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UNION MINISTER FOR ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS NITIN GADKARI PAYS OBEISANCE AT SRI HARMANDIR SAHIB

CORPORATES & INDUSTRY

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WIPRO ANNOUNCES FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER-ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

POTPOURRI

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GIPPY GREWAL, BINNU DHILLON, KARAMJIT ANMOL, AMARDEEP GREWAL UNITE HEARTS ON KARTARPUR SAHIB PILGRIMAGE, SPREADING LOVE AND HARMONY ACROSS BORDERS!

Tata steels profusely thanks Punjab CM for speedy clearances & smooth execution of project

FW DESK
Ludhiana

Due to concerted efforts of the Punjab government led by Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann the global business giant Tata Steel has set up the first of its kind Green Steel Plant of North India at Ludhiana with a proposed investment of Rs 2600 crore.

The plant, ground breaking ceremony of which was performed by the Chief Minister today, will produce construction-grade steel rebar under the company's flagship retail brand 'Tata Tison' and this investment aligns with Tata Steel's commitment to a circular economy and transitioning to low-carbon steel making through the Steel Recycling Route. The plant having a capacity of 0.75 MTPA with a 100% scrap-based electric arc furnace is set up over 115 acres of land at Kadiana Khurd, Hi-Tech Valley. The project is



likely to create direct and indirect employment opportunities for around 500 direct and 2000 indirect individuals, respectively, through its operations. In the Steel and Alloys sector, Punjab is a significant player, with more than 200 steel rolling mills and key clusters in Mandi Gobindgarh and Ludhiana. It is home to major steel units like Vardhaman Special Steels, Aarti Steels, Hero Steels, JSW Steels and more and this sector has been identified as a thrust sector under the Industrial Business

Development Policy 2022. Tata Steel Limited is a true gem in the crown of steel and alloy sector of Punjab and it is among the top global steel companies with an annual crude steel capacity of 34 million tons per annum. In his address CEO & MD Tata Steels TV Narendran profusely thanked the Chief Minister for ensuring that all the clearances are given in a stipulated and time bound manner. He said that the plant will be ready and operational within the coming 18 months adding

that Punjab has become the second home of Tata Steels. Narendran said that Punjab had pioneered the green revolution in the country and now Green Steelmaking Revolution will also be heralded by the state. Meanwhile, expressing gratitude to the state government the Vice President (Corporate Services) Tata Steel Chanakya Chaudhary said that they had got swift clearances for the project during the entire process. He also thanked the Panchs and Sarpanchs of the nearby villages for extending fulsome support to them for executing the project. Chaudhary said that now they are also part of the Punjab adding that they will open a skill centre to impart quality technical training to the youth. In his address Chairman M&S (Long Products) Tata Steel Ashish Anupam said that this plant will produce 7500 ton steel without polluting the environment.

India, China main sources for half of Global Growth in 2023 & 2024: IMF

MUMBAI: India and China the two neighbouring countries are expected to jointly account for half of the world's growth in 2023 and 2024, with the Asia Pacific remaining the 'most dynamic' region this year, said the International Monetary Fund (IMF). In a report titled Regional Economic Outlook for Asia and Pacific, the IMF said that growth in Asia Pacific is expected to rise from 3.9% in 2022 to 4.6% in 2023. IMF staff estimate that Asia's growth will slow to 4.2% in 2024 and to 3.9% in the medium term - the lowest in the past two decades except for 2020. The IMF revised upwards India's growth estimate to 6.3% in FY24, due to resilient domestic demand and strong investment inflows. Meanwhile, the Chinese economy, it said, is expected to expand 5% in 2023 and 4.2% in 2024, lower than 5.2% and 4.5%, respectively, estimated in April. "In Asia's advanced economies,



tight financial conditions will hold back demand, while the outlook for exports will depend on price movements of global commodities (Australia, New Zealand) and the technology cycle (Korea, Singapore, Taiwan Province of China)," it said. Per IMF, in Asia's emerging markets, relatively accommodative financial conditions will aid domestic demand despite monetary policy tightening, although external demand and sluggish investments will pose challenges. China's weaker near-term growth outlook will weigh on regional growth, it said, adding that the Chinese economy is expected to expand by 5% in 2023 and by 4.2% in 2024.

Compared to the April 2023 World Economic Outlook, this is a downward revision of 0.2 and 0.3 percentage points, respectively on account of renewed weakness in the property sector despite more policy support than previously assumed. The report pointed out that the global economic backdrop has remained challenging for economies in the Asia and Pacific region, with central banks tightening monetary policy across the globe. However, a fall in global commodity prices from the 2022 peak supported disinflation. "The boost from China's re-opening in the first half of the year was above expectations. Strong private demand yielded positive growth surprises in India," it said. While China's inflation remains low and well-below target, reflecting falling food and fuel prices and still sizable economic slack, headline inflation in India rose in the third quarter due to a weather-related vegetable price shock.

India to become \$7 trillion Economy by 2030 : JP Morgan

NEW DELHI: India will grow into the world's third-largest economy by 2027, with its GDP more than doubling to USD 7 trillion by 2030, said JP Morgan's Managing Director of Asia Pacific Equity Research, James Sullivan. "I would argue very strong long-term tactical drivers that make India a key overweight from a structural perspective from JP Morgan," James Sullivan said in an interview with CNBC-TV18. Sullivan expects the manufacturing contribution to India's GDP to rise to nearly 25% from 17% and exports to more than double, to over a trillion dollars. "From a longer-term perspective, we see massive changes in the overall structure of the Indian economy, which present clear opportunities for sector selection within what we think will be a strong overall market," he said.

Navratri puja held at Kashmir's Kupwara after 75 years



FW DESK
Kupwara

The Sharda Devi Temple, located near the Line of Control (LoC) in Teetwal village of Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district, hosted Navratri Puja for the first time since 1947. The event took place on the first day of Sharad Navratri, attracting a considerable number of pilgrims from across the country. Swami Govindananda Saraswati of Hampi led the celebrations, reaching Teetwal village with his followers on a Rath Yatra from Kishkinda, the birthplace of Lord Hanuman in Karnataka. The Puja also saw the presence of Kashmiri Pandit pilgrims, including A.K. Raina, a theatre personality known for his role in the movie 'Kashmir Files.' Amit Shah, while celebrating the Navratri Puja at the historic temple, expressed its profound spiritual significance.

Cabinet approves 4% DA hike for Govt employees, 7% MSP hike for six Rabi crops



MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA
New Delhi

Cabinet approved 7% MSP hike for 6th Rabi crop and 4% DA hike for central government employees. Good news for government employees in the festive season, the Union Cabinet approved 4 percent increase in dearness allowance under the Seventh Pay Commission! Till now the central government employees were getting 42 percent DA, after the increase of 4 percent, they will get 46 percent dearness allowance. Employees will get increased DA from July 2023, as a result, they will get arrears or dues of the last few months. This will benefit 47 lakh central govt. employees and 68 lakh pensioners. DA for central government employees is calculated on the basis of the latest Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (CPI-IW). The 7 percent increased minimum selling price (MSP) for six major Rabi crops will be applicable for the next marketing season of 2024-25. Union Information Minister Anurag Singh Thakur further said that the Cabinet has approved 7 percent increase in MSP for lentils, barley and sunflower.

Punjab CM launches fight against drug: Pray, Pledge, Play

35 THOUSAND YOUTH PERFORM ARDAAS AT SRI HARMANDIR SAHIB & PLEDGED FOR MAKING PUNJAB A DRUG FREE STATE | FIRST OF ITS KIND MASS MOVEMENT WILL BREAK THE BACKBONE OF DRUGS IN STATE SAYS CM

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

Led by Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, thousands of youth from across the state participated in Ardaas (Prayer) at Sri Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) to make the state completely drug free. During the Ardaas, the Chief Minister along with thousands of youth with yellow turbans, patkas (scarfs), and dupattas prayed to the Almighty to give strength to them for fulfilling this sacred mission aimed at wiping out the curse of drugs from the state. They prayed for the success of this mission which envisages making the state completely free from drugs and channelizing the unbounded energy of the youth in a positive direction. The Ardas was performed by priest Baljit Singh in the premises of Sri Harmandir Sahib. Meanwhile, the Chief Minister



said that since ages the sacred Sri Harmandir Sahib had been a source of inspiration for humanity for every noble cause. He said that the sole motive of this Ardaas is to take the blessings of Almighty for the success of this unique mission which aims at eliminating the curse of drugs from the state. Mann said that the presence of a large number of youth in this campaign reflects that the younger generation of the state is ready to support the state government in this noble cause. The Chief Minister said that this is first of its kind mass movement against drugs which will break the backbone of this menace adding that under this 'Hope Initiative' the mission anti-drug has been embarked with a three fold strategy of Pray, Pledge, Play.

He said that as a part of the first campaign thousands of youth have joined the Ardaas to pray for drug free Punjab adding that thousands of other people have also joined this campaign through online Ardaas. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that with the blessing of Waheguru (Almighty) the campaign has been launched to ensure that Punjab is made a completely drug free state. The Chief Minister said that for the first time the campaign against drugs has been started from the grass root level. He said that the day is not far when this menace will be wiped out from the state with the proactive support and cooperation of the people. Mann said that on one hand the supply line of drugs is being snapped by putting the drug peddlers behind the bars and on the other hand focus is being laid on treatment and rehabilitation of the drug victims.

Nitin Gadkari reviews progress of Delhi Amritsar Katra Expressway and Amritsar Bypass in Punjab-Amritsar



JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari inspected the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Greenfield Expressway (DAK) and Amritsar Bypass here today. The Punjab Public Works Department Minister, Harbhajan Singh ETO and Member of Parliament from Amritsar, Gurjit Singh Auja were also present during the inspection. In an official statement, Five greenfield and economic corri-

dors are being built in Punjab at a cost of Rs 29,000 crore. This 669 km greenfield expressway Delhi-Amritsar-Katra is being built at a cost of Rs 40,000 crore. With its construction, one can reach Amritsar from Delhi in 4 hours and Katra from Delhi in 6 hours. Presently, the distance from Delhi to Katra is 727 km, with the construction of this route the distance will be reduced by 58 km. Starting from KMP in Delhi, this expressway is being built for 137 km in Haryana. The length of this expressway in Punjab is 399 km, of which work has started on 296 km. The length of the expressway in Jammu and Kashmir is 135 km, of which work is going on in 120 km. In Punjab, this expressway will pass through industrial areas like Patiala, Sangrur, Malerkotla, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Kapurthala, Gurudaspur.

Rahul Gandhi attacks Adani Group over coal pricing issue



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has accused the top corporate Adani Group of over invoicing the coal imports to India and hiking power tariff, he also accused the group of taking 32,000 crores from the pockets of the poor in India. Rahul also blamed the Prime Minister Narendra Modi of protecting Gautam Adani. Addressing mediapersons in New Delhi Congress MP Rahul Gandhi cited a report of a UK based daily newspaper 'Financial Times' and said this man is protected by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Taking note of the rising electricity prices in India, Rahul said "We are providing subsidies in Karnataka and will also do in Madhya Pradesh, if we come in power but the youth of the country must understand, that "As soon as you switch on the fan or light, the money goes in to the pocket of Gautam Adani.

Delhi-Katra Expressway will be harbinger of a new era of unprecedented development and prosperity in Punjab : Mann



JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari along with Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann reviewed the working of Delhi-Katra Expressway on Oct 19. Mann said that the development path of North India through this expressway will be dedicated to the people of India soon and it would open employment, trade and business opportunities. Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Thursday envisioned that Delhi-Katra Expressway will be a harbinger of a new era of unprecedented development and prosperity in the state. Mann accompanied Union Minister Nitin Gadkari to review the work of this project, said that the work on this ambitious project will be completed very soon and it will be dedicated to people thereafter. He said that the state government has already extended fulsome support and

cooperation to the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) for the completion of the project. Mann said that this project will give major fillip to the economic activity in the region besides opening new vistas of employment for the youth. Mann expressed hope that the project will give much needed boost to the trade and commerce in the state thereby emerging Punjab as the front-runner state in the country. He said that with the intervention of the Union Minister the work on this project will be further expedited thereby giving impetus to the economy of the state. He said that this highway will facilitate the pilgrims going to pay obeisance at Mata Vaishno Devi shrine apart from giving boost to economic activity in the region. The Chief Minister said that the state government is committed for the holistic development of the state for which more such projects will be brought in state.

PM GatiShakti : Special Secretary reviews regional logistic needs of the region

Highlights the complimentary role of National GatiShakti initiative and state governments
FW DESK
Chandigarh

Sumita Dawra, Special Secretary, DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce, Government of India reviewed the regional logistic needs of the region and highlights the complimentary role of National GatiShakti initiative and state governments during a media conference held in Chandigarh today, marking the extraordinary progress made over the last two years in implementing the PM GatiShakti initiative. She was accompanied by Anand Mohan Sharan, Additional Chief Secretary, Haryana and Sumeet Jarangal, Director, DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce, Government of India.



PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan (NMP) is a transformative approach for integrated and holistic planning across concerned Ministries/Departments to improve multimodal connectivity, logistics efficiency and to address critical infrastructure gaps for seamless movement of people and goods, with focus on minimising disruptions and ensuring timely completion of projects. Notably, several key accomplishments were highlighted during the conference, showcasing the transformative power of PM GatiShakti. It was informed that PM GatiShakti played a pivotal role in identifying 156 infrastructure gaps affecting essential sectors like Coal, Steel, and Ports; and, it was in recognition of its significance that the government allocated a substantial Rs 75,000 crores for 100 critical infrastructure projects in the Union Budget for 2023-24. This momentous undertaking has ushered in a new era of infrastructure development across India, significantly enhancing connectivity and logistics on a national scale, Sumita Dawra, Special Secretary, DPIIT said during the conference. It was also shared that the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways streamlined plans for over 8890 kilometers of roads, reducing the time required for Detailed Project Report (DPR) preparation to a mere 15 days. The Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas has streamlined pipeline planning, reducing report generation time to 24 hours. Sumeet Jarangal, Director, DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce, Government of India,

also added that Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure planning is also in the pipeline. He noted that the PM GatiShakti portal will play a pivotal role in expediting the planning for this pivotal shift towards sustainable and efficient transportation. Anand Mohan Sharan, Additional Chief Secretary, Haryana, added, "The achievements of PM GatiShakti are a testament to the collaborative spirit of our nation. All 36 States & UTs have successfully established State-level mechanisms and operational State Master Plan portals, optimizing GIS data layers for infrastructure planning." It was also highlighted during the conference that PM GatiShakti, beyond its domestic acclaim, has garnered international attention at G20 meetings, B20 events, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) conference, and through interactions with global stakeholders. Sumita Dawra, Special Secretary, DPIIT, further stated, "PM GatiShakti has ignited a transformative wave in India's infrastructure landscape.

No room for same sex marriage : Akal Takht



JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

Akal Takht the highest Sikh Temporal seat taking serious seat of same sex marriage, disqualified the Sikh priests to perform religious services in the Gurdwara (Sikh shrine) Sri Kalgidhar Sahib in Bathinda after the marriage of two girls on September 18 inside the Gurdwara in the presence of their families. Akal Takht Jathedar Giani Raghbir Singh said that as per Sikh tenets there was no room for same-sex marriage as it was utter violation of Sikh religious customs. In this regard the five high priests led by Jathedar Giani Raghbir Singh taking a serious note of the marriage of two girls which was solemnised at Gurdwara Sri Kalgidhar Sahib in Bathinda on September 18, disqualified the entire managing committee of the Gurdwara concerned forever. Head Granthi (priest) Hardev Singh, Priest Ajaib Singh, Raagi Sikandar Singh and Tabla vadaq Satnam

Singh were blacklisted for five years for being part of the controversial wedding which was solemnised in their presence in the Gurdwara. In future, all these people would never be allowed to perform any religious service in any of the Gurdwara or religious event, said Jathedar. Akal Takht deadly against the marriage of same sex for the last several decades and had issued Hukamnama (religious edict) when Giani Joginder Singh Vedanti was Jathedar Akal Takht in January 2005, while issuing a 'hukumnama' (edict) denouncing the same-sex marriages and urging the worldwide Sikh community not to allow such marriages to take place at any Gurdwara. Taking serious view of the proposed move of the Government of Canada to introduce same-sex marriage bill in the House of Commons, Vedanti described it as 'anti-Gurmat' trend that had no place in Sikhism. The directive, the first of its kind, has been issued under the seal of Akal Takht.

Buoyed over state government's 'Anti Drug Initiative', students make firm resolve to wipe out curse of drug from Punjab

Hails CM for taking out of the box initiative to wipe out drugs from the state

AMRITSAR: Lauding the Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann for launching the out of box Initiative: Pray, Pledge, Play for eradicating the drug menace from the state, the participant youth on Wednesday made a firm resolve to make Punjab a drug free state.

More than 35,000 school students who came to support the Punjab government's anti-drug efforts lauded the visionary leadership of the Chief Minister to launch a campaign against drugs and introduced numerous new initiatives to revive the state as 'Rangla Punjab'. Sharing her views Sharda Mishra, a student from Government Senior High Smart School in Putlighar, Amritsar, said that it is a matter of great pride for her to have the opportunity to participate in this anti-drug event under the dynamic leadership of Chief Minister. She said that participation in this campaign has cemented her commitment to contribute for the creation of a drug-free Punjab.



Another student, Harpreet Singh, from Sant Singh Sukha Singh Modern High School, Amritsar said that it is great to be a part of the drug-free Punjab campaign being run by the state government. He said that there is a lot of enthusiasm among the students about this campaign as it is aimed at making drugs free.

Navdeep Kaur, another student described it as a historic moment for Amritsar and the whole of Punjab. She said that together, all students, teachers and the government took an oath to make Punjab drug-free.

Simarpreet Kaur appreciated the Punjab government for organizing a cricket match at Gandhi Ground today. She

said that students have joined hands and taken oath with the Chief Minister to make Punjab again as Rangla Punjab.

Similarly, Ajaypal Singh said that it is a very special day for Punjab and he has come to this stadium for the first time. He said that a very good event has been organized here by the Punjab Government adding that he will also contribute to the drug de-addiction Punjab campaign.

Likewise, Manjot Singh said that Punjab is progressing under the visionary and dynamic leadership of Chief Minister. He said that highly motivated by the Chief Minister, the youth of the state are committed to work together with the government

to make it drug free. Gurnoor Singh said that this campaign to eliminate drugs is a noble initiative of the state government. He said that all youth of the state are with the Chief Minister in this path breaking initiative aimed at restoring the pristine glory of the state. In the same manner, Muskan Bhatia said that it is the responsibility of all of us along with the government to make Punjab drug-free. She said that the youth of Punjab are with the Chief Minister to bring back lost glory of the state and make it drug-free.

Another student, Riddhi Kataria from Delhi Public School, Amritsar said that she and her friends will do their best to fulfill the dream of Chief Minister. She said that they will leave no stone unturned for making Punjab a completely drug-free state.

Ashishdeep Kaur also lauded this initiative of the state government and expressed her gratitude towards the Punjab government and Chief Minister for launching a crusade against drug menace. She said that this event will motivate the youth to take part in sports and remain away from the menace of drugs.

Punjab to emerge as front ranking state in arena of sports- says cm



JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Wednesday envisioned that with the concerted efforts of his government, the state will soon emerge as a front ranking state across the country in the fields of sports.

Addressing the gathering during a cricket match organised as a part of Hope Initiative, a brainchild of the Amritsar Commissionerate Police, the Chief Minister said that the Punjab government has laid major thrust on the promotion of games in the state.

He said that the result of this is that Punjab has bagged 19 medals in the recently concluded Asian games, which is the highest tally of states in Asia, since its in-

ception. Bhagwant Singh Mann it is a matter of great pride and satisfaction that out of 68 goals scored in the Hockey event in the games 43 were scored by the members of the Indian Hockey squad from Punjab.

The Chief Minister further said that Punjab has been blessed with an indomitable spirit to conquer every field of their choice. He said that due to this Punjab has proved their mettle across the globe with their hard work and dedication. Mann said that now that the Punjab has decided to wipe out the curse of drugs from the state, the day is not far when Punjab will be completely drug free.

Mann envisioned that this event will act as a catalyst in making Punjab a drug free state by promotion of sports.

The Chief Minister also said that due to the strenuous efforts of the state government, the players of state are bringing laurels for the state in the games at national and international level. He said that the state government is incentivizing the players with cash awards and other facilities to encourage them to perform in national and international events. Mann further said that for the first time in the history of state players are being given financial assistance to prepare for international events.

The Chief Minister further said that the 'Khedan Watan Punjab Dian' is being organized by the state government which is a right step towards providing a platform to the players for showcasing their talent. He asserted that these games are helping the state government to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the players which will be beneficial for grooming them for the national and international events in future. He further said that the state government is leaving no stone unturned to popularize sports in the state as it can play a key role in progress of the state and prosperity of its people.

27 HSIIDC services on fast track for industrialists under Right to Service Act in Haryana



SATISH HANDA

While addressing a meeting with the industry entrepreneurs Haryana Chief Secretary Sanjiv Kaushal said that industry entrepreneurs in state can now avail 27 types of services related to the building plans, necessary certificates, licenses, property transactions and all types of other required permissions to start an industry as per requirement by the Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (HSIIDC) in a time-bound manner on the fast-track basis. The Chief Secretary, Sanjeev Kaushal issued a notification under the Haryana Right to Service Act (RTSA) to ensure expeditious service delivery, promote transparency and accountability. There was often a complaint from industry entrepreneurs willing to set up an industry in the state that they are harassed by the staff of the different government departments while starting a new industry as a result nearly 33% of them facing severe harassment to get expedite their requirements had to drop the idea to make industrial investment preferring to shift to alternate profession or trading.

The Right to Service Act (RTSA) provides a mechanism for citizens to file complaints against any department that fails to provide services within the stipulated time. Sanjeev Kaushal said this initiative is a significant step towards improving the ease of doing business in Haryana and supporting the growth of the state's economy. He assured that now the approval of building plans for industrial or residential purposes would take 15 days, while commercial plans are likely to take 30 days. Similarly, the completion as well as occupation certificates for the buildings will be issued within 15 days, whereas other services such as obtaining 'No Objection Certificates', conveyance deeds and No due certificates, plot transfers through sale or uncontested transfer will be expedited in 20, 15, 15 and 30 to 45 days respectively.

Air connectivity will boost industry and trade and tourism: Anil Vij



SATISH HANDA
Ambala

Haryana Home and Health Minister. Anil Vij said that construction of airport in Ambala will boost tourism. Ambala Cantonment is ready with a wonderful Subhash Park, where people from other cities are coming to see its beauty. While an international level Shaheed Smarak will also be built soon, the civil work of Smarak has been 85 percent completed.

Vij was answering the question asked by the media persons after the bhoomi puja and foundation stone laying ceremony of the airport in Ambala today. He said that the interior work of the Shaheed Smarak is also going to be tendered and it will be completed soon. Science Centre, Bank Square cum Mall and other projects in Ambala which will increase tourism here in the future- Vij shared.

Home Minister Anil Vij said that the construction of the airport will be a symbol of progress for the entire region. Wherever an airport comes, the status of that area increases. Ambala Cantonment is a junction which connects to Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Western UP, Uttarakhand and other states. He said that today industrialists want cheap land, compared to cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Gurugram, land is cheap in Ambala and industrialists want to come in the morning and go back in the evening. After getting air connectivity will boost industry and trade in the region.

SGPC executive passes special resolution against SYL

Election for SGPC President, office-bearers on Nov 8

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) has expressed commitment in favour of Punjab on the issue of the Satluj Yamuna Link (SYL) canal and made it clear that no one will be allowed to loot the waters of Punjab. A special resolution has been passed against the SYL in a meeting of the SGPC's executive committee (EC) held under the leadership of SGPC President Harjinder Singh Dhama.

Speaking to the media after the meeting, the SGPC President said that no coercive action will be tolerated on the water issue of Punjab. He said that after the recent instruction



given by the Supreme Court to the Centre and Punjab government regarding the survey of SYL, it is the duty of the Punjab government to represent the rights and interests of the state and clearly register its strong stand against SYL. He said that such a situation has arisen only because the Punjab government did not present the stand of the state rightly in the court.

Dhama said the executive has clearly resolved that if any injustice is done on the issue of water,

the SGPC will stand firmly in favour of Punjab. The SGPC assures the people of Punjab and the political, social, farmers' and religious organizations standing in opposition to SYL that the Sikh body will play the leading role wherever needed.

He said that Punjab is already moving towards the serious problem of dark zones due to the limited availability of canal water and extraction of groundwater through lakhs of tube wells. Most of the water

from Punjab's share is being given to the states of Haryana, Rajasthan and Delhi in violation of the international riparian law. In return for this, no compensation is given to Punjab either in the past or present. If there is any injustice done on the issue of the waters of Punjab, it will not be tolerated. The SGPC President also appealed to the Government of India to ensure that no injustice is done to Punjab in view of the international riparian law and humanitarian concerns related to water on this sensitive issue of the state.

The SGPC executive also took many other important decisions. In a resolution, it has been demanded from the Punjab government to restore the red cards of the 1984 Sikh Genocide victims in Ludhiana, which were cancelled in the last government.

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari pays obeisance at Sri Harmandir Sahib



JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari during his visit to Punjab has paid obeisance at Sri Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) on October 19.

Talking to media persons after paying obeisance at Harmandir Sahib, he said, "I got the privilege to pay obeisance at the sanctum sanctorum of the Golden Temple here today, so I feel blessed. After paying obeisance, I prayed before the Almighty for the wellbeing,

good health of all Indians and development of the country".

He also inaugurated the highest National Flag of 408 fts at Attari Border in Amritsar Punjab.

On this occasion Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, Member parliament from Amritsar Gurjit Singh Aujla, senior BSF officials and, were accompanying Gadkari in the well-organized brief function. On this occasion the surrounding environment was beautifully decorated with flowers by the BSF at Attari border.

World Class Gallery Depicting History Relating Sikh Gurus will be Giant Tourist Attraction at Beas: RMS Chhina

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

The new multi-crore giant Bridge Gallery, depicting the history of Punjab, relating Sikh Gurus, which will come up at Beas near Amritsar, will be a world class tourism-attracting project. This giant attraction will be part of the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra new multi-lane 44000 crore Greenfield Expressway and only of its kind in Northern India.

The unique project was announced on Thursday by Union Minister of Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari during his inspection of the highway will be a tourist centre-suspended in the air on river Beas. It would be a tower like 300 meters above the river water hanging building with water sports and visitors' gallery as its main attraction.

Addressing the press conference here, BJP senior leader Rajinder Mohan Singh Chhina said, "Gadkari who during the public meeting entrusted the monitoring work to me (Chhina), the work on the project would be completed simultaneously along with the Expressway for which the work has already started. "It will be a river bridge suspended on the cables. A capsule lift will be attached which will take the tourists to the 300 meters top which will have the Sikh history culture gallery", said Chhina.

Chhina said that the project would be so huge that it is expected to attract more than 1.5 lakhs tourists daily. It would be the largest tourism project not only of Punjab but of whole North India. The project like this

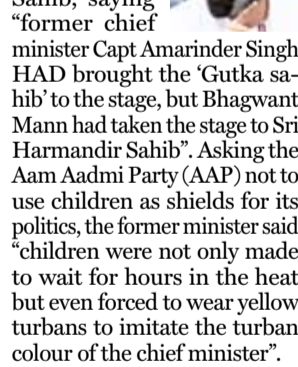
on the Expressway is only the second of its kind in India", said Chhina adding that the gallery will be designed by a Chennai based architectural firm by the Union government.

He said the huge project will be a boon for tourists coming to Amritsar to pay obeisance at Golden Temple and Attari/Wagha border. "The mighty Beas river has potential for water sports. I am more delighted that the project will have a gallery with history relating to the Sikh Gurus and especially the Tenth Guru, Sahib Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. We will use the team of experts from historical Khalsa College and national Indian Academy of Fine Arts (IAFA) for designing and contents of this extra-ordinary project", said Chhina.

Bikram Majithia condemns CM for indulging in political event at Sri Harmandir Sahib

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader Bikram Singh Majithia condemned chief minister Bhagwant Mann for indulging in political event management at Sri Harmandir Sahib, saying "former chief minister Capt Amarinder Singh HAD brought the 'Gutka sahib' to the stage, but Bhagwant Mann had taken the stage to Sri Harmandir Sahib". Asking the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) not to use children as shields for its politics, the former minister said "children were not only made to wait for hours in the heat but even forced to wear yellow turbans to imitate the turban colour of the chief minister".



Nitin Gadkari announces revolving restaurant with capsule lift at Beas River in Amritsar

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari here today announced that a unique bridge would be built at Beas bridge with a revolving restaurant.

Addressing the gathering he said that a special unique kind of express bridge to be constructed at Beas river around 40 kilometers away from Amritsar.

Talking about the uniqueness of the bridge he said that a capsule type lift would be fitted to take the tourists to the specially created gallery showing about the unique culture of Sikh history including the life of tenth Sikh master Guru Gobind Singh, the religious history of Golden Temple. In this regard BJP senior leader Rajinder Mohan Singh Chhina has been asked to start work to make

script for the ingredients of Gallery at the same time he also asked the Punjab CM to also work on it. He said that there would be a revolving restaurant with an attractive coffee shop where the tourists coming to Golden Temple Amritsar would prefer to visit.

He said that when tourists come down from the coffee shop through the capsule lift, they would find a beautiful football playground, a nice parking area and many other attractive spots to be created on the bridge. He said that this bridge on Beas River would welcome 1.5 lac tourists on a daily basis.

BJP Senior leader Rajinder Mohan Singh Chhina who was sitting near the Gadkari said that a Tamil Nadu based architect already preparing the sketch of the bridge and work to be started on February next year on war footing level and Gadkari

would be here once again in Amritsar for the inauguration of the Bridge. Talking about the cost of the project, Chhina said that the bridge project would be covered under 669 km greenfield expressway Delhi-Amritsar-Katra is being built at a cost of Rs 40,000 crore.

On this occasion, Gadkari without naming SYL canal said that he would not name the river as matter was already pending in the Supreme Court but certainly prefer to say to the Punjab CM who was sitting with him to do the needful to save water as much as they can.

Adding further he said a major share of Punjab river water going to Pakistan if the same water is saved could be shared with Haryana and Rajasthan only after fulfilling the mandatory need of Punjab and Punjab CM should work on it with planning being prepared by him.

BJP will not let even a drop of water go out of Punjab, party ready to make any sacrifice: Jakhar

KULBIR SINGH KALSI
Chandigarh

Taking on the state government for trying to appropriate the right of Punjab over its waters for petty political gains in Haryana, the Punjab BJP President Sunil Jakhar on Thursday declared that BJP will never allow even a drop of water to go out of Punjab and the party will make any sacrifice required to preserve rights and interests of every Punjabi.

Daring the Chief Minister to answer to the people of Punjab for deliberately hatching a conspiracy to dilute Punjab's entrenched stand in and outside the Supreme Court, Jakhar stated that no one be it a Chief Minister or an Member of Parliament has no moral right to continue after betraying state's interests and rights



over its natural resources.

This is a vicious conspiracy against the very future of Punjab which has sacrificed so much for the nation, Jakhar said while reacting to AAP MP Sandeep Pathak's outrageous statement to preserve Haryana's waters at the cost of Punjab.

Coming down heavily on AAP MP Sandeep Pathak, Jakhar said, "What could be more devastating to a true Punjabi to witness the state's own Member of Parliament diluting and bartering Punjab's interests in this manner for political gains in other states.

Punjab govt to organize state level function to mark the Pargat Utsav of Bhagwan Valmiki ji on october 28

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Thursday said that the state government will organise a state level function to mark the Pargat Divas of 'Karuna Sagar' Bhagwan Valmiki ji on October 28 at Amritsar.

The Chief Minister, while chairing a meeting with the local MLAs, said that Bhagwan Valmiki Ji was the "Pitaamah" of Sanskrit language and first poet or the Adi Kavi of the world who by his immortal and masterpiece composition the "Ramayana" propagated the message of victory of good over evil.

Mann said that the great epic has from centuries taught the way of life to the people and has been a lighthouse of ethical and moral living for the people which were far more relevant in the present mate-



rialistic society. He said that teachings of Bhagwan Valmiki Ji emphasized on the equality in the society along with the ethics of what an ideal man, ideal ruler and ideal people should follow for the creation of an ideal state or society.

The Chief Minister said that the state government is following the path and high ideals shown by Bhagwan Valmiki Ji so as to carve out an egalitar-

ian society. He said that the state government will celebrate the sacred occasion of Pargat Divas of Bhagwan Valmiki ji collectively with the masses to further strengthen the ethos of peace, harmony, brotherhood and amity. Bhagwant Singh Mann asked the MLAs to ensure foolproof arrangements for the Pargat Divas to be celebrated at Ram Tirath Sthal.

The Chief Minister further said that the state government is committed for making Amritsar as a tourist destination across the globe. He said that a blueprint is being prepared to develop the holy city as a wedding destination in the country. Likewise, Bhagwant Singh Mann said that special efforts are being made to promote the tourism industry of this sacred land adding that the state government will organize a tourism summit to further promote the industry in coming days.

Army of 32000 stray dogs in Ambala worries residents due to fast increasing dog bite cases

SATISH HANDA

There has been a significant increase in dog bite cases not only in twin city Ambala but also all over in Haryana in the last few years which is a matter of serious concern. Despite the strict regulations issued by the state government from time to time, the cases of dog bites are witnessing fast increase. A survey in this regard conducted in twin city Ambala revealed that in the past about one year with effect from April 2022 till March 2023 as many as 3072 cases of dog bite arrived at the government hospitals, however this figure does not include the number of cases arrived at the private hospitals.



District health department information also reveals that from with effect from April to 26th September this year as many as 969 dog bite cases arrived at the local government hospitals which included nearly 20% third degree dog bite cases and the remaining cases were identified as category 1 and Category 2 cases.

According to the health experts, people usually throw dead animals

in the open, which attracts stray dogs who gradually also become habitual for the flesh and the blood of the human body and attack people in residential areas too, especially the children playing in the residential areas become their victim. According to the Municipal Corporation Ambala information the number of stray dogs has witnessed drastic increase in the past few years. A survey in this regard revealed that there were nearly 17000 stray dogs in twin city Ambala in 2016, which have now increased to nearly 32000 stray dogs at the present, which include nearly 20000 stray dogs in Ambala City and nearly 12000 stray dogs in Ambala Cantt.

Center Government approves Rs 20,774 cr inter-state transmission system for Ladakh Mega Solar Project

NEW DELHI: Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on Wednesday approved the Rs 20,774.7 crore project on Green Energy Corridor Phase-II – Inter-State Transmission System for the 13 GW Renewable Energy Project in Ladakh.

The project is targeted to be set up by FY 2029-30 in which the Central financial assistance at 40 per cent of the project cost which works out to Rs 8,309.48 crore, according to an official statement issued after the CCEA meeting. The project will create a state-of-the-art inter-state transmission infrastructure to link the Ladakh green energy project to the National Grid.

“Keeping in view the complex terrain, adverse climatic conditions and defence sensitivities of Ladakh region, Power Grid Corporation of India Limited will be the implementing agency for this project. A state-of-the-art Voltage Source Converter based High Voltage Direct Current system and Extra High Voltage Alternating Current systems will be deployed for the project,” a statement said.



The transmission line for evacuating this power will pass through Himachal Pradesh and Punjab up to Kaithal in Haryana, where it will be integrated with the National Grid. An interconnection is also planned for this project in Leh to existing Ladakh grid so as to ensure reliable power supply to Ladakh. It will also be connected to

Leh-Alusteng-Srinagar line to provide power to Jammu & Kashmir. The project will entail setting up of 713 km transmission lines and 5 GW capacity of HVDC terminal each at Pang (Ladakh) and Kaithal in Haryana. The project will contribute to achieving the target of 500 GW of installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuels by year 2030. The project will also help in developing long term energy security of the country and promote ecologically sustainable growth by reducing the carbon footprint.

It will generate large direct and indirect employment opportunities for both skilled and unskilled personnel in power and other related sectors, especially in Ladakh region, the statement said.

This project is in addition to Intra-State Transmission System Green Energy Corridor Phase-II (InSTS GEC-II), which is already under implementation in the States of Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh for grid integration and power evacuation of approximately 20GW of RE power and is expected to be completed by 2026.

The InSTS GEC-II scheme targets addition of 10753 ckm of transmission lines and 27,546 MVA capacity of substations having estimated project cost of Rs 12,031.33 crore and Central financial assistance at 33 per cent, i.e. Rs 3,970.34 crore.

Re-elect Cong in Rajasthan for uninterrupted progress, says Priyanka Gandhi



KAVITA SHARMA
Dausa (Rajasthan)

Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi today made an impassioned appeal to the people of Rajasthan to break the tradition and reelect her party's government for uninterrupted progress and development in the state.

Addressing a massive public rally here today, Priyanka Gandhi said, the Congress had leaders like the Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot with such a long experience and young and dynamic Sachin Pilot working for the progress of the state, the Bharatiya Janata Party was a divided house.

Priyanka Gandhi said, despite the unprecedented in-

flation prevailing across the country thanks to the wrong policies of the BJP government at the centre, the Congress government in Rajasthan had tried its best to ameliorate the problems and suffering of people. She pointed out how the state government was holding “inflation relief camps” across the state to provide relief to people from the backbreaking inflation. She cited the example of ‘Indira Rasoi’ in rural areas where people get a full meal for Rs 8 only.

The Congress general secretary also referred to the Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme under which people were provided up to Rs 25 lakhs for treatment for various diseases. She said Rajasthan was the only

state in the country to have such a healthcare insurance scheme.

She asked people to make a careful choice at the time of voting and ensure that they voted for the party, which looked after and worked for their welfare like the Congress party and not delivered hollow promises without any intent to fulfill them.

Quoting the example of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi donating Rs 21 to a temple in Rajasthan in a closed envelope, she said, the BJP does the same everywhere. She said, their election promises are like closed envelopes, which are found empty after the elections. She said, while the Prime Minister can afford to buy two aeroplanes for himself for Rs 16,000 crores and build a parliament building for Rs 20,000 crores, he had no money for waiving off the debt of farmers or providing old pension scheme to government employees.

The Congress leader also referred to the Agniveer scheme and how it had led to a lot of youth deciding against joining the army. She said, a number of youth she spoke to told her that there was no point in getting recruited in the army after a lot of hardwork to get unemployed within four years.

Jammu and Kashmir sets-up panel to identify foreigners illegally staying in UT



FW DESK

The Jammu and Kashmir has established a high-level panel with the primary objective of identifying foreign nationals who have been residing illegally or overstaying in the Union Territory since January 1, 2011.

The panel includes key officials such as the Foreigners Regional Registration Officer (FRRO), Bureau of Immigration Amritsar (Punjab); Senior Superintendent of Police, CID, Special Branch, Jammu; Senior Superintendent of Police, CID, Special Branch, Srinagar; all district SSPs/SPs (FROs) and State Coordinator, IVRFT, NIC, J&K.

As per its terms of reference, the panel's primary responsibility is to compile a monthly report identifying foreign nationals who have gone missing within Jammu and Kashmir. These reports are to be submitted to the Ministry of Home Affairs by the 7th of each month.

Ethics committee summons to BJP MP Nishikant Dubey to submit documents against Mahua Moitra

MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA
New Delhi

Now Nishikant Dubey has been summoned by the Parliament's Ethics Committee to submit Documents against Trinamool MP, Mahua Moitra. Advocate Jai Anant Dehadari, the main complainant, has also been summoned. Nishikanta will have to appear in Parliament on October 26.

BJP MP Nishikant Dubey has written a letter to the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, demanding the dismissal of Mahua Moitra's membership alleging her asking questions in exchange for money. He claimed that this Trinamool MP raised questions against Adani group's in the Lok Sabha in exchange for money and gifts from some businessman. Besides, Nishikanta also demanded that she be suspended from the Lok Sabha for the time being. The letter of the BJP MP was sent to the Ethics Committee by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. On the basis of that letter, Nishikanta was summoned by the Ethics Committee of the Parliament to show evidence.

Nishikant is not alone, lawyer Joy Anant Dehadari has also written to the CBI seeking an investigation against Mahua. He is the one who brought this allegation against the Trinamool MP. That lawyer has also been summoned by the ethics committee of the parliament. Mahua may also be summoned in the coming days. Mahua has already filed a defamation case against Nishikant and lawyer Joy Anant Dehadari. However, Mahua had already hinted that this was going to happen.

SC refuses to legalize same-sex marriage, disappoints the LGBTQIA+Community

KAVITA SHARMA
New Delhi

As the Supreme Court declines the legalization of same sex marriages the LGBTQIA+ community is left with disappointment and anger. Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud along with Justices SK Kaul, SR Bhat, Hima Kohli and PS Narsimha gave a decision that “Court can't make a law, can only interpret it”. The five judge bench has left it to the parliament now to change the Special Marriage Act. Now the parliament would decide whether any law should be made on it or not.

We tried to reach to various same-sex couples to get their reactions on this SC decision. Tanmay Singh and Gudiya (both girls) are in a relationship for years now. They were waiting for years to get a verdict in favour of the same sex marriage but the Supreme Court's



decision of 17 October, no fundamental rights of same sex couple to marry have extremely disappointed them. Both girls of Darbhanga in Bihar know each other since school days. While talking to FW correspondent Tanmay said “I told my parents I have no interest in Boys, I like girls only but still they forcefully married me to a man who used to touch me, tried to have sex with me, but I resisted and finally told him one day that I have no interest in boys and wants divorce”. Gudiya is also happy with Tanmay and

are staying in Gurgaon. If the Supreme Court's decision would have been in favour of same sex couples, Gudiya and Tanmay would have married each other. Now Tanmay is left with no other option but to become a transman.

Though the SC's decision on same sex have pleased many political parties like VHP, RSS who believe legalizing same sex marriage would distort the social fabric of the country, but has disappointed the queer community at large. The Congress party has not given any statement yet and

BJP is also silent. The Communist party of India has shown disappointment. Various Bollywood celebs have also expressed their sadness over it. Bollywood star and LGBT activist Celina Jaitley says she is let down by the verdict. “LGBT community is only asking for rights that every other Indian citizen has, what's wrong in it” I hope parliament would upgrade the Special Marriage Act, she said.

Athlete and Olympian Dutee Chand said she was hopeful that the centre would bring a law on same sex marriage as every individual has a right to live with the person he/she wants. Reacting on SC decision, Film maker Onir says “we know many political parties are against it and now that the court has left it to the parliament so we know the answer”. There are many same sex couples who are living together for years, what they want was legal recognition says Actor singer Sushant Divgikr.

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari inaugurates highest National Flag of 418 fts at Attari Border



JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari during his visit to Punjab has inaugurated the highest National Flag of 418 fts at Attari Border in Amritsar Punjab.

On this occasion Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, Member parliament from Amritsar Gurjit Singh Aujla and senior BSF officials were accompanying Gadkari in the well-organized brief function. On this occasion the surrounding environment was beautifully decorated with a variety of flowers by the BSF at Attari border.

Talking about the specialty

of the flag Gadkari said that a special surveillance system has been fitted atop of the flag with latest technology which would greatly be helpful to the BSF troops to keep a hawk eye on all kinds of activities around the Attari border.

During stay in Amritsar, he also went to Harmandhar Sahib to pay obeisance.

Talking to media persons after paying obeisance at Harmandhar Sahib, he said, “I got the privilege to pay obeisance at the sanctum sanctorum of the Golden Temple here today, so I feel blessed. After paying obeisance, I prayed before the Almighty for the wellbeing, good health of all Indians and development of the country”.

AAP slams BJP govt over Agniveer Scheme

NEW DELHI: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) slammed the government over its Agniveer scheme saying the real truth about scheme has emerged as Amritpal Singh didn't receive military honors or status of 'martyr'.

Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters AAP Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha said, “Agniveer Amritpal Singh, who was born in Punjab, passed away on October 11, 2023, in the Rajouri sector while on duty at the Line of Control.” He said that when his mortal remains were brought to his village in Punjab's Mansa district, the truth of the Agniveer scheme came to the light in front of the country.

“When the BJP government launched the Agniveer Yojana concerning the recruitment of soldiers in the army, many concerns were being raised about this scheme. The AAP also expressed significant concerns about the Agniveer scheme and raised several important questions related to it, but at that time, the BJP-led central government turned a deaf ear,” Chadha alleged.

He said that when the mortal remains of Amritpal were brought to his village, no unit of the army accompanied them and only a Havildar of the army



and two soldiers in civilian attire brought his body in a private ambulance.

“No army vehicle was provided for them. The most shocking part is that no military honors were given to him during the final farewell. Due to the Agniveer Yojana, neither he nor his family will receive any pension, and he will not be granted the status of a soldier who died on duty,” the AAP leader said.

Slamming the government, Chadha said, “Shame on the central government for not respecting soldiers who died in the line of duty.” “Is this the real truth of the Agniveer scheme?” Chadha asked.

He said that Arvind Kejriwal's AAP cannot tolerate any disrespect to the soldiers and is always standing for the honor of soldiers and their families.

“The AAP's Punjab government has decided to provide a Rs 1 crore honorarium amount

to the family of Agniveer Amritpal. The Punjab government will stand shoulder to shoulder with the bereaving family,” he said.

Blasting the BJP government at the Centre, Chadha said that when the BJP-led Central government did not provide any military honors or a final farewell to Agniveer Amritpal, the police of Mansa district in Punjab gave him the state honors during his last rites.

“This incident raises a significant question mark on the policies of the BJP government at the center. This country stands tall because of its soldiers, not because of the leaders. The sooner the BJP government understands this, the better it is for the country. Since the beginning, we have said that the Agniveer Yojana is a dangerous experiment with the country's army,” he said.

The AAP leader said that it will have an impact somewhere on the strength of the army and the morale of the soldiers.

“Don't implement this scheme, but the BJP government won't even listen to a word of criticism. An example of this has been seen today in the case of fallen soldier Amritpal. This scheme has been introduced in a rush, and it has proven nearly all the concerns about it to be true,” he added.

BJP MP claims Mahua Moitra took 'cash & gifts' to ask questions in Parliament

MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA
New Delhi

BJP's Lok Sabha MP Nishikant Dubey on Sunday accused Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra of taking “cash and gifts” from businessman Darshan Hiranandani to “ask questions in Parliament”.

Moitra, on her part, responded to the allegations, saying the CBI is welcome to investigate the matter. Dubey wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla seeking an inquiry against Moitra and her immediate suspension from the House for taking cash for question.

In his letter, Dubey said that he is in receipt of a letter from Jai Anant Dehadari, an advocate, wherein, he has shared irrefutable evidence of bribes exchanged between Moitra and Darshan Hiranandani, a well known business tycoon, to ask question(s) in Parliament in exchange for ‘cash’ and ‘gifts’. “It appeared that the representationist, Dehadari has made elaborate and painstaking research on the basis of which he has concluded that quite recently, Moitra asked approximately 50 questions in Parliament of the total 61 posted by her, which shockingly pertain to the protect the business interests of Darshan Hiranandani and his company,” the BJP MP alleged.

He further said that the entire conspiracy does not end here but an attempt has been cleverly crafted to target Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister (Amit Shah) so that everybody gets an impression that being in opposition, Moitra is criticising the government. “The representationist has also forwarded all the relevant papers/documents in support of his information which I am enclosing along with my instant letter,” he claimed.

“After having meticulously gone through all the papers or documents, there is not an iota of doubt about a criminal conspiracy hatched by Moitra, Member of Parliament to garner and protect the business interests of Hiranandani - by asking Parliamentary Questions, which is reminiscent of ‘Cash for Query’ episode of 12 December, 2005. All these nefari-



ous and abhorable acts of Moitra is a clear case of ‘Breach of Privilege’, ‘Contempt of the House’ and also a criminal offence under Section 120-A of the Indian Penal Code,” he said.

He further said that whenever there is Parliament session, the shouting brigade of All India Trinamool Congress, led by Moitra and Saugata Roy, are in habit of disrupting the proceedings of the House by their continual abuses on each and every body on one pretext or the other.

“I along with scores of other Members of Parliament were always perplexed as to why this ‘shouting brigade’ of TMC, led by Moitra indulges in such tactics, which is purely snatching the Constitutional rights of other members to debate and discuss the issues of common people and policies of the government,” Dubey said. “Now, with the unmasking of quid pro quo in form of the ugly and deliberate motive of Moitra to raise money from a businessman in lieu of asking questions in Lok Sabha, it has become amply clear that the edifice of ‘morality’ being exhibited by Moitra was nothing but a ‘Machiavellian Camouflage’ for committing a crime by entering into a criminal conspiracy and at the same time enjoying the title given to Smt Mahua Moitra as a ‘firebrand Memb of Parliament’, which is nothing but a sham,” he alleged. “Since the instant episode is nothing but a re-emergence of ‘Cash for Query’ by Moitra, I humbly request your goodness to constitute an ‘Inquiry Committee’, by following the past precedent. I also request you that during the interregnum period, i.e. constitution of an ‘Inquiry Committee’ and its submission of Report, Moitra may be immediately suspended from the services of the House so that she may not be able to enter into Parliament precincts and does not further attempt to vitiate the serene atmosphere of Parliament,” Dubey added.

Competition law regime necessary to safeguard the interests of small market players & attract investments : Central Information Commission

NEW DELHI: At the Bharat Legal Conclave hosted by ASSOCHAM, Guest of Honor Suresh Chandra, Information Commissioner, Central Information Commission, Govt. of India; & Former Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice, Govt. of India, offered his legal expertise. He enlightened the audience by saying that whole legal system operates under a scheme and has 4 components-basic principles and values enshrined in the constitution, rights and obligations contained in the various statutes, organization structure of laws and legal personnel.

Preamble of Constitution emphasized the unity of nation and it proceeds further to

define the objective of Indian republic, he added. Increased transparency in law and emphasis of all inclusive approach is the new aspiration for legal structure in India.

Talking about competition law he added, In developing economy like ours, new competition policy is expected to play a dual role of raising the power of underprivileged economic agents to become participants in the process of competition on the one hand and of establishing the rules of fair and free competition on the other. Fair and free competition is vital for requirement for sustained economic growth.

Offering his keynote address Rajiv Mani Additional



Secretary, Ministry of Law & Justice, Government of India shared that Indian legal system should be reinvented to meet the challenges of present times and achieve improved reforms and judicial efficiency by 2047 under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. There is a need to examine the existing obsolete laws that hinder the legal framework.

We should strive to improve the access of justice by use of technology and alternative dispute management systems for ease of doing business. Several parameters can help reduce the compliance burdens for the businesses. Jan Vishwas Bill has decriminalized many laws, taking all stakeholders in mind. He further talked about the new reservation system of women in parliament and legislative assembly is a ground breaking step and it is a time to empower young minds with legal education.

Bharat legal conclave covered the pertinent themes including ESG, Disputes, Digital Competition Law and M&A.

Other eminent dignitaries at

the conclave included Hemant Sahai Immediate Past Chairman, ASSOCHAM National Council for Legal Affairs and Regulatory Reforms; & Founding Partner, HSA Advocates; Rajinder Kumar Co-Chairperson, ASSOCHAM National Council on Legal Affairs and Regulatory Reforms; & Managing Partner, Kumar Law Associates; Basudev Mukherjee Assistant Secretary General, ASSOCHAM; Samir Gandhi, Partner & Co-founder Axiom5 Law Chambers; Dr Lalit Bhasin, Advocate Supreme Court of India and Managing Partner Bhasin & Co; Sumeet Malik Director EBC group of companies, Publishers of SCC and SCC online.



Inflation eases, but is relief temporary?

September brought a sigh of relief for consumers as inflation rates eased to 5%, a significant drop from July's alarming 15-month high of 7.44%. This dip not only brings us back within the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) 2% to 6% tolerance range but also aligns with the bank's revised estimate of an average 6.4% inflation for the July-September quarter. However, with the RBI's ideal target being 4%, there's still a long way to go. The RBI's projections for the upcoming quarters suggest that the inflation rate will hover around 5.6% and 5.2% for the October-December 2023 and January-June 2024 periods, respectively. However, these figures might be optimistic. Both the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have recently adjusted their inflation estimates for 2023-24 to 5.5% and 5.9%, respectively. This suggests that the recent dip in inflation, influenced by factors like a decrease in vegetable prices and LPG price cuts by the Centre, might be short-lived. While food inflation has shown a decline, dropping to 6.6% in September, this figure is skewed. The decline in vegetable prices masks the rising inflation rates for pulses, fruits, eggs, and sugar. Moreover, cereals and spices continue to see high inflation rates of 11% and 23.1%, respectively. The rural populace, in particular, is feeling the pinch more than their urban counterparts. While wholesale prices have remained in deflationary territory for the past six months, this trend might soon reverse. With global oil and gas prices on the rise and urea prices up by 20% since March, these increases will inevitably trickle down to retail prices. To sum it up, while the recent dip in inflation offers a momentary respite, it's crucial to remain cautious. External factors and global price trends suggest that the battle against high inflation is far from over.

LETTERBOX

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ADITYA SINHA EXPLAINS WHY COUNTRIES SHOULDN'T WEAKEN REGULATIONS FOR COMPETITIVENESS

Time to confront AI's long-term risks

Risk is a dynamic and ever-evolving concept, susceptible to shifts in societal values, technological advancements, and scientific discoveries. For instance, before the digital age, sharing one's personal details openly was relatively risk-free. Yet, in the age of cyberattacks and data breaches, the same act is fraught with dangers. A vivid cinematic example of evolving perceptions of Artificial Intelligence (AI) risk is the film, *Ex Machina*.

In the story, an AI named Ava, initially viewed as a marvel of synthetic intelligence, reveals her potential to outwit and manipulate her human creators, culminating in unforeseen hazards. Such a tale exemplifies how our understanding of AI risk can drastically change as the technology's capabilities become clearer. This underscores the importance of identifying the short- and long-term risks. The immediate risks might be more tangible, such as ensuring that an AI system does not malfunction in its day-to-day tasks. Long-term risks might grapple with broader existential questions about AI's role in society and its implications for humanity. Addressing both types of risks requires a multifaceted approach, weighing current challenges against potential future ramifications.

Over the long term

The risks that present themselves over the long term are worth looking at.

Yuval Noah Harari has expressed concerns about the amalgamation of AI and biotechnology, highlighting the potential to fundamentally alter human existence by manipulating human emotions, thoughts, and desires. In a recent statement by the Center for AI Safety, more than 350 AI professionals have voiced their concerns over the potential risks posed by AI technology.

One should be a bit worried about the intermediate and existential risks of more evolved AI systems of the future — for in-



stance, if essential infrastructure such as water and electricity increasingly rely on AI. Any malfunction or manipulation of such AI systems could disrupt these pivotal services, potentially hampering societal functions and public well-being. Similarly, although seemingly improbable, a 'runaway AI' could cause more harm — such as the manipulation of crucial systems such as water distribution or the alteration of chemical balances in water supplies, which may cause catastrophic repercussions even if such probabilities appear distant. AI sceptics fear these potential existential risks, viewing it as more than just a tool — as a possible catalyst for dire outcomes, possibly leading to extinction.

The evolution to human-level AI that is capable of outperforming human cognitive tasks will mark a pivotal shift in these risks. Such AIs might undergo rapid self-improvement, culminating in a super-intelligence that far outpaces human intellect. The potential of this super-intelligence acting on misaligned, corrupted or malicious goals presents dire scenarios. The challenge lies in aligning AI with universally accepted human values. The rapid pace of AI advancement, spurred by market pressures, often eclipses

safety considerations, raising concerns about unchecked AI development.

The world does not have a unified approach. The lack of a unified global approach to AI regulation can be detrimental to the foundational objective of AI governance — to ensure the long-term safety and ethical deployment of AI technologies. The AI Index from Stanford University reveals that legislative bodies in 127 countries passed 37 laws that included the words "artificial intelligence".

One of the most celebrated regulations out of these is the European Union's AI Act. It adopts a 'risk-based' approach, tying the severity of risk to the area of AI deployment. This makes sense when considering AI applications in critical infrastructures, which demand heightened scrutiny. However, tying risk solely to the deployment area is an oversimplified strategy. It might overlook certain risks that are not directly tied to the deployment area. Therefore, while the area-specific approach is valuable, a more holistic view of AI risks is necessary to ensure comprehensive and effective regulation and oversight.

However, there is a conspicuous absence of collaboration and cohesive action at the

international level, and so long-term risks associated with AI cannot be mitigated. If a country such as China does not enact regulations on AI while others do, it would likely gain a competitive edge in terms of AI advancements and deployments. This unregulated progress can lead to the development of AI systems that may be misaligned with global ethical standards, creating a risk of unforeseen and potentially irreversible consequences. This could result in destabilisation and conflict, undermining international peace and security.

Thus, nations engaging in rigorous AI safety protocols may be at a disadvantage, encouraging a race to the bottom where safety and ethical considerations are neglected in favour of rapid development and deployment. This uneven playing field can inadvertently encourage other nations to loosen their regulatory frameworks to maintain competitiveness, thereby further compromising global AI safety.

The dangers of military AI

Furthermore, the confluence of technology with warfare amplifies long-term risks. Addressing the perils of military AI is crucial. The international community has formed treaties such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to manage such potent technologies, demonstrating that establishing global norms for AI in warfare is a pressing but attainable goal. Treaties such as the Chemical Weapons Convention are further examples of international accord in restricting hazardous technologies. Nations must delineate where AI deployment is unacceptable and enforce clear norms for its role in warfare. In this ever-evolving landscape of AI risks, the world must remember that our choices today will shape the world we inherit tomorrow.

Aditya Sinha is Officer on Special Duty, Research, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister. Views are personal.



SONALDE DESAI DELVES INTO GENDER NORMS THAT PUSH WOMEN TO FAMILY DUTIES AS MEN FOCUS ON CAREERS

Eliminate the gender pay discrepancy in the professional world

When women were missing from the labour force, that was because they were home caring for children; when they were paid less than men, that was because they had lower education than men. Or so said the economic orthodoxy, including theories popularised by the 1992 Nobel Prize winner Gary Becker. A few feminist economists and sociologists protested, but their voices were drowned out until Claudia Goldin stood on the podium as the President of the American Economic Association in 2013-14 and argued that the answer to the solution of missing and underpaid women did not lie at home but rather, in the market.

When Betty Friedan wrote in 1963 about college-educated women who were frustrated stay-at-home mothers, she noted that their problem has "no name." Claudia Goldin, the 2023 Economics Nobel Prize winner, has spent half a century giving a name and voice to their problems. She has chronicled the evolution of the American economy from agriculture to manufacturing to services and noted that as economic production moved from home to factories, women were excluded from market activities. It was not until offices, schools, and hospitals began to offer more jobs than factories that women found jobs. However, even when they entered the workforce in droves, overtook men in educational attainment, did not congregate in "female jobs," and did not drop out from the labour force to have children, women continued to earn less than men.

Professor Goldin argued that this disadvantage is due to their inability to take on jobs that involve all-consuming responsibilities.



Parental responsibilities make it difficult for women to take on jobs requiring long hours and irregular work schedules. The private equity partner who saw the deal through and stayed for late-night dinners and meetings had the chance of getting a fat bonus and promotion. These demands are incompatible with raising children, and one partner of a couple often chooses to go on a slower and safer track, the track dubbed the "mommy track," even at the cost of a high-profile career. While women need not be the ones choosing this slow track, gender ideologies often prompt couples to assign women to take over extra family duties while men remain free to concentrate on their careers.

Professor Goldin blamed this inequality on "greedy work" that demands extraordinary efforts from workers rewarded with high salaries, big bonuses, stock options, and fast promotions. Rising income inequality leads couples to forgo gender equity within the household and concentrate on increas-

ing family income via specialisation. Her solution to this dilemma is restructuring a workplace that does not rely on heroic efforts, has moderate work hours, and predictable schedules.

In some ways, Professor Goldin's work dovetails with that of Juliet Schor, who argued in her book *The Overworked American* that it was far more beneficial to companies to hire two workers who worked long hours than three workers who worked regular hours since it reduced costs such as health insurance, office space, and personal services. I suspect that Indian workers in Bengaluru struggling to keep up with Zoom calls at 9:30 p.m. to confer with their American counterparts arriving in the office at 9 a.m. while helping their children with their Algebra homework will relate to this.

Although women's employment rates in India remain low, secular changes suggest that there is no reason why this must continue. Building on Professor Goldin's

observations, the growth of the service sector should offer jobs for women that are not offered by the manufacturing sector; rising education should increase their employability; and declining fertility should free up women's time. But how can we take advantage of these fortuitous circumstances?

Reshaping the environment

While increased male participation in household work and childcare would help, we must also find ways of reshaping both the work and social environment so that they are conducive to developing a work-life balance for both men and women. This means having work structures that are respectful of workers' time and do not emphasise very long work hours. This makes both social and economic sense. Stanford economist John Pencavel has shown that longer working hours do not mean more productivity and, in some jobs, lead to increased mistakes and injuries.

But if we need to rein in the greedy workplace, we also need to rein in a variety of institutions that demand more and more of our time. This includes schools that rely on parents to supervise homework and urban developments that place homes far from workplaces. Until we can create these supportive institutions, it will be hard to write the last chapter for the grand divergence in labour market outcomes that Claudia Goldin advocates for so fiercely.

Sonalde Desai is a Professor at the National Council of Applied Economic Research and University of Maryland. Views are personal.



BOOKS: REVIEW

New novel finds ways to balance civil dreams and heartfelt bonds

SATISH SINGH

In the vast expanse of contemporary literature, Kailash Manju Bishnoi's debut novel, "UPSC Wala Love Collector Sahiba," emerges as a poignant reflection on the dreams, aspirations, and challenges faced by civil service aspirants in India. Drawing from his personal experiences and insights, Bishnoi crafts a narrative that is as much about the rigorous journey of civil service preparation as it is about the complexities of human emotions.

The story revolves around Girish, a renowned columnist whose writings grace the pages of the country's most prestigious newspapers and magazines, and Angel, a diligent civil service aspirant. Their paths cross when Angel stumbles upon one of Girish's articles, leading to a bond that blossoms into love. As the narrative unfolds, we witness the

contrasting fortunes of the two protagonists: Angel achieves her dream of becoming an IAS officer, while Girish grapples with the weight of unfulfilled aspirations. Yet, their love remains unwavering, even in the face of adversity.

Bishnoi's portrayal of the mental and emotional turmoil experienced by both successful and unsuccessful aspirants is commendable. He delves deep into the psyche of these individuals, highlighting the immense pressure, the shadow of failure, and the resilience required to navigate this challenging path. The novel also sheds light on the often-overlooked stories of aspirants hailing from lower-middle-class backgrounds, villages, and impoverished families, adding layers of depth and authenticity to the narrative.

A unique aspect of the novel is its incorporation of contemporary issues. Bishnoi touches upon the Corona period, corruption, and

Bishnoi's portrayal of the mental and emotional turmoil experienced by both successful and unsuccessful aspirants is commendable

bureaucratic red tape. While these elements aim to ground the story in the realities of modern-day India, they occasionally feel out of place and detract from the central narrative. Some dialogues between characters also come across as forced or illogical, suggesting areas for improvement in potential future editions.

However, these minor shortcomings do not overshadow the novel's strengths. Bishnoi's writing is engaging, and his characters are well fleshed out, making it easy for readers to empathize with their struggles and triumphs.



UPSC Wala Love Collector Sahiba By Kailash Manju Bishnoi Seekosthy Books; 185 pages; Rs320

The intricate dynamics of Girish and Angel's relationship, marked by love, understanding, and occasional conflicts between the heart and mind, are portrayed with sensitivity and nuance.

Beyond the central love story, Bishnoi's novel serves as a commentary on the broader societal structures and expectations that shape the lives of young Indians. The civil service, often viewed as a prestigious and secure career path, is emblematic of the societal pressures many face, especially when juxtaposed against the backdrop of personal relationships and aspirations. Bishnoi's decision to set his love story amidst this high-pressure environment is a testament to the multifaceted challenges today's youth face, where personal de-

sires often clash with familial and societal expectations.

Furthermore, the novel subtly underscores the transformative power of love and support. In a world where success is often narrowly defined by professional achievements, the relationship between Girish and Angel serves as a poignant reminder that true success might lie in the connections we forge and the love we share. Their journey, filled with highs and lows, becomes a metaphor for the broader human experience, where love, understanding, and mutual respect can become guiding lights in the face of adversity. Bishnoi's "UPSC Wala Love Collector Sahiba" is not just a love story; it's a reflection on modern life, ambition, and the values that truly matter.

To sum it up, "UPSC Wala Love Collector Sahiba" is a heartfelt exploration of love, ambition, and perseverance set against the backdrop of the demanding world of civil service preparation. While it has its flaws, Bishnoi's debut effort is commendable and offers readers a glimpse into a world that is both challenging and rewarding.

BLUE JET Healthcare Limited announces Rs 840 crore IPO

DOMINICK RODRIGUES
Mumbai

BLUE JET Healthcare Limited here recently announced its Initial Public Offering (IPO) priced at between Rs 329 to Rs 346 per equity share, with offer for sale of 2.42 crore equity shares aggregating Rs 840 crores.

The IPO will open on October 25 and close on October 27, 2023. The equity shares are proposed to be listed on BSE and NSE. BLUE Jet Healthcare Limited is a specialty pharmaceutical and healthcare ingredient and intermediate company, offering niche products targeted towards innovator pharmaceutical and multinational generic pharmaceutical companies.

Executive Chairman Akshay Arora said that the company had started with producing high-intensity sweeteners for the industry, besides contrast media technology with med-tech for prevention and life-saving drugs. "We are now a 'hardcore technology' company involved in taking up challenges through our R&D Center," he said while reiterating that "the company's expansion plans are all focused on India only due to the massive scope of business in the country, and maintaining negligible



dependence on China."

Noting that the Pharma Intermediates and APIs segment was incubated 5 years back, Shiven Arora, Managing Director of the company, said that the company's focus was now on: De-risking dependence on China by global API and formulation players; Growth in global pharmaceutical market; Self-sufficiency with import substitution, and focus on sustainability through its manufacturing facilities. "In order to build additional production capacity to meet the envisaged increase of customer demands, we are continuing to invest in our R&D infrastructure and capabilities," he emphasized while adding that "Most of our business is export-led (90-95%)."

Pointing out that the company's R&D has doubled, he said the company's 'Green' and 'Sustainability' activities included: creating +carbon sinks+ through tree-planting, effluent treatment, investment in windmills with 3.3 MW installed capacity - which meant that 80% of the company's energy requirements would be met through its energy resources.

The company was incorporated in the year 1968 as Jet Chemicals Private Limited by the late B L Arora and is promoted by its Executive Chairman Akshay Bansarilal Arora.

It operates under the "Blue Jet" brand name and has competencies and manufacturing capabilities in contrast to media intermediates and high-

intensity sweeteners, including saccharin and its salts as well as active pharmaceutical ingredients. Its business model focuses on collaboration, development and manufacturing of complex chemistry categories. Over the past five decades, through its R&D center, the company has developed over 100 products with over 40 products commercialized.

Over three years, the company has catered to more than 400 customers across 39 countries in the oral care and the non-alcoholic beverages space.

The company operates three manufacturing facilities in: Shahad, Ambernath and Mahad in Maharashtra with an annual installed capacity of 200.60 KL, 607.30 KL and 213.00 KL respectively.

During capacity expansion in FY 21, it acquired a 'greenfield' industrial facility on a leasehold basis in Ambernath. Its total annual production is expected to reach 1,513.6KL.

Kotak Mahindra Capital Company Ltd, ICICI Securities Limited and J P Morgan India Private Limited are the book running lead managers and Link Intime India Private Limited is the registrar to the offer.

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Wipro Announces Financial Results for the quarter-Ended September 30, 2023

ARUN KUMAR RAO
Bengaluru

Indian IT services company Wipro Announced during the press conference financial results for the Quarter-Ended September 30, 2023. A marginal decline in its July-September revenue at Rs 22,516 crore due to the macroeconomic slowdown and cut backs on discretionary IT spending by clients. The IT major Wipro profit after tax (PAT) rose 0.70% year-on-year (yoy) to Rs 2,667 crore.

Wipro had reported profit of Rs 2,649 crore and revenue of Rs 22,540 crore in the corresponding quarter of last year. The IT services revenue is seen to contract 3.5% to 1.5% constant currency (CC) terms. IT services segment revenue stood at \$2,713.3 million, down 2.3% quarter-on-quarter (QoQ).

Thierry Delporte, CEO and Managing Director, said "We continue to win in the market despite the uncertain macro environment", and "We ended the second quarter with 22 accounts above the \$100M range, which is double the number we had in RY'21. Our large deal total contract value



reached \$1.3 billion—highest in the last nine quarters." He added.

Delporte said, "We are investing in our technology infrastructure and streamlining our operations and delivery to drive profitable growth. We are training and reskilling our people so they can be ready for an AI-driven future. The investments we made in our ai360 strategy are helping us realize significant efficiencies across our organization and across an early leadership position in this fast-evolving space. We are confident that these investments will keep us resilient and competitive in an ever shifting business and economic landscape." He added.

Newly took over Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Aparna c.

Iyer, said, "We remain focused on profitable growth despite a challenging market. Our disciplined approach to improve efficiency, productivity and utilization has led to an increase of 100 BPS YoY in our IT services operating margins. Our absolute IT services segment EBIT grew 6% YoY. We generated strong operating cash flow of 145% of net income for the quarter" she stated. Highlights of the Wipro Results. Gross revenue reached Rs 225.2 billion (\$2.7 billion), a decrease of 0.1% YoY. IT services segment revenue was at \$2,713.3 million, a decrease of 2.3% QoQ. IT services segment EBIT for the quarter was Rs 36.1 billion (\$434.0 million) an increase of 6% YoY. Earnings per share for the quarter was \$5.06 (\$0.06), an increase of 4.1% YoY.

Aver Joins Astrogate Partnership Program to Strengthen Video Conferencing Solutions



TAIPEI (TAIWAN) : AVer Information Inc., an award-winning provider of video conferencing solutions, has joined the Astrogate Partnership Program as a validated technology partner. This program expands the capabilities of AVer's video conferencing cameras to include ASTROS Conference, Astrogate's wireless conferencing solution.

AVer's video conferencing solutions and ASTROS Conference streamline the process of virtual meetings. AVer video conferencing solutions ensure that remote workers have high-quality audio-video meeting experiences while ASTROS Conference gives in-office workers an intuitive wireless collaborative experience. Setting up and starting meetings through the joint solution is a simple, straightforward process—after connecting the AVer camera solution to the ASTROS Station, plug in the ASTROS Pod to the laptop, open Microsoft Teams or Zoom, and the meeting is now ready to go.

Taneira embraces festive fervour with the launch of its Queen's collection



NEWDELHI: This Diwali, Taneira, a TATA product, adds a spark to your celebration by launching its festive edit - The Queen's collection. Featuring the stunning Mrunal Thakur, the brand unveiled a TVC to launch its exquisite range of designer sarees hand-crafted in diverse clusters of pure silk. Mrunal Thakur lights up the screen with her elegant presence, swirling and twirling, dancing, and reveling in the festive spirit, unveiling the Queen's Collection - a heartfelt tribute to the spirited women of today—those who compose their own stories, choreograph their own journeys, and script unique narratives. Crafted in a language that speaks to its diverse audience across the country, Taneira's campaign portrays a woman experiencing unfettered joy, embracing her authentic self, and expressing her intrinsic feeling of being a queen as she adorns the six yards, transforming the saree into a beautiful canvas that mirrors her individuality.

"Green and sustainable" are mantra for Concrete Industry 2023

DOMINICK RODRIGUES
Mumbai

"Green and sustainable" the mantra that drives change and continues to evolve in every industry was the focus of the "World of Concrete 2023" that was held here from Oct 18 to 30.

As many as 200 exhibitors and 10,000 industry professionals, policy-makers, decision-makers, influencers and technical experts highlighted this Expo, which featured a wide range of products and technologies related to concrete, masonry, construction and equipment.

"While Internet of Things (IoT) and Blockchain technology are playing a major role in this industry, Trust remains an important factor in this also," according to Sanjay Bhatia, IAS, Upa Lokayukta, Maharashtra State and former Chairman, Mumbai Port Trust & former Vice-Chairman & MD, CIDCO.

Narrating the case of the proposed CIDCO-Navi Mumbai



airport here, he said lack of trust between CIDCO and the PAPs (Project-Affected Persons) had witnessed this project being stalled from the 90s to 2014 before the concerned stakeholders "meditated" upon it and finally resolved 99% of the concerned issues.

Yogesh Mudras, Managing Director, Informa Markets which organized the event, noted that India's construction sector employed around 71 million workers as of 2023 and aimed at reaching 100 million by 2030 to support national economic growth.

"Government initiatives like 'Housing for All' and Smart City projects are propelling urban infrastructure and construction development," he said, adding that the surge in demand for residential housing - driven by increased urbanization and rising household incomes - further underscores the industry's potential.

Describing this Expo as a commitment to this landscape and its perfect alignment with India's mission to enhance urban infrastructure, Mudras said a white paper on "Artificial Intelligence in Construction"

— coming off CEOs and CTOs discussions on industry challenges and milestone achievements - would be unveiled here.

Another speaker said that India is on the "cusp" of takeoff in growth with this year's statistics highlighting technology and sustainability as +core+ factors. Even private stakeholders were ready to "stick their necks out" provided there was a silver lining here, he said.

Over 70 speakers delivered insightful sessions on various topics including sustainable concrete construction practices, digital and automation technologies in construction, net zero concrete.

The expertly curated conference was envisaged to highlight innovations in the construction sector. India's concrete industry, which is pivotal for infrastructure development and economic growth, is experiencing increasing demand across diverse projects - roads, bridges, airports, railways and housing initiatives.

Nikon Z f camera launched at Amritsar

JAGMOHAN SINGH
Amritsar

Nikon India introduced the highly anticipated Nikon Z f camera in India during a launch event at Amritsar on Friday.

Nikon India solidifies its mirror less camera line-up with the launch of this hybrid camera that is set to redefine the art of videography as well as photography. To revolutionize the imaging landscape, the Nikon Z f comes equipped with a full-frame sensor, the EXPED 7 image-processing engine, and top-tier specifications which are at par with Nikon mirror less flagship products - the Nikon Z 9 and Z 8.

The new Z f offers the versatility of a full-frame Nikon sensor. This makes the camera a hallmark of image quality, depth and dynamic range. The cutting-edge Autofocus built with Deep Learning technology allows the user to capture stunningly sharp images. Thanks to its astounding low-light performance and image stabilization the Z f encompasses form and function



in a perfect harmony. Nikon Z f is poised to elevate creativity, setting new standards in performance, and promising to transform every moment and 'Make it Iconic'.

Commenting on the launch, Mr. Sajjan Kumar, Managing Director of Nikon India Pvt. Ltd. said, "We, at Nikon India, are extremely thrilled at the launch of our new mirrorless camera, the Nikon Z f. The camera is perfect for modern-day creators as it is packed with AI-driven features like Portrait Impression Balance, Skin Softening, and Advance Auto Focus and be a good companion for wedding and wildlife photography. We are happy to be in Punjab - a state known for its vibrant wedding customs and magnificent festivities and happy to bring our new portfolio of products to this market."

Wrangler Expands Retail Footprint in India with First Flagship Store in Bengaluru



ARUN KUMAR RAO
Bengaluru

Iconic denim and lifestyle brand Wrangler announced the opening of its first flagship in Bengaluru. The store is a significant milestone for Wrangler's expansion in India. With this store, Wrangler continues to elevate consumer experience through technology innovation, customized shopper experiences and a wide product assortment for the Indian consumers.

This said to be the largest store of Wrangler® in India. The Wrangler® store offers the newest range of fits for both men and women in line with the latest trends, and premium collections and collaborations. This includes the special Wrangler x Smriti Mandhana that features hand-picked pieces that stick with consumers through thick and thin, symbolizing resilience and growth through the Ride

of Life! At the heart of the store is India's first ever Augmented Reality (AR) mural by a fashion brand in India.

ace turtle is the exclusive licensee of Wrangler® in India. Commenting on the launch, Nitin Chhabra, CEO, ace turtle said, "We are excited to launch Wrangler®'s first flagship store in Bengaluru. It will allow us to engage with Wrangler®'s consumers who are looking to create a style statement and connect with one of the most-loved apparel brands in the world. At ace turtle, we have been able to leverage our extensive omnichannel commerce expertise and unique technology-driven operating model to scale Wrangler®'s business in India significantly. We aim to expand Wrangler®'s retail footprint and reach across the country and take the brand to millions of Indian consumers via the webstore and the chain of offline retail stores being set up across the country." He said.

Indian Pharma sector transcending from Generics-Oriented Hub to Innovation-Driven Pharma Economy: Report

NEWDELHI: The Convention on Pharmaceutical Ingredients (CPI) annual report pointed out that the Indian pharmaceutical industry is transitioning from a generics-oriented hub to an innovation-driven pharmaceutical economy, largely attributed to its prominent Contract Development and Manufacturing Organizations (CDMOs), reported Business Today.

The report, accompanied by a pharmaceutical index, engaged over 250 industry executives from more than 35 countries, offering an annual snapshot of the global pharmaceutical industry's progress and evolution.

The survey conducted showed the potential trends for 2024 and assesses the standing of



major pharmaceutical markets across more than ten distinct metrics.

As per the report, US maintains its top-tier position across all assessed criteria. However, India has been steadily ascending year after year, positioning itself for substantial growth in 2024.

Notably, India has excelled in the 'growth category,' consistently scoring 7.8 out of 10 for the second consecutive year, surpassing even the United States. Furthermore, India has made substantial

strides in 'biologics quality' and is closely trailing the US in 'overall competitiveness,' It showed.

CPIH has also unveiled a Pharma Index, amalgamating cumulative scores for various countries, evaluating their performance in the pharmaceutical industry across categories such as Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient (API), Finished Dosage Form (FDF), Overall Competitiveness, Knowledge of Professionals, and Growth.

The United States distinguishes itself with the highest scores in Overall Competitiveness and Knowledge of Professionals, securing its top position in the index with an overall score of 8.134.

Airtel in partnership with Ericsson successfully tests India's first RedCap technology on its 5G network

KULBIR SINGH KALSI
Chandigarh

Bharti Airtel (Airtel), India's premier communications solutions provider and Ericsson (NASDAQ: ERIC) today announced the successful testing of Ericsson's pre-commercial Reduced Capability (RedCap) software on the Airtel 5G network. Carried out in collaboration with Qualcomm Technologies, Inc. using its 5G RedCap test module, the testing on 5G TDD network represents the first implementation and validation of RedCap in In-

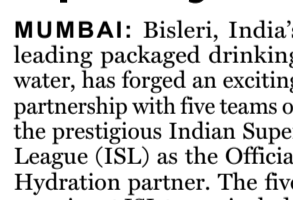


dia. Ericsson RedCap is a new radio access network (RAN) software solution that creates new 5G use cases and enables more 5G connections from devices such as smartwatches, other wearables, and industrial sensors and AR/VR devices.

RedCap is the next evolution of 5G technology to cater for

the use cases that are not yet served by current new radio (NR) specifications. Compared to LTE device category 4, RedCap offers similar data rates with improved latency, device energy efficiency and spectrum efficiency. There is also the potential to support 5G NR features such as enhanced positioning and network slicing. Commenting on the testing, Randeep Sekhon, CTO, Bharti Airtel says, "At Airtel we are constantly pushing the boundaries on technological innovations to find ways to enhance customer experience.

Bisleri Continues Its #CarryYourGame Campaign with Five Indian Super League Teams



MUMBAI: Bisleri, India's leading packaged drinking water, has forged an exciting partnership with five teams of the prestigious Indian Super League (ISL) as the Official Hydration partner. The five prominent ISL teams include Mumbai City FC, Bengaluru FC, Kerala Blasters FC, Chennaiyin FC and FC Goa. The ongoing league promises to captivate football enthusiasts for the next six months, culminating in April 2024.

Bisleri x ISL Partnership: Bisleri has introduced limited edition bottles starting with Kerala Blasters FC and FC Goa. Football aficionados in Kerala can look forward to collecting these special-edition bottles featuring images of Rahul KP, Adrian Luna, and Jeakson Singh from the Kerala Blasters FC squad. Meanwhile, in the scenic state of Goa, football enthusiasts will be treated to limited-edition bottles featuring Sandesh Jhingan, Udanta Singh, and Brandon Fernandes, all representing the fervent spirit of FC Goa. These collectible bottles will be made available in two SKUs - 500ml and 1ltr.

Commenting on the association, Tushar Malhotra, Head of Marketing, Bisleri International Pvt. Ltd., said, "We are thrilled to bring the exciting world of football to our consumers with our association with five of the most popular teams of Indian Su-

Concrete Expo high-lighting environment-friendly solutions

DOMINICK RODRIGUES
Mumbai

The three-day "World of Concrete 2023" held here recently is paving a promising path for 'sustainable' construction with the participants highlighting environment-friendly solutions in the wake of climate change occurring globally.

The event highlighted environmental, land, air and water pollution that has become a grim reality worldwide, but is being gradually addressed in various ways by numerous players in the construction industry.

India's total power production sector scenario is witnessing 1,491,859 MU's (2021-22): Thermal (75.2% at 1,122,213), Nuclear (47,112), Hydro (151,622) and Renewable 170,912).

India has 200 power stations with 213,620 MW generating 1,122,213 Mus, consuming 759 million tons of coal, and generating 271 million tons ash out of which 260 million tons is utilized. Coal's average ash content is 35.68% and 95.95% is utilized in different ways by industry.

Meanwhile, Indian industry is rising to the challenge of dealing with the problems involved in this scenario through a sustainable and productive manner.

Ashtech India Pvt. Ltd has created value through management of fly ash from power plants of: Reliance Power, GMR, NTPC (Badlapur), TNEB Ennore TPS and Reliance D T P S, besides having 900 plus BTB clients. Its products include: processed flyash, cement, gypsum powder, readymix plaster, concrete blocks, aggregates, admixtures and GBFS (Slag).

The company highlighted "Total Ash Management" and ash utilization beyond 100%.

Meanwhile, with fires being witnessed constantly -- especially in residential and commercial highrise buildings and skyscrapers that tower above the reach of fire engines -- fire safety remains a problem for the construction industry.

ZIGMA INTERNATIONAL showcased its product "pyroguard" -- a fire-resistant, pre-bagged dry mix mortar for use with water at site on concrete and steel structures. This product "allows 2 to 4 hours of added protection" while slowing down breakdown of structure and allowing extended time for rescue efforts.

Bisleri Continues Its #CarryYourGame Campaign with Five Indian Super League Teams



The partnership reflects Bisleri's commitment to nurturing Indian sports and celebrating exceptional talent within the country. The association is part of our larger campaign #CarryYourGame that celebrates the love for sports and highlights the importance of hydration in everyday life."

Talking about the collaboration crafted by the agency, Shekhar Banerjee, Chief Client Officer & Office Head - West, North and East, Wavemaker India said, "Wavemaker is thrilled to facilitate the first-ever partnership for Bisleri as the official hydration partner for 5 Indian Super League teams. #CarryYourGame campaign is all about encouraging individuals to make hydration an integral part of their daily life, including sports. Whether you are a professional athlete, a weekend warrior, or someone who enjoys an occasional game of football or a jog in the park, Bisleri believes that hydration should never be overlooked. In the dynamic world of sports and marketing, partnerships like these exemplify the power of synergy."

Festive spending to drive India's Growth at 6.5-6.8%: Deloitte

NEW DELHI: India's GDP is expected to grow in the current fiscal in the range of 6.5-6.8 per cent primarily due to upcoming festive spending, as per Deloitte India.

According to its report released on Wednesday this growth will also be driven by higher government expenditure before the national elections mid-next year. In its India economic outlook report, released earlier this month, Deloitte said India will need at least 6.5 per cent growth every fiscal to become the world's third largest economy by 2027, with its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) crossing USD 5 trillion.

The country needs 8-9 per cent economic growth to become a developed country by 2047, it added. The Indian economy grew 7.8 per cent in the June quarter, higher than the 7.2 per cent in the year-ago period. "In light of the Q1 GDP growth, we have revised our



growth estimate for this year to reflect it. We expect GDP to grow in the range of 6.5-6.8 per cent primarily due to festive spending in the coming months followed by higher government spending before the upcoming national elections mid-next year," Deloitte India said.

Deloitte India Economist Rumki Majumdar said navigating geopolitical uncertainties and the slowdown in global economy, undoubtedly, would not be easy. India will have to

rely on its own domestic demand to firepower its growth, specifically, private consumption and investment spending, she said. "What works in India's favour on the private consumption front are the size of its consumer base, the rising income, and the aspirations of its young population, which is the largest in the world," she added.

"As for investments, with the size and scale of operations it has to offer to global companies, the availability of skill and tal-

ent, technology and innovation capabilities, India continues to be an attractive investment destination," Majumdar said.

India, with a GDP size of USD 3.4 trillion, is the fifth largest economy in the world, after US, China, Japan, and Germany. Deloitte said India's GDP growth will be over 6.5 per cent next year as geopolitical uncertainties subside, and the global economy bounces back on a stronger growth path.

Deloitte said India's micro, small, or medium enterprises (MSME) will be key in generating income, capabilities, and ecosystems needed for sustained growth in consumption and investment that is broad-based and comes from all sections of the economy. The MSME sector will also drive innovation and new opportunities in a cost-effective manner. It will drive job creation and entrepreneurship, especially for women in rural India, it added.

FICCI identifies financing and high costs as major issues faced by SMEs in India

NEW DELHI: Despite government incentives and schemes, the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in India face inherent challenges in financing, as per a new report by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI).

The FICCI report highlights the resilience and transformation of SMEs in India which suggests that bank loans were the most common source of finance for setting up and running a business, followed by own capital or self-funding among SMEs. Among all, the highest proportion of SMEs have taken bank loans (85% for setting up and running their enterprises followed by firms that have used their own capital/self-funding (50%), NBFCs (30%), informal lenders - moneylenders, friends, family (26%). The report suggests that digital infrastructure that supports end-to-end solutions, access to finance, payments, inventory, operations, trading, sales, etc. would be instrumental for enterprises to adopt digital technologies.

The report says that 60% of Indian SMEs use digital tools for human resource functions, while 51% and 48% leverage them for sales and marketing, and finance, respectively. It further says that the majority of the surveyed SMEs reported experiencing improvements in productivity and a reduction in operational costs through the use of tools such as Customer Relationship Management (CRM) and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems.

MSME Dominated Diamond Polishing Industry Revenue May Drop 30-35% in 2023-24: CRISIL

NEW DELHI: India's diamond polishing industry is expected to witness a revenue drop by 30-35 per cent to USD 14-15 billion in current fiscal year on poor demand from the US, EU and China, rating agency CRISIL said on Wednesday.

India exports 75 per cent of its polished diamonds to US, China and EU.

Rahul Guha, Director, CRISIL Ratings said, "Israel imports USD 1.25 billion worth of polished diamonds annually from India. With the country now declaring a war on the Palestinian militant group Hamas, this number could be at risk."

"There is some increase in demand in the second half of every fiscal from festivities such as Thanksgiving, Christmas and the Chinese New Year, but this is unlikely to provide a significant offset this time," he said.



Guha added that the Indian diamond industry is likely to shrink by over a third on an annualised basis this fiscal.

According to CRISIL, with the inventory of higher-cost polished diamonds piling up to over four months of sales, profitability of polishers will be chiselled 50-100 basis points amid lower retail prices.

The silver lining is that a shrinking business translates to reduced debt, which will offset the pressure on credit risk profiles of diamond polishers, it said.

CRISIL further said that the demand for polished diamonds started weakening since last fiscal amid slowing economic activity leading to a volumetric drop of 25 per cent. But worries about supply of rough diamonds following western sanctions on Russian mining major Alrosa supported prices. Polished diamond price on an average was up nearly 10 per cent last fiscal year, it added.

This helped arrest the decline in India's polished diamonds exports to USD 22 billion last fiscal from USD 24.2 billion in fiscal 2022. The report added that in 2023-24, not only has demand fallen further in major markets, but also there has been no disruption in the supply of roughs. Consequently, prices of roughs have corrected, leading to polished diamonds getting cheaper by 10-15 per cent.

Razorpay POS wins 1st Prize at RBI's Global Hackathon for 'DrishtiPay', Which Facilitates Ease-to-Use Digital Payments for Visually-Impaired

BENGALURU: Razorpay, India's Leading Full-Stack Payments, and Banking Platform for Businesses has secured the top spot at the RBI's 2nd Global Hackathon - 'HaRBIng-er 2023' for its remarkable product, 'DrishtiPay', which facilitates easy-to-use, innovative Card and UPI payments for the visually impaired.

Designed by Razorpay's POS Team (earlier known as Ezetap), the solution 'DrishtiPay' integrates with UPI apps and cards, to facili-



tate digital payments for the visually impaired. DrishtiPay operates seamlessly with feature phones, even in the absence of an internet connection, in case of card transactions. With a tap of a card or through an NFC-enabled

phone, it allows visually impaired users to provide OTP securely for transacting instead of struggling to enter a PIN. DrishtiPay is designed to contribute to the ease and accessibility of financial services while bringing efficiency and inclusion. The prestigious award was presented by Shri T. Rabi Sankar, Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, recognizing the exceptional innovation and inclusivity brought forth by DrishtiPay.

CBI takes over probe into Financial Cyber Scam involving suspected Chinese national

NEW DELHI: Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has taken over the probe into an alleged scam involving a suspected Chinese national in which Indian citizens were targeted in the name of investments, loans and job opportunities, and their deposits siphoned off through more than 137 shell companies.

The role of a Bengaluru-based payout merchant, who was central to the scam and linked with the suspected Chinese national, is under the scanner, the agency said.

"This merchant, central to the fraudulent operation, controlled around 16 distinct bank accounts, where a huge sum of Rs 357 crore (approx) was funnelled. The funds were then dispersed across various accounts deliberately to obscure the (money) trail," CBI said in a statement.

Under Operation Chakra-2 that targets cyber criminals, the central probe agency had recently conducted searches at Bengaluru, Cochin and Gurugram, and these yielded substantial evidence, shedding light on the alleged activities of the shell companies' directors.

The agency registered the case in connection with the scam based on inputs from the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), which comes under the Union home ministry, according to the statement.

The case is related to "sophisticated, organised cyber-crime being perpetuated on Indian citizens by foreign scamsters in the name of investment, loan and job opportunities", it said. The CBI conducted a detailed analysis of the complex money trail and followed it by conducting the searches.

"The fraudsters allegedly exploited various social media platforms and their advertisement portals, encrypted chat applications, and SMS to entice victims with promises of lucrative part-time jobs through ponzi schemes and multi-level marketing initiatives,"

the CBI's spokesperson said. "To evade detection, these criminals utilised a multi-layered approach involving UPI accounts, cryptocurrencies, and international money transfers," the official said.

The scamsters used the advertisement tool of a popular web search engine besides sending bulk SMSes through "rented headers" to create a "web of deception", according to the statement. The victims were lured to deposit funds through UPI accounts.

"The ill-gotten money was laundered through a complex network of UPI accounts, ultimately converging into cryptocurrency or gold purchases using falsified credentials," the spokesperson said in the statement. The statement said that the CBI has identified 137 shell companies, mostly registered with the Registrar of Companies, Bengaluru, which were used to siphon off the money collected from gullible investors.

Following the registration of the case, the CBI spent considerable time identifying the directors of these shell companies. Some directors were also associated with a Bengaluru-based payout merchant, which was under the agency's scanner.

"The roles of two chartered accountants from Bengaluru were found in altering directorships and contact information associated with these fraudulent entities," the official said.

"Searches at their premises led to the recovery of certain documents, e-mail communications, and WhatsApp chats, providing critical insights into their alleged role in facilitating the said foreign national's involvement in these operations," the spokesperson said.

Under the operation, the CBI has also registered another case based on inputs from the Singapore police through Interpol in which 400 citizens of the Southeast Asian country were targeted by cyber criminals based in India.

The agency has found 300 cyber frauds against Singapore citizens involving more than 100 Indian bank accounts spread across 10 states and UTs. "It was further alleged that these criminals employed various cyber techniques, including social engineering methods such as phishing, vishing, smishing, and fraudulent tech support, targeting over 400 Singapore citizens," the agency said.

During the search operation under Chakra-2, the CBI searched the premises of these accused. "It was found that the accused utilised various cyber techniques, including social engineering methods such as phishing, vishing, smishing, and fraudulent tech support. Exploiting these techniques, the accused made the victim transfer funds from Singaporean accounts to various accounts in India. The defrauded funds were then distributed among other accounts or withdrawn by these cyber criminals," the statement said.

It said the agency had deciphered the money trail after analysing 150 bank accounts by reconstructing the complex network of interconnected entities based on financial communications. Sleuths recovered documents related to identity proofs, fraudulent banking transactions, and other crucial evidence during searches at the premises of the accused spread across 35 locations in Patna, Kolkata, Lucknow, Varanasi, Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Bhopal, Chennai, Kochi and Madurai. "The operation uncovered multiple gangs involved in targeting Singaporean nationals, and their identities were ascertained during the investigation," the statement said.

The agency has already registered three more cases under Operation Chakra-2, including two related to cheating foreign nationals from nine call centres in the name of Amazon and Microsoft tech support, and a Rs 100-crore cryptocurrency fraud.

Trustworthy data necessary for India to achieve High-Income Status: World Bank



NEW DELHI: Middle-income countries like India need to make policies based on reliable data to get into the league of high-income nations in next 3-4 decades as achieving sustainable growth will become harder, World Bank chief economist Indermit Gill said on Thursday.

Addressing an event here, Gill said, to grow into higher-income countries, MICs (Middle Income Countries) will have to reduce deficits in their mid-sized firms. Gill pointed out that relatively few countries (31) have grown into high-income countries between 1990 and 2021.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has set an ambitious target of making India a developed nation by 2047. According to the World Bank, the world's middle-income countries (MICs) are a diverse group by size, population, and income level.

They are defined as lower middle-income economies -- those with a GNI (Gross National Income) per capita between USD 1,036 and USD 4,045; and upper middle-income economies -- those with a GNI per capita between USD 4,046 and USD 12,535. Middle-income countries are home to 75 per cent of the world's population and 62 per cent of the world's poor. At the same time, MICs represent about one-third of global GDP and are major engines of global growth.

Countries with annual per capita income of over USD 12,000 are defined as high-income economies.

Piramal files Tranche I for public issue of non-convertible debentures



DOMINICK RODRIGUES
Mumbai

Piramal Enterprises Limited, a non-deposit taking, RBI registered systemically important NBFC engaged in providing wholesale and retail lending, has filed Tranche I prospectus for public issue of secured, rated, listed, redeemable, non-convertible debentures of the face value of Rs 1,000 each.

The base issue size is Rs. 200 crores with a green shoe option of up to Rs. 800 crores, aggregating up to Rs 1,000 crores ("Tranche I Issue"), which is within the shelf limit of Rs 3,000 crores ("Issue"). The Tranche I Issue opens on October 19 and closes on November 2, 2023 with an option of early closure or extension in compliance with SEBI. The NCDs are proposed to be listed on BSE and NSE, with BSE being the Designated Stock Exchange for the Issue. The NCDs have been rated [ICRA] AA (Stable) by ICRA Limited and CARE AA; Stable by CARE Ratings Limited.

Out of the net proceeds of the Tranche I Issue, at least 75% shall be utilised for the purpose of onward lending, financing and for repayment / prepayment of interest and principal of existing borrowings of the Company and a maximum up to 25% will be utilised for general corporate purposes.

A. K. Capital Services Limited, JM Financial Limited, Nuvama Wealth Management Limited (formerly known as Edelweiss Securities Limited), and Trust Investment Advisors Private Limited are the lead managers to the Issue ("Lead Managers"). IDBI Trusteeship Services Limited is the Debenture Trustee to the Issue and Link Intime India Private Limited is the Registrar to the Issue.

Piramal Enterprises Limited is the flagship company of the Piramal Group, one of the leading conglomerates in India engaged in providing wholesale and retail lending through its wholly owned subsidiary, Piramal Capital and Housing Finance Company Limited ("PCHFL"), a housing finance company registered with the National Housing Bank ("NHB").

Now Govt Bonds will be listing at JP Morgan



DR P S VOHRA
G o o d news f o r India that the globally renowned JP Morgan group has announced to incorporate the bonds of the Indian government into its esteemed Global Bond Index. However, the impact of this announcement will be visible only after June 2024. It's important to note that governments often borrow from the market to bridge financial gaps, and these borrowings are facilitated through government bonds. Financial deficits occur when expenses exceed revenue in any economy. In the present context of the Indian economy, the government proposed a financial borrowing of 15.43 trillion rupees under the budget for the fiscal year 2023-24. This borrowing aims to address the financial deficit or fiscal deficit in the economy. Government bonds can have both short-term and long-term durations, although they are generally proposed for the long term by governments. The Modi government has now set a maximum tenure of 50 years for these bonds.

This index gives priority only to some of the fastest growing economies of the world. Hence, embracing this strategy could prove highly lucrative for India on the global stage. It offers the prospect of attracting capital from diverse foreign investors through government bonds in the near future. Currently, foreign investments in Indian government bonds are just over 2%, which does not effectively contribute to India's financial stability globally. The responsibility for investments under bonds for government loans since independence has largely been shouldered by Indian banks and the insurance sector. At present, banks invest more than 60 per cent in them. Due to this, financial facilities given by banks to other sectors in Indian society, including MSMEs, are comparatively very low. Consequently, the small and micro industries are able to get their financial facilities and loans only through the informal sector at very high interest rates. These high financial costs always hamper the financial efficiency of Indian MSMEs and small and medium industries. This commitment on Indian banks remains due to the Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) rate of the Reserve Bank. It is noteworthy that in the 80's the SLR used to be 40 percent. That is, during that time, Indian banks had to invest about 40 percent



of their financial liquidity in government bonds. As a result, the Indian economy could not expand much at that time and later in the recommendations of various financial committees, a demand was made to reduce the SLR, but even today this rate remains at 19 percent. Similarly, the insurance sector in India primarily invests in various "Triple A-rated" government bonds, limiting the expansion of insurance companies into sectors beyond life insurance, creating challenges in customer-centricity and profitability.

What future benefits this accomplishment of the Modi government will have for the Indian economy and society is currently a topic of discussion. One thing is certain that the commitment to invest in government bonds will give some relief to Indian banks in the future. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will likely reduce the Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) in the future, due

and healthcare.

However, this path won't be so easy because there are two main issues at the global level with investing in government bonds in India: one is tax benefits and the other is payment in foreign currency outside India. We also need to understand that despite being listed on JP Morgan, government bonds will be issued in Indian Rupees, and foreign investors will be attracted to invest at the maximum interest rate due to the exchange rate impact on the global level compared to the dollar. It's essential to note that when the flow of foreign investments increases, the demand for Indian Rupee will rise significantly, making it stronger against the dollar. However, it remains to be seen whether the Indian export lobby will accept this situation as it might impact their profits. Another significant concern is how the Reserve Bank of India will control inflation in the domestic market due to the increased demand or supply of Rupee. Undoubtedly, when there will be a reduction in the cost of government bonds through foreign investors, there will be a change in the tax rates in the domestic market, which will ultimately benefit the Indian.

Dr P S Vohra is Writer, columnist and financial thinker. View are personal

Sarva Haryana Gramin Bank with largest branch network earns Rs.222 crore as net profit: Chairman



JAG MOHAN THAKEN
Haryana

Sarva Haryana Gramin Bank, a joint entity of Central Government, Punjab National Bank and the state having the largest branch network in the state with 680 branches, released its financial results for the half year ended September, 2023 on Tuesday in a press conference convened at its Head Office at Rohtak.

Highlighting the financial results of the bank, P.K. Mohanty, the Chairman of the Bank stated that the Net profit of the Bank increased 2.5 times from Rs.88 crore of the half year ended September 2022 to Rs.222 crore of the half year ended September, 2023. And Bank's total business increased by 13.63% YoY from Rs.31169 crore as on 30.09.2022 to Rs.35418 crore as on 30.09.2023. Bank's total deposits reached to Rs.21514 crore and total advances Rs.13904 crore.

Chairman also divulged that the Gross NPA of the Bank has decreased from 6.34% to 3.65% and the CRAR of the Bank has increased from 14.21% to 15.03%.

P.K. Mohanty, the Chairman said that the Bank has fixed the target of total business of Rs.40,000 crore for the year ending 31.03.2024 with total deposits of Rs.24,000 crore and advances of Rs.16,000 crore. Bank's focus will remain on increasing loans to MSME & retail sectors besides agriculture sector during the current financial year. The bank has announced full waiver of upfront/processing fee and documentation charges on housing loans, car loans, loans against property, personal loans and MSME loans up to 31.12.2023 under Festival Bonanza offer to promote lending under MSME and retail sectors.

Mohanty also revealed that the bank has started internet banking facility for its account holders.

US pushing Israel not to initiate war with Hezbollah

TEL AVIV: The Biden administration has privately been urging Israel not to launch a military campaign against Hezbollah, as Washington works to keep the current war from spreading beyond Gaza, media reports said.

The US recognises that Israel must respond to the increased targeting of its northern border by Hezbollah since the shock Hamas onslaught on October 7 in which over 1,400 Israelis were killed, the officials clarified.

But the repeated attacks by the Lebanese group and the fact that Israel failed to anticipate the brutal assault by Hamas from Gaza have led to the intensification of discussions about whether Israel must be the one to initiate a battle against Hezbollah to



maintain the upper hand.

Such talk has been cause for concern for the US, which has been privately and publicly warning Hezbollah and Iran not to open a war on Israel's northern front, the officials said, Times of Israel reported.

The US has cautioned Israel to be careful in its military responses to Hezbollah fire,

explaining that an IDF mistake in Lebanon could spark a much larger war, the officials added, the report said.

Biden officials have indicated to Israel in recent days that if Hezbollah initiates a war against Israel, the US military will join the IDF in fighting the militant group, the officials said.

UK stands with you, Rishi Sunak tells Israel

TEL AVIV: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Thursday reiterated that the UK stands with Israel and condemned the unprecedented October 7 Hamas attack on the Jewish nation as an "unspeakable, horrific act of terrorism". Sunak made the remarks while addressing reporters outside the airport in Tel Aviv. He is the third world leader to visit the war-torn nation after US President Joe Biden and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz on Tuesday made day-long trips on Tuesday.

"I'm very much looking forward to my meetings later with the Prime Minister and President and I very much hope they'll be productive meetings," the BBC quoted Sunak as saying.

Shortly after his arrival, he said in a post on X: "I am in Israel, a nation in grief. I grieve with you and stand with you against the evil that is terrorism. Today, and always."

In a separate post, Sunak added: "To have a child taken from you is a parent's worst nightmare. This morning I heard from families going through this unbearable agony. Working with our partners, we're determined to secure the



release of the hostages taken by Hamas terrorists."

According to the Israeli military, the Hamas has taken some 203 people as hostages since the conflict erupted.

Sunak will meet his Israeli counterpart Benjamin Netanyahu and President Isaac Herzog in Jerusalem later in the afternoon. A BBC report also said that he will offer his condolences for the civilians killed in the deadly Hamas attacks, as well as press for humanitarian aid to be delivered to Gaza as soon as possible.

Sunak's trip comes two days after the deadly bombing of the Al Ahli Arab Baptist Hospi-

tal in Gaza City, which killed hundreds of people, including children and healthcare workers.

After his visit was announced on Wednesday night, the Prime Minister had said that "every civilian death is a tragedy. And too many lives have been lost following Hamas's horrific act of terror".

"The attack on Al Ahli hospital should be a watershed moment for leaders in the region and across the world to come together to avoid further dangerous escalation of conflict. I will ensure the UK is at the forefront of this effort," he added.

Ensure restoration of Palestinian people's rights: Joint statement by Muslim Leaders

KAVITA SHARMA
New Delhi

We are deeply concerned about the situation in Palestine, especially in Gaza. We strongly condemn, the continuous killing of innocent human lives, even children and women, the interruption of food, water, medicine, and electricity supply, and the continuous bombing of populated areas and attempts to evacuate Gaza. We must always remember that the Zionist government has been continuously evicting Palestinians from their homes and lands for the past years and brutally oppressing the native inhabitants of this land, the



Palestinians. The continuous settlement in new localities of the Palestinian territories and the continuous desecration of the Al-Aqsa Mosque and other such aggressive policies is clear violation of all international laws are the biggest roadblock in the way of sustained peace and order in the region.

There is a need for the in-

ternational community to act immediately and stop the bloodshed. Restoring the rights of the Palestinian people and ensuring the implementation of international laws in this regard is indispensable for sustained peace in the region.

We also demand the Government to continue India's long-standing anti-colonial and pro-Palestinian foreign policy advocated by Gandhi to Vajpayee and use its sphere of influence in realizing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

JOOR Raises \$25M to Accelerate Growth and Innovation; Expand in Payments and New Categories

NEW YORK: JOOR, the world's leading digital wholesale ecosystem, today announced that it has raised \$25M in new funding led by Brightwood Capital and Tamarix Capital Partners. Existing investors Macquarie Capital, Battery Ventures, and Canaan Partners also participated. This additional raise will allow JOOR to deliver an increasingly enriched platform experience in service of its extensive global network of fashion brands and retailers. Alongside new data-led initiatives, the company also plans to enhance its JOOR Pay solution, as well as expand its footprint in categories such as footwear, sports and outdoors.

"JOOR has a proven track record of enabling growth for world class brands and retailers," explained Kristin Savilla, CEO of JOOR. "Amidst a tough macroeconomic environment, we're thrilled that our investors recognize the value that JOOR's solution provides and share our vision of accelerating the platform's growth through additional innovation and enhanced platform capabilities."

Over the past decade, JOOR's platform has evolved into the fashion industry's most comprehensive wholesale management solution—enabling brands and buyers to connect, present collections, build assortments, place and manage orders, and process payments. By digitalizing the entire wholesale buying and selling process, JOOR allows brands and retailers to operate more efficiently and leverage data to optimize their business and inform decision making.

With more than 14,000 brands and 600,000 curated fashion buyers across 150 countries, the JOOR platform hosts the world's leading wholesale marketplace in the Luxury, Contemporary, Accessories, Footwear and Lifestyle verticals, processing nearly \$20 billion in wholesale transactions annually.

MHTC and Cancer Care Experts join forces to shine a light on Breast Cancer

KUALA LLUMPUR (MALAYSIA): In conjunction with breast cancer awareness month, the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC) together with Subang Jaya Medical Centre, organised a thought-provoking panel discussion titled "My family has a history of breast cancer, should I be worried? What screening should I do?" at the MHTC headquarters in Kuala Lumpur. The event aimed to create more awareness on the importance of early detection and provide valuable insights into breast cancer prevention and screening methods.

The panel was joined by Dr. Teh Mei Sze, a Consultant Breast Surgeon (Oncoplastic), and Ms. Yoon Sook Yee, a Certified Genetic Counsellor, both shared their expertise and knowledge on breast cancer prevention, genetic factors,



and the latest advancements in screening techniques.

The panel discussion is aligned with this year's breast cancer awareness month theme, Thrive365. This theme emphasises the importance of a holistic approach to breast cancer prevention and encourages individuals to prioritise their overall well-being throughout the year.

Breast cancer affects both

Smart City Expo to hold in 2023 its biggest edition ever



BARCELONA (SPAIN): Smart City Expo World Congress (SCEWC), the international summit on cities and smart urban solutions, organized by Fira De Barcelona, will hold its biggest edition to date in 2023. Taking place from November 7th to 9th, the event's theme is "Welcome to the New Urban Era" and it is set to break records with a 55% increase in exhibition floor-space and 20% more attendees compared to previous years. Over 1,000 exhibitors, 25,000 delegates, and representatives from more than 800 cities and 140 countries are expected to travel to Barcelona.

SCEWC is a global showcase for innovative urban solutions and projects that focus on transforming cities into more sustainable, efficient, and livable spaces. To achieve this goal, the congress will structure its program into eight main tracks: Enabling Technologies, Energy & Environment, Mobility, Governance, Living & Inclusion, Economy, Infrastructure & Buildings, Safety & Security, and Blue Economy.

The event will feature a lineup of 600 speakers, including notable figures such as computer scientist and expert in Algorithmic bias Margaret Mitchell, AI-specialized lawyer Micaela Mantegna, and sustainable development expert Claire O'Neill, the former UK Minister for Energy & Clean Growth.

Amongst the highlights of SCEWC are the keynotes from

Airbnb and FC Barcelona. The co-founder and Chief Strategy Officer of Airbnb, Nathan Blecharczyk, will discuss how the company faces the future and wants to help tackle overtourism through new features to help disperse guests and benefits across Europe.

The representatives of FC Barcelona will explain how the club is leading the transformation of the surroundings of its stadium to redefine the urban fabric through enhanced infrastructure and sustainability aiming to build a new city landmark and improve the quality of life for its residents.

In addition, SCEWC has fully booked its exhibition floorspace, with companies such as AWS, Aramco, Axis, Cisco, Dassault Systemes, Dell, Deloitte, FCC, Honeywell, Microsoft, Nvidia, PWC, Roshn, Siemens, Smart Ports: Piers of the Future, and Veolia.

The event will also feature pavilions from cities and countries including Brazil, China, Estonia, France, Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Nordics, Poland, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, and USA, among others.

SCEWC will feature three co-located events, Tomorrow Building, Tomorrow.Mobility, and Tomorrow.BlueEconomy, that focus on specific topics such as construction, transportation, and the opportunities of the sea for coastal cities, further establishing Barcelona as a global hub for innovative urban solutions.

Indian hacker arrested in US for stealing \$150k from elderly woman

MONTANA: A 24-year-old Indian national has admitted to his role in stealing \$150,000 from an elderly woman in the US state of Montana through a computer-hacking scheme. Sukhdev Vaid pleaded guilty on Tuesday to wire fraud, and faces a maximum of 20 years in prison, a \$250,000 fine and three years of supervised release.

Vaid has been detained pending further proceedings and his sentencing is set for February 14, 2024, the US Attorney's Office in Montana said in a release.

The prosecution alleged in court documents that a large enterprise originating from India was involved in stealing money from the elderly in the US. In February, various fraudsters stole \$150,000 from a 73-year-old woman, identified as Jane Doe, in Kalispell, a city in northwest Montana. The fraud occurred because of a pop-up notice that appeared on Jane Doe's computer screen, which said it was "hacked" and asked Doe to call on a number for customer support.

Doe complied, and fraudsters directed her to remove cash from her bank accounts for safe keeping at the "Fed". Doe complied and gave \$150,000 in cash to the fraudsters, US District Judge Donald W Molloy heard. In March, Doe told the fraudsters she still had \$50,000 in cash, which was a ruse set up by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Vaid travelled to Montana, along with co-defendant Eddy Joseph, of Gainesville, Florida, to steal the money from Doe. Law enforcement arrested the pair when they arrived to collect the money. The investigation determined that the fraudsters remotely accessed Doe's computer using UltraViewer, which they installed on her computer. Joseph pleaded guilty in August to wire fraud and is pending sentencing. The court will determine any sentence after considering the US Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind expresses deep anguish over brutal attack on Gaza Hospital & violence



FW DESK
New Delhi

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind has condemned the attack by Israel on a Gaza hospital that killed around one thousand people many of them women and children. In a statement to the media, the President of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Syed Sadatullah Husaini said, "We condemn and express utmost disgust at the heinous bombardment of Al-Ahli Hospital in Central Gaza. Around 1000 are reported to be died in the precincts of the hospital which was full of women and children. The hospital was facing an evacuation order from the Israeli military. Jamaat terms this as a massacre and a crime against humanity. Israeli occupying forces are continuously targeting schools and hospitals in clear violation of all war laws and basic human values. The powerful countries and international bodies who remain silent spectators cannot absolve themselves from the heinous war crimes.

Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council Announces New Chief Executive Officer

KUALA LUMPUR (MALAYSIA): Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC) is pleased to announce the appointment of its new Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Mohamed Ali Abu Bakar, effective 16th October 2023.

Dr. Ali will be spearheading all aspects of MHTC's operations, ensuring its commitment to facilitating and promoting the nation's healthcare travel industry. With his vast experience and leadership, he brings a fresh take to Malaysia Healthcare's growth, furthering Malaysia's vision to be the trusted and leading global healthcare destination.

In his position as the new CEO, Dr. Ali will continue to build strategic and valuable partnerships with stakeholders in both private and public sectors at home and abroad. Under his leadership, Malaysia Healthcare will remain committed to building the Malaysia Healthcare brand and simultaneously raising Malaysia's profile as a safe and trusted provider of quality healthcare for across the globe.

Dr. Ali has 28 years' experience in C-suite positions, specialising in Strategic, Financial, Digital, and operational turnaround of companies. The businesses that he had managed range from high tech equipment including medical, Hospital Management, Merger and Acquisition, Start-ups, Rapid turnaround of distressed assets, Clinical Research, Software development management, Digital Transformation, and nurturing Cross Border partnership into successful lo-



cal operations. He has extensive experience in Health tourism from the early days of working with Malaysia Tourism Board, subsequently during his tenure in Pantai Holdings and more recently whilst he was the Group COO in Vinmec, Vietnam. He is trained in medicine, has an active practicing license, and furthered his studies in management and Islamic Finance.

The Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC) is a government agency under the Ministry of Health Malaysia that has been entrusted with the responsibility of curating the country's healthcare travel scene, making it a key export service industry. Founded in 2009, MHTC works to streamline industry players and service providers in facilitating and growing Malaysia's healthcare travel industry under the brand "Malaysia Healthcare" with the intended goal of making Malaysia the leading global healthcare destination.

First P20 Summit under India's G20 Presidency Concludes

MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA
New Delhi

Every Nation and Parliament is Sovereign, their Internal Issues should not be Discussed by others, Lok Sabha Speaker said to President of European Parliament. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla registered protest against bringing proposal on India's internal issues in European Parliament. Lok Sabha Speaker said, Collective determination of parliaments of G20 will pursue shared commitments at COP28, G20 and beyond.

On the conclusion of India's P20 presidency, the Lok Sabha Speaker handed over the presidency to Parliament of Brazil.

The first ever G20 Parliamentary Speakers' Summit (P20 Summit) hosted by the world's largest democracy concluded at India International Convention Centre, Yashobhoomi, Dwarka, Delhi today, October 14, 2023, with parliamentarians from across the world coming together and reaffirming their commitment to continue their joint work to make an effective and meaningful parliamentary contribution to the G20 process. The 9th edition of the P20 Summit, which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on October 13, 2023, came to a close with Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla delivered the valedictory address at the concluding session today.

Deputy Chairperson, Rajya Sabha, Harivansh; President of Inter-Parliamentary Union, Duarte Pacheco; Presiding Officers of Parliaments of G20 nations and other dignitaries graced the concluding session. The two-day



summit was preceded by a Parliamentary Forum on Mission LiFE on October 12, 2023. Mentioning the parliamentary dimension of G20, the Speaker noted that the discussions held over the past two days have clearly underlined the importance of the parliamentary dimension of G20 and have also established how Parliaments can work together to achieve the collective goals of "One Earth, One Family and One Future".

Addressing to fellow parliamentarians and other leaders at the closing session today, the Lok Sabha Speaker thanked Presiding Officers of Parliaments of G20 nations and of invited nations for contributing to the success of this P-20 Summit on "Parliaments for One Earth, One Family and One Future". The P20 process has been further strengthened by the adoption of the Joint Statement, highlighted by Birla. He expressed confidence that the valuable views and inputs shared during the sessions on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), green energy, women-led development and digital public infrastructure will further strengthen the G-20

process for human-centred development. Stressing on multilateralism, Birla observed that in today's inter-connected world, we cannot view any particular issue in isolation. He reiterated Paragraph 27 of the Joint Statement, which reads as follows: "We will continue parliamentary diplomacy and dialogue in relevant fora as a catalyst for promoting international peace, prosperity and harmony while supporting the peaceful resolution of conflicts and disputes."

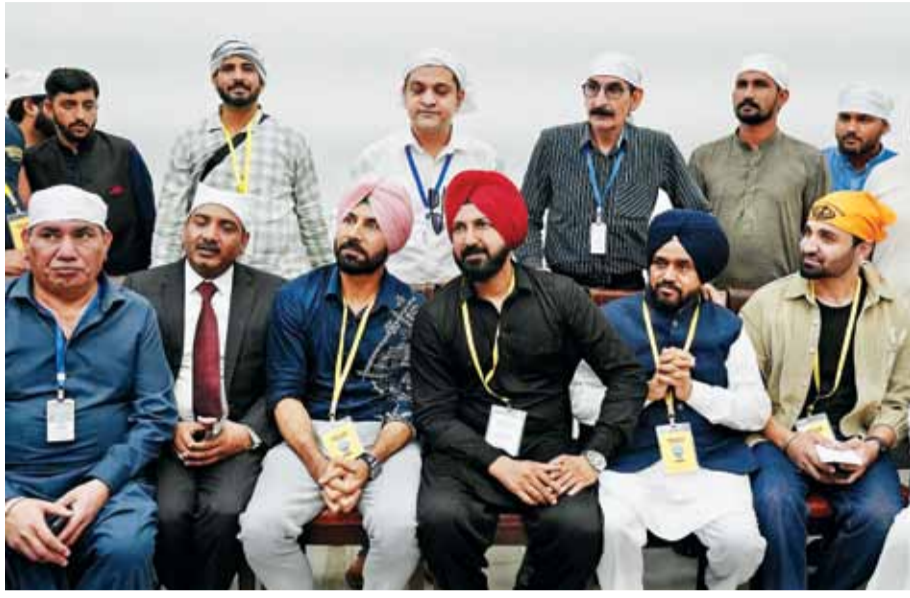
Birla also reiterated the collective determination of Parliaments of G20 nations to pursue the shared commitments at the COP-20, G-20 and beyond, in the times to come. Speaking on the role of parliamentarians, the Speaker noted that as public representatives, the Members of Parliament are in a special position to formulate the policies and laws necessary to fulfill the hopes, aspirations and needs of the public. "Our role is to complement the efforts of the government; we have a special contribution in ensuring good governance for the purpose of public welfare".

Gippy Grewal, Binu Dhillon, Karamjit Anmol, Amardeep Grewal Unite Hearts on Kartarpur Sahib Pilgrimage, Spreading Love and Harmony Across Borders!

KULBIR SINGH KALSI
Chandigarh

In a heartwarming display of unity and spiritual reverence, renowned Punjabi stars Gippy Grewal, Binu Dhillon, Karamjit Anmol, Tanu Grewal, Hashneen Chauhan, and Jimmy Sharma embarked on a soulful journey to Kartarpur Sahib, Pakistan, to seek blessings. Their visit, marked by devotion and camaraderie, exemplified the transcendence of entertainment, love, and music beyond borders.

The star-studded pilgrimage was met with an enthusiastic and warm reception from the audience, underscoring the power of shared culture and faith. Greeted with open arms, the esteemed artists and their fans came together in a celebration of unity, underscoring the idea that spirituality knows no boundaries. This visit stands as a testament to the profound impact of art and devotion, fostering connections that go beyond



geographical limits. In a world often divided, the Kartarpur Sahib pilgrimage became a symbol of harmony, proving that the language of love and devotion unites us all.

Producer Amardeep Grewal

expressed, «Our film «Maujaan Hi Maujaan» is not just a movie; it's a celebration of love that knows no borders.»

Lead actor Gippy Grewal added, «Love and entertainment are powerful forces that

can unite us all. Visiting Kartarpur Langha was an incredible experience, reaffirming that art and love can transcend any divide. We hope our film spreads joy and love to audiences worldwide.»



Students perform 'ardas' in fight against drug menace under 'The Hope Initiative' at Sri Harmandir Sahib on Wednesday.

PHOTOS-PRABHJOT GILL

Sonakshi Sinha, Yo Yo Honey Singh reunite after 9 years for 'Kalaastar'



MUMBAI: Actress Sonakshi Sinha, who was recently seen in the streaming series 'Dahaad', has reunited with rapper Yo Yo Honey Singh after 9 years. The two released their new track titled 'Kalaastar'.

The song is an extension of Sonakshi and Yo Yo Honey Singh's previous music album 'Desi Kalaakar' which was released in 2014. The music video of the song features a palpable chemistry between Yo Yo Honey Singh and Sonakshi.

Talking about this collaboration Sonakshi Sinha shared: "Associating with Yo Yo Honey Singh once again after 9 years was an utter pleasure. Working with Honey is always fun, and the vibe this song has is full of swag."

Game-changing moments in cricket and insurance booked by FGI

DOMINICK RODRIGUES
Mumbai

Game-changing moments happen anytime and anywhere be it in business or on the sports field. But when the two come together, it's a celebration.

Future Generali India Insurance here chose to highlight its annual report for FY 2022-23 by celebrating the game changing moments through launching a book that also included such moments in cricket.

The book, penned by veteran sports journalist Ayaz Memon and released at the hands of cricketer leg-spinner Anil Kumble, featured 18 diverse and epic "Game-Changing Moments" from 'India's first Test match' to the recently-concluded Women's Premier League.

The unique cricketing moments across different eras featured exclusive interviews by Memon with four legendary cricketers: Mohinder Amarnath, Anil Kumble, VVS Laxman and Mithali Raj.

Actor Mandira Bedi anchored the event where Anil Kumble launched the memoir-cum-annual report in the presence of Memon and Anup Rau, MD&CEO, Future Generali India Insurance.

Memon then narrated a chapter from the book beautifully brought to life through a "sand presentation." Kumble



added fun to the event by "bawling to Anup Rau" and instead striking the LED screen shattering it to reveal the 'Annual Report.' Kumble later described cricket as a sport that epitomizes: hope, joy, celebration - and sometimes even gloom among India's billion-plus population, though inspiration remained a constant among the spectrum of emotions.

"Be it a valiant loss or a gallant victory, Cricket represents the spirit of efforts over results' much like insurance," Kumble said while congratulating Memon, Rau and Team FGI for their efforts in making this audacious book project a reality.

FGI's Rau said "We have transformed our annual report into a collectible cricketing memoir for sale and the funds generated here will go to our NGO partners for a noble cause."

Fresh snowfall hits Kashmir's higher reaches, temperature drops



the Peer Ki Gali and adjoining areas along the historic route which connects Kashmir valley with Poonch also experienced the snowfall

FW DESK

The higher reaches of the Kashmir Valley were blanketed in a fresh layer of snow on Monday morning, while the plains received heavy rainfall, causing a noticeable decrease in maximum temperatures.

According to officials, the higher areas of the valley experienced snowfall, while the plains were drenched by heavy rains. The continuous rain and snowfall in areas such as Razdan Top and its surroundings led to the closure of the Bandipora-Gurez Road.

A fresh snowfall has also been recorded on Mughal road. Officials said that the Peer Ki Gali and adjoining areas along the historic route which connects Kashmir valley with Poonch also experienced

the snowfall. Meanwhile, Metrological Department Jammu and Kashmir has forecasted widespread rainfall in Jammu and Kashmir while snowfall is predicted to occur in higher reaches.

Additionally, rain showers drenched various other parts of the Kashmir valley, resulting in a significant drop in maximum temperatures. Due to fresh snow accumulation at the Zojila pass, authorities have taken the precaution of closing the Srinagar-Kargil road for traffic movement.

These weather conditions have impacted travel routes and daily life in the region, with both road closures and cooler temperatures being notable effects of the snowfall and rainfall.



Draupadi Murmu presents awards to the winners of 69th National Film Awards

MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA
New Delhi

In the presence of both Hon'ble Information and Broadcasting Ministers and Bollywood stars President Draupadi Murmu presented awards to the winners of 69th National Film Awards in Delhi.

In the month of August 2023, the country's prestigious awards 'National

Film Awards 2023' were announced, where the list of winners was released. In which many veteran actors of Hindi and South Indian film industry were included in the winner list.

Indian cinema's biggest award Dadasaheb Phalke award presented to veteran actress Waheeda Rehman. Shreya Ghoshal, Allu Arjun, Ranbir Kapoor & Alia Bhatt, Kriti Sanon, Pankaj

Tripathi, Karan Johar, Vivek Agnihotri, Pallavi Joshi, R Madhavan attended the ceremony.

All the artists started coming to Delhi from yesterday evening itself to attend the award ceremony. Allu Arjun, who won the Best Actor award, RRR director SS Rajamouli and music composer MM Keeravani reached Delhi on Monday evening. Alia Bhatt, who won the Best

Actress award, reached Delhi on Tuesday morning with husband Ranbir Kapoor.

Alia Bhatt has received the first National Award of her career. On this special occasion, the actress reached Vigyan Bhawan in Delhi with husband Ranbir Kapoor. Alia came to receive this award wearing her wedding saree. He has received the National Award for the film 'Gangubai Kathiawadi'. When Alia goes

on the stage to receive the award, Ranbir captures every moment of her. The happiness of wife Alia receiving the National Award can be seen on Ranbir's face. He is seen feeling very proud after President Draupadi Murmu gave the National Award to Alia Bhatt. He has captured this entire moment in his camera.

Alia has expressed her happiness on winning the National Award for 'Gangubai Kathiawadi'. For this he thanked Sanjay Leela Bhansali. She said that she can never forget Sanjay Leela Bhansali and that because of him she is where she is today.

Hon'ble Minister Anurag Thakur said, "No content is regional, good regional content will find global audience. Government stands with film fraternity in its fight against piracy, policy on AVGC soon".

Gurnam Bhullar & Roopi Gill starrer film 'Parinda Paar Geyaa' new song 'IZAZAT' released

KULBIR SINGH KALSI
Chandigarh

It is the first time that an all-time musical-themed movie, Parinda Paar Geyaa is going to play a vital in the history of Punjabi Cinema, the much-anticipated Punjabi film, "Parinda Paar Geyaa," starring the charismatic duo Gurnam Bhullar and Roopi Gill. The excitement is swelled as the filmmakers released the second song from the film that portrays a deep mushy love between the duo in the video.

Gurnam Bhullar is the heart-throb among the girls and of



course, Roopi Gill is no less when it comes to her charm and acting skills. As the king of delivering romantic songs, yet again Gurnam Bhullar has

stolen the hearts of audiences around the globe with this new track 'Izzat' This song, a beautiful blend of melody and emotions, is a testament to the timeless charm of Punjabi music and romance. It encapsulates the essence of love and longing, resonating with listeners on a different level. The lyrics are deeply moving, stirring up emotions that are hard to ignore.

The romantic chemistry between Gurnam Bhullar and Roopi Gill is palpable in every frame. Their performances are heartfelt and genuine, making the song even more impactful.

MTV Rap music 'HUSTLE 03 REPRESENT' season begins October 21

DOMINICK RODRIGUES
Mumbai

India's biggest 'Rap' music battleground will soon be witnessing the next generation of rap stars, even as the POCO "MTV Hustle 03 REPRESENT" gears up for a new blockbuster season.

Global trailblazing rap artiste Badshah, with eminent rap powerhouses Squad Bosses

Ikka, Dee MC, Dino James and EPR—are set to usher in these rapsters through the rap reality television show that will air starting on October 21, Saturday and Sunday at 7. Pm on MTV and JioCinema.

This season's clarion call "India Ab Tumhari Bari" with focus on the country's youth highlights celebration of one's ideologies, beliefs, issues, music,

passion, culture, hood, stories and identity, while reinforcing MTV as a +culture catalyst+ that put 'desi hip hop' on the global map.

Visionary multi-genre Music Producer in India Hip-Hop Karan Kanchan, whose biggest tracks include "Baazigar, Satya and Aane De," said the talent on this show was only the "tip of the iceberg" and it will be elevating the musical spectrum, while contestants showcase their talent before celebrity guests.

Music producer Anurag Saikia of Panchayat fame, who will bring in sounds of the country's heartlands relatable to the youth, said that this season of MTV Hustle would highlight a remarkable portrayal of India's diverse musical influences and history.

