a celebration of fitness, fun, and a deep-seated commitment to a noble cause. What makes this event exceptional is that every pedal stroke has a purpose. 100% of the funds raised during the Bicycle Marathon have been dedicated to assisting underprivileged children in their pursuit of education. Over 40 People from different age groups eagerly took part, joining hands with Ikshana to make a difference.

### Anjum Shharma lauds Vinay Pathak: He is communicative, easy person to work with



**MUMBAI:** Actor Anjum Shharma, who is all set for the release of his upcoming show 'Sultan Of Delhi' opened up on his co-star Vinay Pathak, and how he enjoyed the funny side of the latter on the sets of the series.

Veteran actor Vinay Pathak has given audiences performances to remember and enjoy. He has always tickled our funny bones, and Anjum thoroughly enjoyed the experience of working with him.

Talking about the same, Anjum said: "Working with Vinay Pathak was definitely very entertaining because he is full of humour. He is very interesting

and easy as a person to work with. He is very communicative and creates a level of comfort for his co-stars to work with him."

"There are some scenes that involve just the two of us and those scenes took me minimum rehearsal, because by then we both had struck a comfortable cord with each other," he shared. Anjum added that it was a delight to share screen space with him. Based on the book, 'Sultan of Delhi: Ascension' by Arnab Ray, the series is produced by Reliance Entertainment and directed by Milan Luthria and co-directed and co-written by Suparn Verma.



19th Asian Games gold medalists winning Indian Hockey team players are welcomed by fans and family members as they arrive at the Sri Guru Ram Dass Jee International Airport, in Amritsar on October 11.

PHOTOS-PRABHJOT GILL