

REGION

2

## PUNJAB GUV FOR ACTION AGAINST TWO UPSCALE HOUSING PROJECTS OWNED BY AAP LEGISLATOR



# MAIN PUNJAB BOLDA HA debate on Nov 1 will seek answers from traditional parties for their sins against state : CM Mann

CHANDIGARH: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann said that the people of state will seek answers for their misdeeds from the traditional parties during the 'Main Punjab Boldaa Haan' debate slated to be held on November 1 at Ludhiana. Rolling out red carpet to the people of the state to be part of this momentous occasion, the Chief Minister said that all the political parties who have remained in power hitherto in the state will present their case during the debate. He said that every party will get a time of 30 minutes each to speak during this debate which will focus on the issues pertaining to the state. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that during the 'Main Punjab Boldaa Ha' debate the stage will be conducted by Prof. Nirmal Jaura.



Punjab Chief Minister said that the debate will be centred around who and how Punjab have been looted till now, nepotism (bhai-bhatija, saala-jeje), favouritism, toll plazas, youth,

agriculture, trade-shopkeepers, sacrilege, river waters and others. He said that the leaders of traditional political parties have deceived Punjab on all these issues for which they are answerable to the people of state. Bhagwant Singh Mann dared these leaders to participate in this open and healthy debate before Punjabis and media. Punjab CM unequivocally said that the hands of these leaders are drenched with this crime against the state and history will never forgive them for backstabbing Punjab. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that this will give a clear picture to the residents of the state as to how they were betrayed in the name of making sacrifices whereas the political leaders secured their own interests by committing unpardonable sins. He categorically said that the people of state will never forget and forgive these leaders for the sinister moves against Punjab and Punjabis just for their vested political interests.

CORPORATES & INDUSTRY

5

## HAL AND SAFRAN AIRCRAFT ENGINES SIGN MOU FOR COMMERCIAL ENGINE PARTS MANUFACTURING



## 'G7 Trade Ministers' Meet to Focus on Trade & Investment Related Challenges

OSAKA (JAPAN): Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal will attend the Group of Seven (G7) Trade Ministers' Meeting in Osaka, Japan from 28-29 October, 2023. The Minister will also have bilateral meetings with a few G7 countries, invite countries and a few International organisations such as WTO, ERIA and OECD have also been invited. This year, Japan has selected contemporary topics for the outreach program namely, "How to enhance Supply Chain Resilience" and "Promote Trade and Sustainability-environment, Development and digital, including prospects for WTO MC13". The G7 is an intergovernmental political forum consisting of the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Italy, France, Canada and Germany. Additionally, the European Union (EU) is a "non-enumerated member".



outreach program to be held on 28 October. Apart from them, International organisations such as WTO, ERIA and OECD have also been invited. This year, Japan has selected contemporary topics for the outreach program namely, "How to enhance Supply Chain Resilience" and "Promote Trade and Sustainability-environment, Development and digital, including prospects for WTO MC13". The G7 is an intergovernmental political forum consisting of the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Italy, France, Canada and Germany. Additionally, the European Union (EU) is a "non-enumerated member".

POTPOURRI

8

## RAJINIKANTH IS 'THUMPING WITH JOY' TO COLLABORATE WITH BIG B AFTER 33 YEARS



## Punjab MP urges High Commissioner Canada to Speed up visa issuance

CHANDIGARH: Punjab MP Vikramjit Singh Sahney on Friday spoke to India's High Commissioner to Canada, Sanjay Kumar Verma, over phone and asked him to speed up visa issuance to Canadians, largely Indian diaspora. "There is a backlog due to visa suspension which should get cleared soon and visas should be granted in 7-10 days from submission to BLS Visa Application Centers, "Sahney, who was pursuing the resumption of visa services, wrote in a post on X, formerly Twitter. According to him, for visas to Indo-Canadians 70 per cent is through BLS in nine cities and 30 per cent walk-in to Indian High Commission and consulates. "For emergency cases of death, serious illness, wedding, etc., please apply on Suvidha Portal to the nearest Indian consulate." At the same time, Sahney said, "It's our foremost duty to raise voice against fringe elements



who are trying to spoil the atmosphere. The Indo-Canadians are suffering at their hands. Be Proud of your Indian roots." He has also requested that the MEA should consider granting of E-visas in case of exigencies. India eased diplomatic tensions with Canada on Wednesday by restoring the visa services in the categories of Entry, Business, Medical and Conference, amid a diplomatic row over the killing of Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on June 18 in British Columbia. Canada has welcomed India's decision to resume some visa services, saying the move was a "good sign" after "an anxious time" for many Canadians.

## Nirmala Sitaraman urges students to explore opportunities beyond IT



VIJAYAWADA: Union finance minister Nirmala Sitaraman has asked youth to look for opportunities in different fields as India has ample of opportunities. Calling India a land of opportunities in the world, she announced that 13 prominent foreign startup companies are planning to invest in India. Addressing the students at the convocation of Vignan university, the FM explained that the products of these firms would be manufactured in India and exported abroad. The minister exhorted the students not to confine themselves to employment in software and IT companies, saying that there are abundant opportunities in research in areas such as new materials, rare minerals, material science, drone technology, and natural gas technology. "India offers the most opportunities globally. Young brains should make the most of this situation as India has become a global powerhouse," said Sitaraman. She highlighted the readiness of the Indian population to embrace new technologies, with widespread internet access and the use of QR codes for payments, even by small businesses. AP finance minister Bugana Rajendranath said the students should make themselves flexible to avail the opportunities.

## Union Cabinet clears fertiliser subsidy worth Rs 22,000 crore

NEWDELHI: The Union Cabinet on Wednesday is learnt to have cleared fertiliser subsidy worth Rs 22,000 crore for the Rabi season, which runs from October 2023 till March 2024. The Government has cleared an additional subsidy of Rs 4,500 per tonne on DAP, sources said. The new rates of subsidy are as follows: On Nitrogen it is Rs 47.02 per kg, on Phosphorus it is Rs 20.82 per kg, on Potash it is Rs 2.38 per kg, on Sulphur it is Rs 1.89 per kg.

## India moving in direction to become Leader of 6G technology : PM Modi

NEW DELHI: India is moving in the direction of becoming a leader in the area of 6G technology, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday. Inaugurating the 7th Edition of India Mobile Congress 2023, PM Modi said, "We are not only expanding 5G in the country but also moving in the direction of becoming leaders in the area of 6G technology." He said that be it technology, be it connectivity, be it 6G, be it AI, Cybersecurity, Semicon-



ductors, Drones, Deep sea, the times to come are going to be completely different and it is a matter of happiness for everyone that our young generation is leading the future of the country. "In line with 'Make in India'

campaign, he said Samsung's Fold 5 mobile phone and Apple's iPhone 15 are being manufactured in India. He also mentioned that tech giant Google is going to manufacture Pixel phones in India and said "Recently, Google has announced the manufacturing of its Pixel phone in India. Samsung's Fold 5 mobile phone and Apple's iPhone 15 are being manufactured in India. We are proud that the world is using Made in India mobile phones now." The Prime Minister men-

tioned that India has become one of the top 3 start-up ecosystems in the world and said, "In a short span of time, we have created a century of unicorns and have become one of the top 3 start-up ecosystems in the world." He further pointed out that India has reached 43rd position in mobile broadband speed that is a massive upgrade from previous rank of 118 and added that 4 lakh 5G base stations have been set up within one year of 5G roll-out, reported in media.

## More women in workforce will drive India's Economy to 8 pc : Report

NEW DELHI: The trajectory of India's 8% GDP growth passes through the precondition of increasing the female workforce and by improving labour productivity, as per a recent Barclays report. The report titled, "India's breakout moment", says that India can achieve a GDP growth rate of 8% by ensuring that women account for more than half of the new workforce set to be created by 2030. The report also highlighted on the need to improve labour productivity through upskilling to fully utilise its young generation. Current female labour force participation rate (FLFPR) stands at 37%. However, to ensure incremental growth in the Indian workforce, India needs to increase its FLFPR to 43.4% by 2030. According to the report it means that of the roughly 108 million estimated increase in the labour force, around 55 million (~50%) would have to come from women, which implies only a partial convergence of male-to-female jobs ratio - that is, for every female worker, there would be 1.9 male workers in 2030, versus 2.2 currently. Other than the significance of bringing more women into



the workforce, the report underlined the importance of faster growth of non-agricultural jobs to employ surplus labour. It also mentioned the need to bring more formalisation of employment. Sectors like construction, wholesale, retail trade segments, manufacturing, etc have the potential to generate opportunities for the expanding workforce in the coming years. Sectors like real estate, professional, and financial services, will also provide employment opportunities in the coming years. Apart from employment generation, a focus on education and skills training in emerging technologies and capital-intensive sectors is required to

improve labour productivity and help generate more formal-sector jobs. The report indicated that India's labour market can increase its share of GDP contribution not "just through a shift away from agriculture, but also through raising labour productivity." It also suggested that investment in hard infrastructure/traditional industries would significantly improve labour productivity and will also raise the efficiency of both factors of production, capital, and labour. The report also suggested that sectors such as chemicals, transport equipment, metals, telecom, and business services, can generate more jobs and improve labour's share in income.

## Punjab signs pact with HPCL for 10 compressed biogas plants

CHANDIGARH: Punjab Energy Development Agency (PEDA) on Friday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) for setting up ten compressed biogas (CBG) projects and other new and renewable energy projects in the state. The pact was signed by Chief Executive Officer, PEDA, Amarpal Singh and Executive Director, HPCL, Shuvendu Gupta here in the presence of Ravi Bhagat, Secretary, New and Renewable Energy Sources, Punjab. Gupta said HPCL would initially set up ten CBG projects with an investment of about Rs 600 crore. It will also explore possibilities of establishing other renewable projects.



These ten plants are expected to produce over 35, 000 tonnes of CBG and about 8, 700 tonnes of organic manure annually, besides generating revenue of around Rs 300 crore annually from CBG

production. The projects will also generate direct employment opportunities for more than 600 people and about 1, 500 indirect jobs. Amarpal Singh said with the implementation of these

ten projects, at least 2.75 lakh tonnes of paddy straw will be prevented from being burnt in about 1.10 lakh acres. This will prevent creation of CO2 emissions and other pollutants to the tune of five lakh tonnes annually, which is equivalent to planting 83, 000 trees each year. The projects will also create around 50 rural entrepreneurs for supply of paddy straw to these plants, further creating employment for more than 500 people. Inviting other CBG developers for investment in the state, Punjab New and Renewable Energy Sources Minister, Aman Arora, said the government's business-friendly and transparent policies have created the most conducive environment for industrial growth.

## Int'l Copper Association India reports notable 16% growth in copper demand in 2023

Growth in capital formation in private & public sector, consumer spending and clean energy transition have impacted the demand of the metal



witnessed a 34 per cent increase in copper demand. This can be attributed to the electrification & modernisation of railways, addition of rapid transportation and 21% growth in sales of automobiles including rising adoption of electric vehicles (EVs). In the construction sector, 11% growth in copper demand can be attributed to the increased use of copper per square foot, especially in premium, high and middle-income houses. The Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme has driven capex expansion in industrial sectors, with INR 1.7 lakh Crore of investments being announced, leading to an increase in copper demand. The pent-up demand from FY21 and FY22, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has resulted in remarkable growth in FY23 in the consumer durables sector, such as Room Air Conditioners (RACs) and electronic devices like laptops, PCs, and mobile phones. Rising disposable income has also contributed to this sector's growth.

## GTRI advises Government to not participate in Free Cross-Border Data flows under IPEF

NEW DELHI: India should not agree to take binding commitments on free cross-border data flows under the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said on Thursday. India has so far not joined the IPEF's trade pillar which includes taking onerous commitments on digital trade, it added. Cautioning the central government, the Think Tank has said that India should not agree to take binding commitments on free cross-border data flows under the IPEF, a 14-member grouping, as the move would lock its policy space. The IPEF was launched jointly by the US and other partner countries of the Indo-Pacific region on May 23 in Tokyo. The 14 IPEF partners represent 40 per cent of global GDP and 28 per cent of global goods and services trade. The framework is structured around four pillars relating to trade, supply chains, clean economy, and fair economy (issues like tax and anti-corruption). India



has joined all the pillars except the trade one. "India has not joined the IPEF trade pillar which includes taking onerous commitments on digital trade. India should never agree to binding commitments on free cross-border data flows as it will lock in the future," GTRI said. It added that taking the commitments under the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) Information Technology Agreement (ITA - 1) has impacted domestic manufacturing of electronic hardware. It also said that India should retain flexibility to share data with Indian firms and not big tech companies with a view to promote domestic enterprise.

India should also not agree to no tax on services offered online as the government is going to earn significant revenue with most services shifting online, it said, suggesting not to adopt the US standards on artificial intelligence. GTRI co-founder Ajay Srivastava said that India's stance in free trade agreements, including the IPEF, on digital trade leans towards retaining control over its data. With China and India being major data generators and China already safeguarding its data, India believes in maintaining flexibility in data-sharing with domestic companies rather than international tech giants, he said.

## ED searches 15 places in Rs 1,626 crore money laundering case

NEWDELHI: Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday carried out searches at 15 locations in Delhi, Punjab, Maharashtra and Haryana in connection with the Rs 1, 626 crore money laundering case involving Pranav Gupta and Vineet Gupta's company Parabolic Drugs Pharma Ltd. Guptas were also the co-founders at the Ashoka University and had last year stepped down. An ED source said that the agency teams are carrying out searches in Delhi, Ambala, Panchkula, Chandigarh and Mumbai on the premises linked to Parabolic drugs and its officials. However, senior officials remained tight-lipped on the developments. The ED case is based on the CBI FIR against Chandigarh-based Parabolic Drugs for allegedly defrauding a consortium led by the Central Bank of India (CBI) of Rs 1, 626.74 crore. Among those booked were Pranav and Vineet Gupta, the co-founders of Ashoka University. Pranav Gupta serves as the Managing Director of Parabolic Drugs while Vineet is one of the directors of the firm. Others booked by the CBI include directors Deepali Gupta, Rama Gupta, Jagjit Singh Chahal, Sanjeev Kumar, Vandana Singla, Ishrat Gill, and the firm's guarantors T.N. Goyal and Nirmal Bansal, and J.D. Gupta. Following the CBI case and searches at 12 locations against them, the Ashoka University in a statement last year in January had said, "The University has over 200 founders and donors who have made personal philanthropic contributions to Ashoka. Their individual business dealings and operations have no connection to the University." "In keeping with the high standards for governance at Ashoka, Vineet and Pranav Gupta have already voluntarily stepped down from all Boards and Committees of the University pending the CBI case and are cooperating fully with the investigations, "the statement had said on January 6 last year.





## Punjab Guv for action against two upscale housing projects owned by AAP legislator

**CHANDIGARH:** Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit on Thursday asked the state government to initiate action against two upscale housing projects on the outskirts of the state capital Chandigarh owned by AAP legislator-cum-realtor Kulwant Singh for violating environmental laws.

Seeking an action taken report from the AAP government, Purohit in a letter to Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said projects 'Super Mega Mixed use integrated Industrial Park' in Sectors 82-83 and 66-A in Mohali and Galaxy Heights by Janta Land Promoters Ltd are coming up in violation of environmental regulations.

The Governor said the observation of environment law violations has been made by Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

He shared the communication of the ministry that says, "The project was under violation from December 16, 2015 (date of grant of Environmental Clearance) to January 10, 2017



(Eco-Sensitive Zone boundary notification). Accordingly, cognisance of the offence is required to be taken under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986."

The governor advised that civic authorities and Punjab Pollution Control Board may be asked to take strict action against the wildlife norms violators who are involved in illegal construction.

The Union Ministry of Environment, in response to a clarification sought by the state

regarding the construction by Janta Land Promoters Ltd, has observed that the proposed project site is located at a distance of 13.06 km from the Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary and 8.4 km from the boundary of the Bird Sanctuary in Chandigarh.

With assets of Rs 250 crore, realtor and former mayor Kulwant Singh, who was the AAP candidate from Mohali Urban in 2022, was the richest among all those contesting the Punjab polls from the district.

## MSME Ministry to support Bahadurgarh footwear industry to compete China

SATISH HANDA

Bahadurgarh footwear industry, known as the biggest hub of footwear in North India has suffered heavy loss worth crores of rupees following around 25 per cent decline in the sales of footwear as compared to the previous years as claimed by Raj Kumar Gupta president of the Footwear Park Association. Bahadurgarh who said a tough competition with footwears manufactured in China and a considerable rise in the goods and services tax (GST) are believed to be main reasons behind the fall in sales.

The president of Bahadurgarh Chamber and Commerce and industry Subhash Jagga



said that there are over 2,000 large, medium and small-scale units associated with the footwear industry directly or indirectly operational in Modern Industrial Estate, the HSIIDC Footwear Park and surrounding areas in Bahadurgarh town located on the border of Haryana and Delhi, while over two lakh people are employed in these manufacturing units having total estimated annual turnover of the Bahadurgarh Footwear industry around Rs 20,000 crore and more than 50 per cent comes in the winter season from October to February. Information reveals that in case of the poor lifting of

stocks during the coming winter season there is possibility that nearly 50 manufacturing units in the town may turn completely sick, said Narendra Chhikara, senior vice-president of the Footwear Park Association, Bahadurgarh.

Chhikara maintained that for the winter season, the footwear production usually started in July and continued for the next three months for fulfill the huge demand from October to February. He disclosed that nearly 50% manufacturing units are running at their 50% manufacturing capacity this year due to limited demand. He said

fashion and design play a vital role in the sale of footwear as customers do not like out-of-fashion footwear. A huge stock of shoes has remained unsold in past few months due to Ukraine-Russia war when Bahadurgarh footwear industry failed to get export orders from Russia, USA and other European countries this year as compared to the previous years, thus forced manufacturers to sell these at throwaway prices in order to get whatever they can from these stocks. Rising inflation is also another vital factor, which makes the customers spend on footwear thoughtfully. Chhikara said, the GST was raised from 5 to 12 per cent on the footwear having price less than Rs 1,000 per pair, leading to a considerable rise in the rates as such high prices also took a toll on the sales so the Bahadurgarh footwear manufacturers demand the government to roll back the hike in the GST immediately.

## Wife of last Nawab of Malerkotla passes away at 100



**MALERKOTLA:** Begum Munawwar-ul-Nisa, the wife of the last Nawab of Malerkotla in Punjab, passed away on Friday, her family said. She was 100.

Begum Munawwar-ul-Nisa was the successor of Nawab Sher Mohammad Khan, who is revered as he had raised his voice against the execution of the younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh, Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh in the court of Wazir Khan, the Subedar of Sirhind, in 1705.

The state Cabinet in January 2021 then led by Chief Minister Capt Amarinder Singh had approved the acquisition and conservation of her palace Mubarak Manzil Palace in Malerkotla in Sangrur district.

The state gave Rs 3 crore to Begum Munawwar-ul-Nisa for transferring the heritage property to it. Notably, Begum Munawwar-ul-Nisa had written to Punjab authorities to point out that the palace, of which she is the sole owner, is an invaluable heritage property that was more than 150 years old.

## Ambala police recovers 1 kg opium from drug smuggler



SATISH HANDA

On a clue that a drug smuggler carrying opium in a car bearing UP registration number looking for the customer near Tangri Bridge, a 1 Staff Ambala police led by Inspector Harjinder Singh started checking of vehicles carrying UP registration number at a police barrier at Shahpur near Parao police station Ambala cantt. On seeing a car bearing U.P registration number the police team stopped the vehicle for checking and during search recovered 1 kg opium from the person driving the vehicle who was identified as Maharaj Singh a resident of village Fatehpur Nagla in Wazirganj police station, in Badaun district (U. P) who during preliminary investigation admitted that he had come to Ambala for the supply of opium. A case was registered under NDPS Act at the Parao police station Ambala Cantt which impounded the car bearing registration number P-14CY-7949.

## Lashkar-E-Taiyaba's threat to blast several railway stations before Diwali festival



SATISH HANDA  
Yamunanagar

GRP Haryana has started a special checking campaigns at the railway stations in Haryana after receipt of a threatening letter by registered post by the station master S.K. Joshi of Yamunanagar-Jagadhari railway station as well as by the station master Ambala threatening to blast several railway stations Jagadhari-Yamunanaga, Ambala Cantt, Panipat, Karnal, Sonapat, Chandigarh, Kalka and few other religious places in Haryana state before coming this Diwali festival. GRP SHO Vilayati Saini said that the letter further stated that on this Diwali people in the state will celebrate festival with blood instead of candles. He said that a special checking campaign has been launched and alert declared in the area.

## CM Khattar released booklet on 9 years achievements of BJP govt in Haryana

SATISH HANDA

While addressing media persons, Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar recalling past scenarios said that when the BJP government in Haryana started ruling in 2014, many questioned regarding his capability in running the government were raised by the political parties in opposition in the state. While presenting a report card on the completion of nine years of his government, CM Khattar highlighting several achievements as well as people-oriented and public welfare programmes carried by his government also released a booklet on party's achievements in the state in this period of nine years he compared with the achievements of 27 years in spite of the fact the BJP formed the government in Haryana for the first time on its own in 2014. Since the Bharatiya Janata Party, which fell short of majority in the 2019 Vidhan assembly polls had an alliance with Jannayak Janta Party to form the government a second time.

Addressing the media along with Minister Kanwar Pal and other senior officers of his



government, Khattar said his government had announced to work on five S—Shiksha, Swasth, Suraksha, 'Swambhiman' and 'Swavlamban' with good governance. Khattar said, prior to this there were talks of discrimination, corruption and there was an atmosphere of despair and after being fed up with the atmosphere of despair, the people of Haryana welcomed BJP government with high hopes. Khattar said that questions were raised that he does not have any experience and without any experience, how many days will he be able to run the government when Congress have been ruling for years in the state. Khattar said that after becoming chief minister in 2014, though we were not having the kind of experience the previous

government (Congress) had of indulging in loot and corruption, but I certainly had the experience of serving the people.

Manohar Lal Khattar spoke about several plans and programmes including his government's flagship 'Parivar Pehchan Patra' (family ID scheme), and 'Meri Fasal Mera Byora', compensation to farmers, welfare schemes for the poor and other sections etc as he emphasized on using the technology for good governance for the welfare of the people. Khattar said the state's sex ratio, such as the number of females per 1,000 of males has also been improved from 871 in 2014 to 932 at present, which is likely to improve further. Khattar said, in agriculture sector his government raised the compensation amount for crop loss

because of natural calamity from Rs 6,000 per acre in 2013 to Rs 15,000 per acre. He added in the last nine years, his government disbursed a compensation of Rs 11,000 crore to farmers while the previous government had paid Rs 1,158 crore in 10 years.

As regards health, Khattar said the number of medical colleges in the state rose to 15 under BJP government in the state as against six in 2014 and eight more medical colleges will come up in the state shortly. The number of MBBS seats has risen to 2185 at present in the state as against 700 in 2014, he said that clean drinking water has been provided through pipelines in 31.41 lakh rural households, apart from 24-hour electricity is being supplied to 5,791 villages which is 86 per cent of the total villages. Khattar said the state government had started "Mission Merit" and based on transparency, 1.10 lakh youths have got government jobs and there are plans to provide 60,000 more jobs. He said the government had distributed 5.50 lakh tablets to students in government schools, paving the way for an educational revolution.

## 1637 RC & DL files illegally approved behind closed doors during clerical staff strike in Haryana

SATISH HANDA

SDM Sonapat Amit Khokhar has started investigation as regard illegal approval of 1637 files related to automobile registration and driving license cases behind the closed doors in SDM office Sonapat during clerical staff strike in Haryana state when the concerned MRC Anil Malik also remained absent from the duty due to strike for 48 days due to the strike. Mystery exists over how such a large number of files were approved behind the closed doors when the office was closed due to strike. Preliminary investigation reveals that agents were seen very active in the office during this period and the alleged accused clerk have been charging Rs 600 per case in alliance with the agents. When talked to the SDM, he admitted that 1637 files were found approved in spite of the fact the office was closed due to the strike and during investigation code words were written on the files and stern action will be taken against the concerned clerk and others found involved in irregularities. He said that a detailed report has been forwarded to the Deputy Commissioner to take legal action



against the accused.

According to SDM, during June till September huge number of applications exceeding 5000 cases seeking vehicle registration and driving license were gathered and were quickly disposed of after the strike was over, still leaving a large number of pending cases. Meanwhile, on October 5, 2023 CM Flying Squad team from Panchkula conducted a surprise raid and detected large number of irregularities with the involvement of brokers found active in SDM office during strike period with large number of irregularities and amount Rs 600 each case was illegally collected by MRC physically was not present in the office from the applicants through the brokers when files were approved behind the closed doors. Sources reveal that the post of MRC in the SDM office was being considered very lucrative and frequently this seat was on sale.

## Haryana Home Minister Vij directs Haryana DGP to suspend 372 police officers delaying 3229 investigation cases

SATISH HANDA  
Chandigarh

Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij on Monday directed Shastruji Kapoor DGP Haryana to suspend 372 police officers investigating officers for not disposing of the cases. He warned concerned DSPs departmental action against them in case such cases will not be finalized within a month. Vij said that the reasons quoted by them are not satisfactory and action is being taken in public interest. Information reveals that maximum number of such cases have been reported in Sirsa district, whereas the number of such cases is minimum in Panipat district in the state.

The number of the suspended investigation officers include in 66 cases in Sirsa, 60 cases in Gurugram, 57 cases in Yamunanagar, 32 cases in Faridabad, 31 cases each in Karnal and Rohtak, 30 cases in Ambala, 24 cases in Jind, 24 cases in Hisar, 10 cases in Panchkula, 9 cases in Sonapat, 5 cases in Rewari and 3 cases in Panipat. While talking to media persons Vij said that he has been directing police officers again and again to finalise all pending cases and observed that 3229 cases are lying pending since past over a year and finally he told DSPs to finalise such cases within a month. Vij said that people cannot be left to run from one officer to another seeking justice. It is the police's duty to provide prompt redressal to the complaints lodged with them. Vij said that



he has instructed the DGP to hand over all such cases to Deputy Superintendents of Police who would take action on these cases within a month, failing which they would also be liable for action. He said that the Investigating Officers facing action are in the ranks of Assistant Sub Inspectors to Inspectors. In some cases there were allegations of corruption leading to intentional delays against them, while in some there were allegations of bias due to which the complaints had been pending for more than one year.

In his letter to DGP Vij said, while listening to the public grievances, he directed concerned police officers many times for early disposal of the FIRs registered in the police stations. Last month, explanations were sought from all the Investigating Officers who have not finalised or disposed of the FIRs that were pending for over a year. The number of such cases is very high, identified as 3,229. Vij said, "Such investigation officers who have not finally disposed of the long pending cases and

reasons quoted by them are not satisfactory. They are making people move from one pillar to another for getting action on their complaints. This is a very serious matter and cannot be ignored." Vij said that "I would like that all these Investigating Officers be put under suspension immediately and their cases be transferred to respective Deputy Superintendents of Police (DSPs) for final disposal within a month, otherwise action will be taken against those officers also."

Sources said, in some cases there were allegations of corruption leading to intentional delays against them, while in some there were allegations of bias due to which the complaints had been pending for more than one year. Vij said, "I am pained to know that despite my instruction, still 372 Investigating Officers are such who have not finally disposed of the pending cases and reasons quoted by them are not satisfactory. They are making people move from one pillar to another for getting action on their complaints.

## Panipat blanket exports down 70%, Ukraine - Russia & Israel-Hamas wars, rise in yarn, cotton prices

SATISH HANDA

The Russia-Ukraine war now followed by war between Israel-Hamas has adversely disturbed world renowned blanket manufacturing industry at Panipat due to hike in cotton yarn prices and have severely hit Panipat's export business having drop up to 60 per cent this year due to cancellation and halting of orders put exporters in trouble. Raman Chhabra, Chairman of Society and Rajat Grover Secretary said that the exporters are not getting orders from Russia, USA, France, Germany, Italy and other European countries



this year received nearly 70% less orders and did export business of value hardly 10 to 12 thousand crore.

They said that Panipat generally has around Rs 45,000-crore annual turnover, including over Rs 15,000 crore from exports alone. Around 4000 units man-

ufacturing handloom products functioning here having export of handloom products, blankets, bed sheets, cushions and hundreds of other items exporting to all over the world. Lalit Goyal, president of the Panipat Exporters' Association said, cotton yarn prices had increased to around Rs 330 per kg from Rs 160 per kg earlier. Open-end yarn, which was earlier available at Rs 120 a kg, had gone up to Rs 170-190 a kg now.

The slowdown in exports at Panipat started in the beginning of this year. There were hardly any fresh orders from overseas buyers. The previously placed

orders were also cancelled or held up by them, Goyal asserted. "If the situation doesn't improve in the coming days, textile exporters will lose business worth around Rs 7000-8000 crore this year, that will be a big setback for Panipat-based exporters," Ashok Gupta, vice-president of the association, said skyrocketing freight charges had increased the production cost by 15-18 per cent. "The economic conditions in America and Europe have led to a slump in demand, thus adversely affecting the Panipat textile industry. If the situation doesn't improve, employment crisis will also set in," he said.

## Ambala to have first TB Hospital & Institute in Haryana

SATISH HANDA  
Ambala

Haryana Home & Health Minister Anil Vij laid foundation stone of the building of 100 bed TB hospital which will be known as TB Institute the first in Haryana having nearly 63000 TB patients in the state at present. The Institute having fully equipped TB hospital is being constructed in 1.8 acre area with the cost of Rs 54.38 crore and would provide health services to the TB patients in the state as well as adjoining states. The building will have four floors apart from the basement and the ground floor, where emergency services to the TB patients will be available round the clock apart from those suffering from the heart and other respiratory disorders



Among those present at the occasion were Aseem Goel MLA Ambala City Additional Chief Secretary Health department G. Anupama, Director General Health Services Sonia Trikha, Director General R.S Poonia and CMO Ambala.

Talking to the media persons Anil Vij said that the hospital will provide OPD services and treatment to the patients suffering from the chest diseases, lung cancer, sensation, LG and

immuno-therapy, ART clinic, post TB complications in fully equipped complete PFT lab, ultra modern TB line, probe access lab, TB culture lab, fungo-securing lab, fungal culture lab Varology lab, sleep study lab, X-ray with PACS system, CT scan, ultrasound centre and a fully equipped operation theatre and fully equipped laboratories inside the hospital under the guidance of highly qualified doctors

## Amity University Punjab signs MoU with Punjab Innovation Mission

**CHANDIGARH:** In a significant development aimed at fostering the spirit of entrepreneurship and innovation among the students of Punjab, Amity University Punjab and Punjab Innovation Mission have joined hands by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

"This strategic partnership is set to unleash a new era of collaboration, knowledge sharing, and support for budding entrepreneurs and innovators in the region," said Prof R K Kohli, Vice Chancellor, Amity University Punjab. The signing ceremony, held at Amity University Punjab, was attended by key representatives from both Amity University Punjab and Punjab Innovation Mission. The MoU signifies a commitment to work together in various domains, sharing best practices, knowledge, and resources with each other, to nurture and empower the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Punjab.

The key objectives and areas of cooperation covered by this MoU include Support for Student Start-Ups; Research and Innovation; Skill Development; Incubation and Acceleration and Industry Connect among others.

Dr Dalip Kumar, Registrar of Amity University Punjab, said that this partnership exemplifies Amity University Punjab's commitment to fostering a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation among its students. The university believes that by joining forces with Punjab Innovation Mission, it can provide students with the best possible resources and support to help them realize their entrepreneurial dreams.



# PM Modi inaugurates 37th National Games in Goa

**MARGAO (GOA)** : Prime Minister, Narendra Modi inaugurated the 37th National Games at Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Margao, Goa today. The Games will be held from 26th October to 9th November and will witness the participation of more than 10,000 athletes from across the country who will compete in over 43 sports disciplines across 28 venues.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister remarked that the journey of Mahakumbh of Indian Sports has arrived in Goa and the environment is filled with colors, waves, enthusiasm and adventure. "There's nothing like the aura of Goa", Shri Modi emphasized. He congratulated the people of Goa and conveyed his best wishes on the 37th National Games. The Prime Minister underlined the contribution of Goa to the country's sports and mentioned Goa's love for football. The fact that the National Games are taking place in sports-loving Goa is energizing in itself, he added.

Prime Minister Modi underlined that the National Games are taking place at a time when the nation is achieving new heights in the world of sports. He mentioned the successes



in the Asian Games breaking a 70-year-old record and also spoke about the ongoing Asian Para Games where all previous records have been smashed with a medal tally of more than 70. He also mentioned the recently concluded World University Games, where India created history. "India's recent success in the world of sports is a huge inspiration for every young sportsman", Shri Modi said. Referring to the National Games as a robust launchpad for every young athlete, the Prime Minister highlighted the various opportunities present before and urged them to give their best.

PM Modi stressed that there is no dearth of talent in India and the country has produced champions despite deprivation, yet poor performance in the medal tally always ranked the

countrymen. In this light, the Prime Minister narrated the changes brought after 2014 in the sports infrastructure, selection process, financial assistance schemes for sports persons, training schemes and the mentality of the society, thus removing roadblocks in the sports ecosystem one by one. The government prepared a roadmap from talent discovery to handholding to the Olympics podium.

Prime Minister Modi informed that this year's sports budget is three times more than the sports budget nine years ago. He said that the new ecosystem of initiatives like Khelo India and TOPS is finding talented athletes from schools, colleges and universities. He said that in TOPS the top athletes get the best training in the world

and 3000 athletes are under training in Khelo India. Players are getting scholarships worth 6 lakh per year. About 125 players discovered under Khelo India participated in the Asian Games and won 36 medals. "Discover talent through Khelo India, nurture them and give them training and temperament for an Olympics podium finish by TOPS is our roadmap", he added.

"Progress of the sports sector of any country is directly related to the progress of its economy", the Prime Minister said. He pointed out that a negative atmosphere in the country is reflected through the sports field as well as daily life, while the recent success of India in sports resembles its overall success story. Modi underlined that India is breaking new records and moving forward in every sector. "It is hard to match India's speed and scale", he emphasized. Throwing light on India's achievements in the past 30 days, the Prime Minister said that if the nation continues to move forward with the same scale and speed, it is Modi who can guarantee a bright future for the young generations. Giving examples, the Prime Minister mentioned the passage of Nari Shakti Vandan

Adhiniyam, the successful test of Gaganyaan, the inauguration of India's first Rapid Rail 'Namoo Bharat', the expansion of Bengaluru Metro, Jammu and Kashmir's first Vista Dome train service, the inauguration of Delhi-Vadodara Expressway, the successful organization of G20 Summit, Global Maritime Summit where agreements worth 6 lakh crores took place, Operation Ajay which evacuated Indians from Israel, the beginning of ferry services between India and Sri Lanka, India's inclusion in the top 3 countries in 5G user base, Google's recent announcement to make smartphones after Apple, and a new record in fruit and vegetable produce in the country. "This is just half the list", he underlined.

Prime Minister said that the youth of the nation is at the base of all the work that is going on in the country. He talked about the new platform 'MY Bharat' which will be a one-stop center for connecting the youth among themselves and with the schemes of the country so that they get the maximum opportunity to realize their potential and contribute to nation-building. This will be a medium to turn India's Yuva Shakti to be Yuva Shakti of Viksit Bharat", he said.

# Rahul discusses revocation of Article 370, Pulwama terror attack with ex-J&K Guv Satya Pal Malik

**NEW DELHI:** Congress MP Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday shared the interview of former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik in which they discussed Pulwama terror attack, the statehood of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir among others.

Malik in his conversation with Rahul Gandhi, on October 14, said that the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir should be returned as the people are unhappy. He also said that the government's lapses led to the February 14, 2019 Pulwama terror attack, in which 40 CRPF troopers were killed. Rahul Gandhi while sharing the post on X, said, "Will this conversation create a stir amid ED-CBI?"

In his conversation with Malik, Rahul Gandhi asked him that during his tenure it was the most complicated time. He said while referring to the revocation of Article 370 and the state being



bifurcated as union territory. To this, Malik said, "In my opinion, you cannot keep Jammu and Kashmir by force and through armed forces. You can do anything by winning the trust of the people."

To this Rahul Gandhi again asked him how Jammu and Kashmir will return to normalcy, to which Malik said that the government must restore the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Revocation of Article 370 and removal of the statehood of the state was most painful for the

people. I felt that the government was thinking that the state police will revolt. They never shared it with me. But the fact was that the Jammu and Kashmir Police remained with the government and the police personnel did not even take leave on the occasion of Eid," the former governor said, who is at loggerheads with the BJP. He also said that the statehood must be returned to Jammu and Kashmir and it is also a promise by Amit Shah to the people in Parliament and hold the election immediately.

# Will BJP win in Chhattisgarh on the basis of OBC and young voters?

**MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA**  
Chhattisgarh

Despite Chhattisgarh being a tribal dominated state, the politics here has started revolving around OBCs. The ruling party Congress and CM Bhupesh-Baghel are trying to turn OBC voters to their side at any cost. On the other hand, BJP has also boarded on the boat of Fresh young voters other than OBC vote bank in the state.

There is a close contest between Congress and BJP to capture power in Chhattisgarh. In tribal dominated Chhattisgarh, the emphasis of Congress and BJP is on OBC votes and both the parties are playing this gamble. Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel is using 27 percent reservation for OBCs as an election weapon.

The State In-charge Brijmohan Agarwal claimed, "BJP will win because there is many points which will favour us as anti-incumbency wave". He explained point wise that Corruption in coal mining - The state government has been accused of embezzlement worth more than Rs 10,000 crore in the District Mineral Trust. Promotion of liquor - The state government has been facing allegations of uncontrolled promotion of liquor sale since the first year of its tenure. Cow Dung Procurement Scheme - There is news of widespread irregularities in the



cow dung procurement scheme. Here soil is being purchased in the name of cow dung and farmers are facing the allegation of giving soil in the name of vermi compost. In this scheme also the government is accused of a scam of crores of rupees in the name of grant.

He said, that Corruption in Public Service Commission - Bribery is being encouraged in the competitive examinations conducted by the Public Service Commission. Fraud through illegal online gaming/betting - Cases of money laundering related to illegal online gaming/betting apps have been reported. This illegal business is like chit fund companies are flourishing. Promotion of religious conversion - Conversion is being promoted by the Congress government. There have been many cases of Christianization in the Adivasi community, Satnami community and OBC community of the state.

Crime - There has been a rapid increase in criminal incidents in the state. Incidents like murder, robbery, rape have become daily matter.

Mr. Agarwal further accused the government that Communal violence - Hindus are being harassed in a planned manner in the state. Following incidents of communal violence in Kabirdham district in October 2021 and Bemetara district in April this year, the BJP has accused the government of being biased towards a particular community. Promotion of Naxalism - This government has been accused of promoting Naxalism also. State Home Department figures shows that during the Congress Party's rule, 1302 incidents of Maoist violence have taken place in the state in the four and a half years from January 1, 2019 to June 15, 2023. In these violent incidents, 139 security forces personnel have been killed in Maoist attacks.

# Security review meeting discusses Middle East crisis impact on Jammu and Kashmir



**FW DESK**

A high-level security review meeting was convened in Srinagar in the backdrop of the ongoing Middle East crisis to discuss the potential impact on Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting took place at the headquarters of the 15 Corps in Srinagar and was chaired by R R Bhatnagar, Advisor to J&K, and Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi, Army Commander, Northern Command, along with other top intelligence officers.

The meeting's primary objective was to coordinate and strategize security measures in response to the Israel-Palestine conflict. Various senior officials from the military, administration, and security agencies, including DGP J&K police Dilbag Singh and the Chinara Corps Commander, were in attendance. During the discussions, numerous aspects related to the prevailing security situation in the Union Territory were addressed. The ongoing situation in the Middle East was deliberated upon, and contingency scenarios were discussed to ensure preparedness for any potential developments. While there have not been widespread protests in the region concerning the situation in Gaza, peaceful protests were observed in certain parts of the valley. The congregational prayers were prohibited at the historic Jamia Masjid in Srinagar on two consecutive Fridays, reportedly due to concerns about pro-Palestine protests that could disrupt the peace in J&K.

# "Supporting Palestine is in our national interest": Syed Sadatullah Husaini

**KAVITA SHARMA**  
New Delhi

The President of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, Syed Sadatullah Husaini has termed the support of Palestine as in the best national interest of India. Expressing this views on the ongoing Israeli bombardment of Gaza at the Weekly Program held at the headquarters of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, New Delhi on 21 October 2023, the JIH President said, "I feel that the most important work that we need to do regarding the Palestinian issue is to create awareness about the issue in the general public. The governments can stop protests and processions. They are trying to stop all such events. We also tried a lot. They have made the conditions in Delhi such that they do not want any public procession or activity in this regard. They can stop these activities but you can convey the real information (about the Palestinian problem) through the media, social media, and by connecting with people. As the media is trying to spread falsehood and misinformation on a large scale and trying to create a special impression about the Palestinian problem in the whole country, then in such a situation, we all have a responsibility to ensure that we bring the real facts in front of the people of this country."

Describing the conflict as a violation of our cherished values, the JIH President said, "People should be told that Palestine is currently the most oppressed nation in the world and Israel is



currently the cruelest and most barbaric country in our modern history. There is no parallel to the atrocities that it is inflicting on the Palestinians. Israel is a collection of all the evils that the civilized world hates. The basic principles and values on which the modern world has been raised and established, all of them are being violated in Palestine today, whether it is democracy, freedom, human rights, or racial equality. All these values are being trampled in Palestine at the hands of Israel. So the problem of Palestine is not only the problem of one country, it is not the problem of the nation, it is the problem of the whole of humanity. If our values are allowed to be trampled in this way, then what we have achieved in the last two hundred years, we will bury and destroy along with Gaza."

Describing the plight of the Palestinians, Mr Husaini said, "We need to tell the people that 6 million people, the number of people living within Palestine, almost the same number have been leading a life of misery as refugees in different parts of the world

for the last 75 years. No war has ever produced refugees in such large numbers. And of the six-seven million Palestinians inside Palestine, they also live in small ghettos, as if they are open-air prisons. And even in these prisons, they are not safe. Every year the homes of Palestinians are bombed every year. Children die every year. Schools and hospitals are bombarded every year. Every year thousands of women and children are locked up and tortured. It has been going on continuously for years and it should be in front of the eyes of the civilized world. Being silent and a mute spectator to this sounds the death knell of our entire civilization."

Talking about India's national interest, the Jamaat Chief said, "We should also tell the people of our country that supporting Palestine is in our national interest. The issue is not merely that of human rights but also that of our national interest. The values on which we established our nation, and the values on which we fought our war of independence are the same values and demand that the Palestinian cause be supported. If we don't support the Palestinian cause, if we don't support the oppressed of Palestine then we are rebelling against our country. We rebel against our values. We rebel against our history. We are rebelling against the praiseworthy legacy of our nation. The people of the country should be strongly informed about all this in a very convincing manner."

# Congress again questions 'Agnipath' scheme viability says it will compromise national security



**KAVITA SHARMA**  
New Delhi

Congress party once again raised the questions over the viability of the 'Agnipath' scheme of recruitment, apprehending it will cause discrimination and may weaken the country's defence forces which may have an impact on the national security.

The party alleged that the Modi government was compromising the security of the country by trying to weaken the defence forces by causing differences and discrimination among the soldiers by creating a class within class i.e., regular soldiers and Agniveers.

# Militancy in Kashmir nearly 'finished' now, says J&K DGP

**FW DESK**

Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP), Dilbag Singh, has given a positive assessment of the current state of militancy in Jammu and Kashmir, highlighting a considerable reduction in local youth joining militant ranks.

Singh, during his visit to the Mata Badrakali Temple in Handwara in north Kashmir said: "This year only 10 (local) youths have joined militancy. Last year, 110 had become militants. How good it would have been if none had joined the ranks because even among

the 10, six have been killed, and the remaining four will also get killed." He appealed to those involved in militancy, saying, "They should leave the path of violence and come back," emphasizing the importance of peace and reconciliation.

Singh expressed empathy for the families of militants, acknowledging that their deaths bring no happiness to the security forces. "I also want to say that it is not as if we feel happy about the death of militants. They also belong to a family. We want that if anyone has left the path of peace should come back and drop his weapons to lead a normal life," he said. The DGP highlighted the overall transformation in the region over the past five years, noting that "The militancy, which had struck like a calamity on the entire Jammu and Kashmir, has been almost finished, and whatever remnants are left will be eliminated soon."

# Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul greet people on Vijaydashami



**NEW DELHI:** Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and party leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday greeted the nation on the occasion of Dussehra. In a post on X, Kharge said, "Warm greetings on the auspicious occasion of Dussehra, which is being celebrated in different parts of the country. It is a symbol of India's unity in diversity and shared togetherness." He said that the festivities remind us of the eternal message of victory of good over evil and mark the hope of a bright future. "Let there be fraternity, amity and harmony among everyone," Kharge added.

Rahul Gandhi in a post said, "Best wishes to everyone on Vijaydashami, the great festival of victory of good over evil. Falsehood and ego should be destroyed, truth and humanity should reside in everyone's life. Happy Dussehra." Vijaydashami, the day marks the victory of good over evil as on this day Lord Rama defeated demon King Ravana and Maa Durga won over Mahishasura. It falls on the tenth day of the month of Ashwin, seventh in the Hindu Luni-Solar Calendar. After the nine days of Navratri, devotees of Maa Durga celebrate Dussehra with much pomp on the tenth day.

# EC notice to Himanta Sarma, Priyanka Gandhi over poll code violations, seeks replies by Oct 30

**NEW DELHI:** The Election Commission on Thursday issued notice to Assam Chief Minister and BJP leader Himanta Biswa Sarma and Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra over alleged poll code violations. It has asked both the leaders to reply to the notices by Monday, October 30 evening.

The poll panel, in its notice, warned both leaders that "in the event of no response from your side within the stipulated time, it will be presumed that you have nothing to say in the matter and the Election Commission will take appropriate action or decision in the matter without making any further reference to you".

Referring to the complaint against Sarma by the Congress, the poll panel said: "Whereas, the Commission has received a complaint dated 19 October, 2023 from Congress that you have, in



a public meeting at 'Kawardha' in Chhattisgarh on 18 October, 2023 made a statement, wherein you have allegedly made communally charged statements and made unverified allegations and distortions against Mohammed Akbar of Congress.

"Whereas, the video of the said speech received along with the complaint was examined and found that you said, "Today, the tribals of Chhattisgarh, who are dear to us, are being encouraged to convert their religion on a daily basis. And when someone raises their voice against it, Bhupesh Baghel ji says 'we are secular'. Is beating up Hindus

your secularism? This country is a country of the Hindus and will belong to Hindus. Do not teach us secularism, we do not need to learn secularism from you."

"In light of the provisions of Model Code of Conduct and the above part of your speech has been found to be prima facie violative of the aforesaid provision of MCC and R P Act, 1951," the EC said.

In regard to complaint against Priyanka Gandhi, the poll panel said: "Whereas, the Commission has received a complaint dated 21 October, 2023 from Leader of Opposition, Rajasthan Legislature Assembly and by the BJP vide their representation dated October 25 wherein it has been alleged that in a public meeting of the Congress held at Dausa, Rajasthan on October 20, you in a public speech have made false statements in respect of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

# Paandian crucial to the implementation of CM's most important schemes

**ARABINDA MOHAPATRA**  
Bhubaneswar

Within 24 hours of taking voluntary retirement from service, 2000 batch IAS officer and chief minister Naveen Patnaik's Man Friday VK Pandian was appointed chairman, 5T and Nabin Odisha, both important governance initiatives of Patnaik government.

His appointment with a cabinet rank was significant because he had been directly supervising the implementation of these schemes when he was Patnaik's private secretary. He was also the first 5T secretary of the state. The chief minister knows that no one can handle the implementation of these schemes better than Pandian, a livewire with Midas touch.

In fact, both 5T and Nabin Odisha are the brainchild of Pandian who, though born in Tamil Nadu, has adopted Odisha for all practical purposes. One of the key elements



of 5T (Team work, technology, transparency, transformation and time limit), a governance initiative, is Mo Sarkar which is an attempt to bring the administration closer to people and making it more transparent.

Mo Sarkar, which was launched by the chief minister on October 2, 2019, has been a tremendous success. Under this initiative, people visiting different government offices are asked about the behaviour of officials and whether steps are being taken to resolve their problems. The chief minister

assisted by Pandian sought feedback from the people and later district collectors were asked to seek feedback.

Sources said that 263 services of 31 departments have been included in Mo Sarkar and so far 3.77 crore feedbacks have been received under the initiative. There has been a marked improvement in the functioning of various departments ever since the launch of the programme. Now Pandian will directly supervise the scheme as chairman, 5T a unique initiative which acts as

a bridge between people and the government and makes government officials more accountable.

Similarly, 'Ama Odisha, Nabin Odisha' (our Odisha, new Odisha) scheme, which Pandian will now be directly monitoring, aims to provide every panchayat of the state financial assistance of Rs 50 lakh to take up projects for protecting places of worship, upgrading sites of historical significance, and improving rural infrastructure and digital access.

This initiative builds upon the 'Ama Gaon, Ama Bikash' (our village, our development) scheme, which had turned out to be a game changer for Naveen Patnaik-led Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in 2019. Under the Ama Gaon, Ama Bikash initiative, Patnaik directly interacted with people in panchayats through video-conferencing and sanctioned projects as per their need.



## Investment revival is the only key to sustainable recovery

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) recent decision to maintain its 6.5% GDP growth projection for the year, despite the myriad of challenges, is commendable. However, the landscape of global uncertainties is ever-changing, and India is not immune to its effects. The Israel-Hamas conflict, which erupted shortly after the RBI's monetary policy review, has only added to the complexities. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's concerns about the potential impact on global food, fuel, and fertilizer supplies are valid. With India's heavy reliance on fuel and fertilizer imports, any disruption or price surge could destabilize our macro-economic framework. The political implications of such a scenario, especially during an election season, are also significant. Furthermore, the RBI chief's mention of rising U.S. bond yields, which recently hit a 16-year high, and mixed signals from central banks globally, underscores the unpredictable nature of the current economic environment. The recent sharp sell-off on Indian bourses is a testament to the prevailing anxiety. While the RBI's 'evenly balanced' outlook on growth risks might be subject to change, the Finance Ministry remains optimistic. Their recent economic review paints a picture of a resilient economy, with growth "on track", easing inflation, and strengthening demand in both consumption and investment. They also downplayed concerns about rising crude oil prices, pointing to the relatively lower averages in the recent quarters. However, while the macro fundamentals might appear strong, there are underlying concerns that need addressing. The decline in small car sales, reports of weak rural demand, and IT firms' reduced growth and hiring projections all point to an uneven recovery. While India might weather the current global storm, it is crucial for the government to delve deeper into consumption and hiring trends. Addressing the disparities in recovery is not just essential for short-term stability but is also vital for ensuring a broader, long-term investment revival.

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**"Build your own dreams, or someone else will hire you to build theirs."**

FARHAN GREY

## THE FINANCIAL WORLD

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DR. SANJAY RAJAGOPALAN EXPLAINS HOW UNHEALTHY DIET, INACTIVITY, AND POLLUTION HEIGHTEN MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY RISKS

## Time to fight for urban India's health

India's urban population is estimated to reach 675 million in 2035, the second highest in the world. Although there is widespread recognition that cities have been fuelling India's rapid rise to economic superpower status, almost all are failing their inhabitants in terms of delivering on health, environmental and equity targets.

India's urban inhabitants experience multi-scalar health risks including the world's highest levels of air and noise pollution, limited greenery, lack of access to sidewalks and parks that limit active lifestyles, archaic modes of transport that contribute to air pollution, pernicious access to nutritionally dense unhealthy foods and unprecedented exposure to toxic chemicals and heavy metals. This concatenation of exposures dramatically magnifies health risks for heart disease and diabetes, referred to as cardiometabolic disease, especially when combined with a lack of physical activity. Of all behaviours well known to mitigate the development of cardiometabolic disease, physical activity is by far the most effective deterrent. Not surprisingly, the cities of India are amidst an epidemic of historic proportions in these disorders.

Addressing the diverse and multi-scaled social, environmental, and infrastructure risk factors that contribute to cardiometabolic risk in cities, by transforming the design of the built local environment as well as provisioning systems, represents a new paradigm for public health. Globally, there are seven key physical provisioning systems that provide food, energy, mobility-transportation, housing, green infrastructure, water and waste management that lie at the core of human health, well-being, equity and sustainability. Dysfunctional provisioning systems consume more than 90% of the world's water and global CO2 emissions and facilitate an estimated 19 million premature deaths annually. The socio-spatial-political



design of urban provisioning systems in India, many of which are legacies of a colonial past, manifests in and exacerbates social inequalities in cities, by class, race, age, migrant and disability status, translating to vast disparities in health risks and outcomes. Based on the primal importance of India's cities for its future, a new narrative for improving health and well-being in cities is needed. This is reflected in several high-level policy frameworks, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) framework, the New Urban Agenda, and the Health in All Policies approach.

### Double or triple-duty actions

Investments such as clean energy and electric mobility which are underway in India offer a once in a lifetime opportunity to improve health through their immediate and dramatic impact of air pollution levels, while also helping meet India's climate and equity goals. While these developments are extraordinarily important, the magnitude of their impact on health outcomes is at risk of being limited, if not simultaneously accompanied by changes in other provisioning systems such as food, mobility and green

infrastructure.

Indeed, studies show that even small changes in the latter systems may have a large catalytic effect on health and productivity and serve as double-duty or triple duty interventions. For example, making way for safe walking and biking lanes, pavements and no-car zones, can help not only improve physical activity and reduce sedentary lifestyles but also reduce the risk from air pollution. Regular physical exercise has been effectively mitigate

the impact of other risk factors such as poor diets, particularly those rich in calories and saturated fats. The dietary ingestion of excess calories without adequate physical expenditure fuels a vicious cycle of insulin spikes, excess fat deposition that together with inflammation sets the stage for heart disease. In this regard, it is well known that exercise may not only help expend excess calories, promoting weight loss and reducing diabetes risk but also act as an effective bulwark against heart disease.

Walking and biking on many Indian roads is not only hazardous but also nearly impossible, as sidewalks are overwhelmed by building and human waste, parked vehicles or street hawkers. Health impact studies indicate that the health and economic benefits of increasing mobility and active transportation vastly exceed that which may be divined by transitioning to electrifying transportation alone.

Studies that have modelled the economic and health impact of the clean energy transition in the transportation sector are currently based almost entirely on the reduction in air pollution and its associated health impact. Ensuring that the transition to electric cars

also paves the way for active transport options such as walking paths and bicycling lanes may not only provide a mechanism to connect the "last mile" but the health and consequent economic benefits of active transportation accrue on top of the benefits of reducing air pollution, making such investments even more economically viable.

Thus, increasing active transportation by any means must be a critical component of a clean energy policy. Similarly, policies that encourage fresh fruits and vegetables and limit sugars and salt in beverages, which may have the largest impact on health outcomes such as obesity, Type 2 diabetes (T2D) and cardiovascular disease, may help contribute to not only better health outcomes but also economic productivity. Urban policies are powerful public health interventions that can serve to promote population health. Health is, unfortunately, an afterthought in most national urban planning policies and mostly non-existent in national urban policy documents from lower and middle-income countries.

Unhealthy diets, reduced physical activity and air pollution in cities in India pose a greater risk to morbidity and mortality than most other risk factors combined including drugs, tobacco, alcohol and accidents. These need to be dealt with on a war footing if India is going to make progress in its fight against cardiovascular disease, obesity and T2D. This will necessarily entail a street fight.

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BADRI NARAYAN WONDERS WHY DALIT PARTIES STRUGGLE TO ADDRESS EVOLVING ASPIRATIONS AND IDENTITY QUESTS.

## A closer look at the present and future of Dalit politics

Dalit politics in India evolved with the rise of various independent Dalit political parties such as the Republican Party of India (RPI), the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), other political parties such as the Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi (VCK), the Puthiya Tamilagam (PT) in Tamil Nadu, and the Praja Rajyam Party (PRP) in the Andhra Pradesh and adjoining States. Most of these political parties are being gradually weakened with each passing day, which reflects in their political actions. The question being asked frequently is whether there is any future for independent Dalit politics in India. Some people say a deepening of democracy in India may compel every political party to give proper space to Dalits in their politics. In such a situation, the future of the independent Dalit movement seems bleak and dim.

The RPI, which was formed to fulfil the incomplete dreams and desires of Baba Saheb Ambedkar, celebrated its 66th foundation day on October 3; the most influential Dalit political party in North India, the BSP has also completed nearly 40 years. A critical engagement with the present and future of Dalit politics in India is needed.

It is true that these parties have played an important role in enabling Dalit empowerment in India. They also cultivated an assertive consciousness among Dalits which led to the rise of a number of leaders and cadres in the Dalit communities. But there has been a decline in their organisational capacities and electoral performance. There has been fragmentation and even a desertion by leaders. Many of these Dalit leaders are either



moving to dominant regional and national political parties and engaging with them for tickets in elections, posts and political positions, or are forming their own groups. Most of these parties, such as the RPI and the BSP, have lost a large percentage of base voters to the dominant regional and national parties such as the Bharatiya Janata Party, and in some States to the Congress.

### Change by affirmative actions

These developments are not autonomous but are closely linked with processual change among Dalit communities due to the influence of democracy, state-led affirmative actions and rising developmental desires. As a result, the socio-political profile of Dalit communities has changed rapidly over time. The percolation of education at the grassroots and the dissemination of the benefits of the affirmative actions have led to a class of Dalits who now aspire for a proper space in politics.

However, while independent Dalit political parties have contributed a lot in leading to the rise of such a section among marginalised communities, they have failed in providing sufficient political space to such a politically aspirant section in Dalit communities, which is why there is a quest for political space in other political parties. Individual ambitions and a growing impatience to gain political power are leading to a drift away from Dalit lead political parties.

The Dalit common masses face struggles and so social welfare schemes launched by the major political parties are a key factor. These welfare schemes work in two ways. On the one hand, these schemes are forging their political relationship with the party in power or a party that might come in power.

Such support provides the basic condition to foster aspiration in even the most marginal Dalit communities. Aspiration is emerging due to state-led democratic interventions and media/social media exposure. These have resulted in the creation of a 'new Dalit mentality'. If independent Dalit political parties have to retain them, there needs to be a new direction to political mobilisation and transformative political programmes and actions.

Most of the independent Dalit political parties still work in a conventional mode of politics involving clichéd identity, dignity and representation. There is a failure to develop an effective political programme around large goals as there are only mere slogans. There is a failure to understand that a sense

of identity is now moving to aspiration — of becoming socio-economically mobile.

### Need for democratic functioning

Most of these independent Dalit political parties, including the BSP, are unable to respond to the changing aspirations and identity quest by a section of Dalit communities. There is a need that they recognise the need to weave a politics of identity with the economics of identity in their programmes and politics. Structurally, these parties need to ensure that there is democratic functioning within the party, so that grassroots leaders get proper political space, also restraining any dynastic tendencies that could be developing within these parties. Unfortunately, the BSP and some RPI groups have failed to stop the growth of a dynastic political culture.

A return to the 'chamcha age', where BSP leader Kanshi Ram "warned Dalits against becoming 'chamchas' of the brahminical establishment" is unlikely now. Many of those at the forefront of the Dalits are politically competent, assertive and better in negotiating with dominant and mainstream parties than the decade of the 1960s when Kanshi Ram realised that trend. So, there will be a negotiation for proper political space and participation based on their rising political values. Dalit masses, cadres and leaders may move and disperse now among various political parties and possibly create a multi-polar Dalit politics in India.

*Badri Narayan is a social scientist and Director of the G.B. Pant Social Science Institute, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh. Views are personal.*

### BOOKS: REVIEW

## India's new dawn: Emotions, politics, and the media

In the intricate tapestry of India's political and social landscape, Ajay Gudavarthy's book offers a deep dive into the nation's recent metamorphosis. "New India" is not just a term; it's a phenomenon that has gripped the nation, promising a brighter future while often harking back to a glorified past. Gudavarthy's narrative is both a critique and an exploration, shedding light on the contradictions and challenges of this "New India."

The book begins by setting the stage with the 2014 elections, where the promise of a "New India" under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi captured the nation's imagination. Gudavarthy meticulously dissects the events, policies, and sentiments that followed, painting a picture of a nation caught between constitutional morality and populist reality.

One of the book's strengths is its attention to detail. Gudavarthy's examination of the Kashmir is-

ue, for instance, is both poignant and insightful. He delves into the emotions—anger, hatred, and betrayal—that the region evokes, both within its borders and in the larger Indian context. The abrogation of Kashmir's special status is not just a political move; it's a statement, and the author captures the nuances of its implications brilliantly.

The narrative also touches upon the role of marginalized communities, particularly the Dalits and Backward Classes. While these groups have historically been at the forefront of social change, Gudavarthy observes a shift in their political stance. Their acceptance of representation without substantial socio-economic change is a testament to the majoritarian politics of the Right.

Gudavarthy's critique of the Modi government's economic policies is sharp and well-reasoned. He argues that the majoritarian psyche, while boosting nationalistic pride, simultaneously disempow-

### The narrative also touches upon the role of marginalized communities, particularly the Dalits and Backward Classes

ers the majority. This paradox is at the heart of the "New India" conundrum.

The book's exploration of emotion versus rationality is particularly compelling. Drawing parallels with the European Enlightenment, Gudavarthy suggests that while individuals may possess the gift of rationality, collective emotions can often overshadow logical thought. This tension between individual and collective consciousness is a recurring theme, making the reader question the very nature of democracy and governance.

However, the book is not without



**Politics, Ethics and Emotions in 'New India'**  
By Ajay Gudavarthy  
Routledge  
220 pages;  
Rs4,159

its challenges. Gudavarthy's extensive use of anecdotes, while adding depth, can sometimes detract from the central narrative. Additionally, readers unfamiliar with India's political landscape might find the plethora of names, events, and policies a tad overwhelming.

Gudavarthy's exploration doesn't stop at just the political and social implications of the "New India" phenomenon. He delves deep into the psyche of the Indian populace, trying to understand the emotional undercurrents that drive their choices. The book offers a fascinating look into the collective consciousness of a nation that is as diverse as it is unified. The author's ability to weave together the threads of history, culture, and politics into a coherent narrative is commendable. He doesn't shy away

from asking the tough questions, pushing the reader to confront the realities of a nation grappling with its identity in the face of rapid change.

Another standout aspect of the book is its exploration of the media's role in shaping perceptions. Gudavarthy critically examines the symbiotic relationship between political power and media influence. He underscores how narratives are built, sustained, and sometimes manipulated to serve specific agendas. In an era of information overload, the author's insights into the media's role in constructing the "New India" narrative are both timely and crucial. It serves as a reminder of the power of storytelling and its impact on shaping a nation's trajectory.

Lastly, the book touches upon the global implications of India's internal dynamics. In a world that's increasingly interconnected, the ripple effects of India's political and social choices have ramifications beyond its borders. Gudavarthy deftly navigates the international dimensions of India's decisions, offering a broader perspective on the country's place in the global order.



## Private Sector Can Play the Critical Role in Precision Farming In India: NITI Aayog's Member Ramesh Chand

**NEW DELHI:** "When we talk about our picture, we can proudly say that India's diversity is its strength. Farmers form a significant part of this diversity", stated Prof. Ramesh Chand Member, NITI Aayog at the National Conference on 'Enhancing Agricultural Productivity: Integration of Improved Inputs, Technology & Mechanization.' The conference was organised by the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ASSOCHAM). He emphasised the need for new ways to boost agricultural output, recognising the wide range of agricultural practices across the country, from traditional methods in states like Karnataka to sophisticated high-tech agriculture.

In his keynote speech, Prof. Chand highlighted the excellent growth seen in India's agricultural industry, notably in livestock and fisheries, with



an annual increase of roughly 2.75%. He recognized the issues faced by the climate change and its impact on productivity, irrigation, and biological processes. Prof. Chand elaborated on the complex interaction between agriculture and climate change, emphasising the significance of cautious management and adaptation techniques. "The real challenge lies in increasing productivity," he said. "To do

so, we must address concerns of cost, technological progress, and resource efficiency."

Prof. Chand emphasized the critical role that the private sector can play in precision farming through the application of appropriate technology and tools. He emphasised the importance of partnership between the private and governmental sectors for long-term agricultural growth, saying, "The private sector can provide advisory services, agrochemicals, and suitable technology to support agricultural development."

He also highlighted small-scale farmers' dominance in India's agricultural environment, as well as the necessity to tackle data privacy, market structure, and scalability difficulties.

While delivering the welcome address Sagar Kaushik,

Chairman ASSOCHAM National Council on Chemicals & Petrochemicals, President - Global Corporate & Industry Affairs, UPL elucidated on the importance of connecting farmers with customers in a sustainable way, bringing access to technology for farmers, mitigating climate change as a new hurdle for research.

Speaking at the conference Ruchira Government and Industry Affairs lead Corteva Agriscience focused on the country plans for next 25 years of Amrit Kaal - a long term vision and prioritization of productivity led growth in agriculture with the foundation of sustainability and climate smart technologies. Conductive policy ecosystem around new age technology which solves ground level issues of small and marginal farmers is of paramount importance.

## Reliance Jio launches India's 1st satellite-based Internet to connect inaccessible areas

**NEW DELHI:** Reliance Jio successfully demonstrated India's first satellite-based giga-fibre service to provide high-speed, affordable Internet services in inaccessible areas across the country. Called JioSpaceFiber, it was showcased on the first day of 'India Mobile Congress 2023' in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Jio is partnering with Luxembourg-based satellite telecommunications network provider SES to access the world's latest in medium earth orbit (MEO) satellite technology, the only MEO constellation capable of delivering gigabit, fibre-like services from space. "With JioSpaceFiber, we expand our reach to cover the millions yet to be connected," said Akash Ambani, Chairman, Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd. "JioSpaceFiber will allow everyone, everywhere, to fully participate in the new digital society with gigabit access to online government, education, health, and entertainment services," Akash Ambani added.

## HAL and Safran Aircraft Engines sign MoU for commercial engine parts manufacturing



**ARUN KUMAR RAO**  
Bengaluru

HAL and Safran Aircraft Engines signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop industrial cooperation in Ring forging manufacturing for commercial engines. HAL press release said. HAL will produce LEAP (Leading Edge Aviation Propulsion, powering Airbus A320 Neo family and Boeing 737 Max) engine forgings at its Foundry & Forge facility in Bengaluru as part of the MoU. The MoU was signed by Mihir Kanti Mishra, CEO (Bangalore Complex), HAL and Dominique Dupuy, Senior Vice President (Purchasing), Safran Aircraft Engines in Bengaluru in the presence of key officials from both companies.

"Safran is a long standing partner, especially on our Helicopter programs, as evidenced by the joint development of the 'Shakti' helicopter engine. We are also going to codesign and coproduce the next generation IMRH engine with Safran. We are proud to take this partnership to another

“

We are delighted to expand our collaboration with HAL, which is already part of the LEAP Supply Chain through our joint-venture in Bengaluru dedicated to the production of aero-engines pipes”

level, and to develop our skills in key technologies," said C.B. Ananthkrishnan, Chairman & Managing Director (Additional Charge), HAL.

"We are delighted to expand our collaboration with HAL, which is already part of the LEAP Supply Chain through our joint-venture in Bengaluru dedicated to the production of aero-engines pipes", said Jean-Paul Alary, CEO, Safran Aircraft Engines.

An Industrial Cooperation Contract was also signed by Anil Kumar Ven, GM (F&F), HAL and Jean Michel, Strategy Director and India Development for Safran Military Division.

## CELLO World Limited launching IPO of Rs 1,900 crores

**DOMINICK RODRIGUES**  
Mumbai



CELLO World Limited is launching its Initial Public Offering (IPO) of equity shares aggregating Rs 1,900 crores. The equity shares, which have been priced at Rs 617 to Rs 648 per share, will open on October 30 and close on November 1, 2023.

Pradeep Rathod, CMD, Cello World Limited, said here recently that the company offered consumer products across three categories including consumer houseware, writing instruments and stationery, moulded furniture and allied products. Noting that majority of the IPO will be going towards the promoters, he said the company is looking at inorganic and other fields of activity in its future plans. "Our company began in 1982 and covered 60-65% of India," he said, adding "We want to be in a niche area as today is seeing cookware completely changing and we want to grow at a healthy pace and margin."

## HFCL launches 1st India-made 5G solution for last-mile Internet connectivity

**MUMBAI:** Enterprise and integrated next-gen communications products provider HFCL on Friday launched India's first indigenous 5G FWA (fixed wireless access) customer premise equipment (CPE) solution.

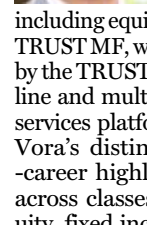
The indoor and outdoor 5G FWA CPE products will accelerate broadband penetration in urban, rural areas and help bridge the last-mile connectivity, the company said in a statement. Built to complement wired broadband connections in areas where fibre rollout is limited, HFCL's range of 5G FWA CPE supports both 5G SA and NSA technologies across multiple Sub-6 GHz and mmWave frequency bands to offer cost-effective and fibre-like speeds to customers using the 5G network.

"HFCL's 5G FWA CPE portfolio of plug-and-play devices are lightweight, compact in size, have minimum power consumption and provide customer friendly features like Wi-Fi 6 technology to connect a large number of devices at high speed," said the company.

## TRUST Mutual Fund appoints Mihir Vora as Chief Investment Officer

**DOMINICK RODRIGUES**  
Mumbai

TRUST Mutual Fund has appointed veteran fund manager Mihir Vora as its Chief Investment Officer to head investments for its mutual fund, which aims to widen its product offerings to other asset classes including equity mutual funds. TRUSTMF, which is promoted by the TRUST Group, a multi-line and multi-asset financial services platform, stated that Vora's distinguished, three-career highlights investing across classes including equity, fixed income real estate and alternative funds. Utpal Sheth, Director, TRUST Asset Management, said that Vora's long-term orientation, growth mindset and deep expertise in the asset management space would undoubtedly contribute to the continued growth and success of TRUST Mutual Fund.



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## Justdial joins hands with Invest UP to Boost UP Tourism SMEs

**NEW DELHI:** Justdial, India's No. 1 local search engine, forges a strategic partnership with Invest UP, the prestigious organization of the State Government of Uttar Pradesh dedicated to promoting and facilitating investment in the state, while also addressing challenges faced by existing and upcoming industries. This collaboration aims to empower tourism-focused Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Uttar Pradesh by enhancing their digital presence and discoverability, ultimately contributing to the growth of the state's tourism industry.

As part of this significant tie-up, Justdial will play a pivotal role in improving the online visibility of tourism-related businesses registered with The Department of Tourism.

## Honasa Consumer Limited announces Rs 1,701 Crore IPO

**DOMINICK RODRIGUES**  
Mumbai

Honasa Consumer Limited announced its Rs 1,701 crore IPO with price band of Rs 308 to Rs 324 per share, opening on October 31 and closing on November 2. The IPO comprised of Fresh Issue of Equity shares aggregating to Rs 365 crore and "Offer-for-Sale" for 4.12 crore Equity shares.

Varun Alagh, Chairman and CEO, Honasa Consumer Limited, noted that product innovation powered by continuous consumer engagement remained



the key strength of the company's 'Beauty and Personal Care' business. "Innovation is our core strategy and this capital efficiency business model is working well for us as we understand Gen Z and Millennials very well including who they follow for advice.

We have inhouse studios generating 2,000 pieces per month, and have created 3,000 influencers, besides product details in different languages," he said. "We plant trees for our customers' contributions and share visuals of these with them. Our focus is

on expanding distributors and brand awareness, besides looking at incubating or acquiring new engines of growth alongside strengthening business efficiency drivers." He said the number of repeat customers has grown from 35% to 60% and the focus is on building a Rs 1,000 crore brand through strong repeats franchise.

Ghazal Alagh, Whole Time Director and Chief Innovation Officer, said that the company drew 80% of its business offline as channel of choice through its presence in 17 cities and continuous expansion of its stores, besides outsourcing its last mile logistics.

## Walmart Vriddhi Sellers see significant increase in sales on Flipkart's Big Billion Days

**ARUN KUMAR RAO**  
Bangalore

The Walmart Vriddhi Supplier Development Program (Walmart Vriddhi) empowering micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in India, saw sellers see an increase of over 70% (YOY) in sales through Flipkart's Big Billion Days Sale, according to the company press statement here. Since its inception in 2019, Walmart Vriddhi has empowered 40,255 MSMEs across the country, providing them with tools and knowledge needed to thrive in the digital age. The achievement of Walmart Vriddhi, along with its local program partner Swasti, showcases its dedication to fostering economic growth at the grassroots level. This growth also demonstrates the resilience and adaptability of its MSME partners as they navigate the challenges of today's market. The range of products sold by Walmart Vriddhi sellers on Flipkart's platform is diverse, spanning various categories. Among the best-selling items are apparel, home decor and accessories, statement said.

Jason Fremstad, Senior Vice President, Supplier Development, Walmart Sourcing, commented on this achievement "Empowering MSMEs is at the



heart of Walmart's commitment to fostering inclusive economic growth. Through Walmart Vriddhi, we have seen incredible resilience and determination from our partners in India. This milestone reinforces our belief in the potential of these businesses to drive innovation and create lasting impact. We are proud to support their journey towards growth."

Under the guidance of Walmart Vriddhi, Abbie Fashions discovered its digital presence on Flipkart in 2022. Previously catering to local audiences in Rajasthan and Delhi, the brand's newfound online reach has garnered a devoted following from all corners of India, resulting in an impressive 25% upsurge in their overall sales. Another business, Naturally Pahadi, which promotes sustainable and nutritious products rooted in the Himalayas, onboarded onto Flipkart's Marketplace through the Walmart Vriddhi program. This strategic move resulted in a remarkable 300% sales boost, boosting the popularity of their Himalayan offerings.

## MSME ministry extends help to FICCI's women wing to set up support centres

**NEW DELHI:** MSME Ministry is willing to help Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry's (FICCI) ladies Organisation (FLO) to create MSME support centre in various parts of the country including Pune, said Narayan Rane, Union Minister of MSME on Wednesday.

Speaking at an interactive session on 'Use of technology & AI to foster growth of women led MSMEs' organised by FLO, he said adoption of advanced technologies and Artificial Intelligence (AI) by women led MSMEs can serve as a tool for growth for businesses in building their resilient capacity.

"The government led by Prime



Minister Narendra Modi has done a lot to improve MSMEs access to financing, information infrastructures and international markets. Providing regulatory, legal and financial frameworks conducive to entrepreneurship and small firms as well as startups has been our priority. Advancement of digital tech-

nologies and development of digital service models especially for women led MSME's offer small businesses enhanced accessibility to business tools," he said.

"The continuous nurturing of this sector, along with measures to embrace new technologies and favourable government policies, will be crucial to promoting the

MSME sector and positioning them on the world map," said Sudha Shivkumar, National President, FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO).

"FLO has a dedicated vertical, the MSME Assist that aims at providing assistance and support to women entrepreneurs who are looking to start or grow their own MSME businesses," she added. "The objective of this cell is to equip women with the necessary tools to succeed in the MSME sector, by providing access to valuable resources, handholding, and mentoring. FLO plans to open six MSME assist centres for women enterprises in various parts of the country including one in Pune," she said.

## We Need to Embrace Technology for a More Efficient Legal System: Meghwal

**NEW DELHI:** "We have made extensive use of technology, from mobile phones to court-related technologies, which have made the legal process much more efficient," stated Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble Minister of State, Ministry of Law and Justice (Independent Charge); MoS, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs; & MoS, Ministry of Culture, Government of India at the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ASSOCHAM's) Bharat Legal Conclave 2023. The ASSOCHAM National Legal Excellence Awards - 2023, organised by a leading industry association, is designed to tackle numerous challenges encountered by the legal sector and society as a whole.

Addressing the audience, Meghwal emphasised the importance of maintaining harmony in body, mind, intellect, and soul, aligning with the rich Indian tradition of 'Bharat Legal Complex.'

As India celebrates its 75th year of Independence, Meghwal urged everyone to reflect on the nation's future. He stressed the need for careful planning and consideration for the 100th-anniversary celebration of independence. In his address, Meghwal shared, "When we award accolades, we extend our best wishes. However, we also have to acknowledge that there might be some deserving candidates who did not receive recognition." He discussed the significance of recognising and rewarding



deserving candidates while also taking action against those who do not perform adequately.

Meghwal highlighted the recent passage of the Mediation Bill and called for a greater emphasis on arbitration, drawing inspiration from global leaders like Singapore and Hong Kong. He questioned the limited participation of Indian lawyers in international arbitration processes, encouraging a deeper engagement. Meghwal questioned, "Why don't our Indian lawyers participate in this? This is something we need to think about."

Speaking about technological advancements, Meghwal acknowledged the challenges posed by emerging technologies like Robotics and Blockchain. He shared a poignant incident from Shastrapur,

where a woman challenged traditional norms, emphasising, "Debate with me as you would with a lawyer, but let the aim be justice."

The Hon'ble Minister of State, Ministry of Law and Justice (Independent Charge) stressed the need for the legal community to focus on seeking justice, championing fairness, and embracing innovation for a brighter legal future.

Preeti Malhotra, Chairman Smart Bharat Group and Chairperson ASSOCHAM National Council for Corporate Affairs, Company Law of and Corporate Governance, said "ASSOCHAM has been contributing from the forefront for policy changes that aligns to the mandate of almost all the ministries and regulators under Government of India and works in sync with international best practices.

## Proost Beer closes INR 25 Crore in ongoing Pre-Series A Funding, Sets Sights on Dominating the Indian Beer Market

**FW DESK**  
New Delhi

Proost Beer, a rising star in India's beer industry, has successfully closed its Pre-Series A funding round securing a significant INR 25 crore in through a mix of Equity and Debt. This substantial investment, backed by a blend of existing and new investors including Chimes Group, Dev Punj, The Chennai Angels, Finvolve, India Accelerator, Hyderabad Angels, Mumbai Angels, Angel

The fresh infusion of funds will play a pivotal role in Proost Beer's strategic expansion plans. Operating under the umbrella of Grano69 Beverages Pvt. Ltd in Delhi, the startup enjoys a strong presence in Delhi, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and Kerala retail outlets selling an impressive 9 units of beer every minute.

Vijay P. Sharma, Co-Founder & Managing Director of Proost Beer, expressed his enthusiasm, stating, "The successful conclusion of this funding round empowers us to enhance our production capabilities and venture into new markets. We are highly optimistic about the industry's growth potential, driven by the increasing consumer appetite for innovative, high-quality products. With this funding, we anticipate achieving

a remarkable 300% growth."

Established in 2017, Proost Beer is on a mission to capture a substantial 5%+ share of the rapidly expanding Indian Beer Market by the end of this decade. In an ever-evolving beer landscape, Proost has emerged as a distinguished player committed to revolutionizing the consumer experience with its range of mass premium and affordable beers.

Tarun Bhargava, Co-Founder & CEO of Proost Beer, expressed his excitement, stating, "We are thrilled to see the strong vote of confidence from both our existing and new investors. This endorsement underscores the strength of our business and sets the stage for the next phase of growth for Proost Beer."

Known for its unwavering commitment to quality and a deep passion for the art of brewing, Proost Beer offers a curated selection of beers, with its flagship product, Proost Strong beer, leading the way. Brewed with precision and care, Proost Beer proudly sources most of its raw materials locally and is proudly 100% made in India.

With this substantial Pre-Series A funding, Proost Beer is primed to disrupt the Indian beer market and achieve a dominant position by the end of the decade. Cheers to Proost's journey towards industry dominance!

## HP to sell repaired PCs to retail customers, small businesses in India

**NEW DELHI:** HP said on Thursday that it will sell refurbished personal computers (PCs) to retail customers and small businesses in India via a subscription model managed by a company-certified partner, reported Business Standard.

India is the first market where the company is launching the initiative before expanding it to other regions in 2024.

Retail customers and small businesses will get refurbished HP PCs with the latest hardware for subscriptions lasting 6, 12 or 24 months. The model will initially focus on notebooks, with a vision to expand and diversify, said the company.

"Recognising the limited PC adoption in rural and smaller towns, we aim to transform this landscape. Our new initiative is a significant step in our ongoing mission to bring affordable



technology to everyone. It's a game-changer for those facing financial constraints, opening doors to PC usage," said Gurpreet Singh Brar, vice-president, HP India market.

"Students gain educational resources, small enterprises enhance productivity, and startups find a cost-effective tech solution, all contributing to a more digitally inclusive society. This programme underlines our dedication to serving the needs of a growing market, particularly

in regions where access to PCs has been a challenge," he said.

HP's certified partner will source devices from enterprises and retail consumers and refurbish them according to company standards. Post-refurbishment, the partner will sell and provide post-sales support, including warranty.

Every HP-certified refurbished device undergoes a rigorous refurbishment process ranging from memory enhancements to storage expansions, tailored to individual preferences and requirements, before rigorous inspections to ensure optimal performance, the company said.

The refurbishment programme stems from HP's prior pilot initiatives, such as the redeployment of close to 20,000 devices per year for its workforce internally.



# GST notices worth Rs 1 lakh crore issued to online gaming c companies: Report

**GST authorities have slapped notices to a host of online gaming firms like Dream11 for alleged short payment of taxes**

**NEW DELHI:** GST show cause notices worth Rs 1 lakh crore have been issued to online gaming companies for tax evasion so far, according to a media report.

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) authorities have slapped notices to a host of online gaming firms like Dream11 for alleged short payment of taxes, it said. According to the Reuters report, a show cause notice was sent to GamesKraft in Septem-



ber last year for alleged GST evasion of Rs 21,000 crore. In August, the GST authority imposed 28 per cent tax on online gaming companies on the total funds deposited to play online games.

Notably, the government amended the GST law, mak-

ing it mandatory for overseas online gaming companies to register in India from October 1. The Ministry of Finance notified October 1 as the date for implementation of the amended GST law provisions for taxing e-gaming, casinos, and horse racing.

In its notification, the GST authority said amendments to Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST) will make it mandatory for offshore online gaming platforms to register in India and pay taxes in accordance with the domestic law.

Rajeev Chandrasekhar, the Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, recently said online gaming segments can add up to USD 300 billion to India's GDP by 2026-27.

The government sees that permissible and legally acceptable online gaming is an important part of opportunities before youngsters, he had said on concerns raised by the online gaming industry over high taxation.

# Policy and data support to enhance MSME's role as growth driver: ADB report

**NEW DELHI:** The role of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) as drivers of growth in the economy will be boosted through policy and data support, according to Asia Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Monitor 2023.

Published by the Asian Development Bank, the report states that the MSME sector played a vital role in the recovery of the economies of Asia and the Pacific region.

According to the report, initiatives such as "the formalization of small businesses, reskilling, and upskilling of workers, along with the integration of digital tools and technology, economic diversification, and increasing access to new and innovative financing can create a fertile environment" for these businesses to contribute



to sustainable growth.

"Job creation is a critical challenge for Asia and the Pacific," said ADB Chief Economist Albert Park.

"In the Pacific, remittances sent by emigrants to advanced economies can support small businesses and create employ-

ment opportunities for women and younger workers. Tourism and agribusiness—where MSMEs actively participate—drive Pacific economies. Their sustainable growth helps strengthen MSME dynamism and raises national productivity," added Park.

# Punjab National Bank Q2 PAT zooms to Rs 1,756.13 cr



**NEW DELHI:** The Indian government-owned Punjab National Bank on Thursday said it closed the second quarter of FY24 with a net profit of Rs 1,756.13 crore. In a regulatory filing, Punjab National Bank said for the quarter ended September 30 it had earned a total interest income of Rs 26,354.92 crore (Q2FY23 Rs 20,154.02 crore) and a net profit of Rs 1,756.13 crore (Rs 411.27 crore).

During the period under review, the bank had earned Rs 93.21 crore (Rs 104.42 crore) as other income taking the total income to Rs 29,383.20 crore (Rs 23,001.26 crore). As on September 30, Punjab National Bank's gross non performing assets (GNPA) and net NPA stood at Rs 65,563.12 crore (Rs 87,034.79 crore) and Rs 13,114.12 crore (Rs 29,348.16 crore), respectively. The capital adequacy ratio stood at 15.09 per cent as on September 30.

# Bajaj Finserv Q2 PAT at Rs 754 crore



**NEW DELHI:** Bajaj Finserv Ltd., the holding company for the Bajaj group's financial services companies on Friday said it had logged an after tax profit of Rs 754.34 crore for the quarter ended September 30. In a regulatory filing, the company said for the second quarter that ended September 30, it has earned a total income of Rs 1,019.07 crore (Q2FY23 Rs 689.42 crore) and a net profit of Rs 754.34 crore (Rs 485.08 crore).

During the period under review, Bajaj Finserv has booked a dividend income of Rs 953.45 crore up from Rs 635.64 crore booked during the previous year corresponding period.

The company is the holding company for Bajaj Finance Ltd, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company Ltd, Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company Ltd and others.

Bajaj Finserv's scrip after opening at Rs 1,570 on Friday touched a high of Rs 1,593.55 and is changing hands for about Rs 1,583.

# Nifty's expiry this week can add to volatility



**NEW DELHI:** Nifty had the much awaited correction giving up almost 3 per cent for the week, says Jaykrishna Gandhi, Head - Business Development, Institutional Equities, Emkay Global Financial Services.

The sell-off was even more brutal within the small and mid cap space as retail investors finally seem like throwing in the towel on back of lackluster earnings and no clear positive commentary from management, he said. The market sell-off was triggered by the US 10yr hitting the 5 per cent mark which pulled down risk levels materially in the region. Nifty will have its expiry this week which can add to further volatility, we see Bank Nifty at the highest risk below the 43K levels with support at 42,200 levels which in turn can drag the market below 19K towards the strong support levels of 18,800, he said.

All eyes will be on the US 10yr, the geopolitical uncertainty along with the FOMC commentary to get direction for the week forward, he said. Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services said investor sentiment is on edge as tensions in West Asia continue to drag the market. Despite a drop in oil prices and an optimistic view of the progressing Q2 results season, investors took a cautious approach due to the expectation that a higher interest rate scenario would continue slowing future growth.

# IOB highlights increased Net Profit, total Business in present quarter

**DOMINICK RODRIGUES**  
Mumbai

Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) highlighted a Net Profit of Rs 625 crores for the quarter ended September 30, 2023, besides Net NPA also improving to 0.68% against 2.56% last year's quarter and Provision Coverage recorded at 94.03%.

Total Business rose to Rs 4,82,006 crores this quarter against Rs 4,34,441 crores same quarter last year. The same period witnessed Total Deposits at Rs 2,73,093 crores against Rs 2,61,728 crores last year.

CASA increased to Rs 1,19,206 crores this year against Rs 1,11,924 last year.

Replying to questions, Ajay Kumar Srivastava, Manag-



ing Director and CEO, IOB, said the Bank witnessed Fresh Slippages of Rs 321 crores in sectors like Retail, Agro with Unsecured Educational Loans taking the major portion, while Rs 1,069 crores of Recovery had been done in this quarter and the Bank was looking at comfortably crossing Rs 5,000 crores Recovery this year.

"Deposit Growth is expected

during this Diwali season and CASA is our main focus as it is cost-effective to build our credit portfolio," he said while pointing out that 71,000 new customers had onboarded in the bank's 3,200 branches.

"Sales worth Rs 3,000 crore to ARCs have been lined up we are looking to good sales in the coming months," he said while also noting that the Bank is in the process of hiring staff with 5 to 6 years experience in different organisations.

About security and anti-hacking measure in the wake of such global threats, he said the Bank was revising its security and other features in the Apps. The Bank is also planning to set up its branch in Gift City in Gujarat and is awaiting relevant approval, he added.

# Toyota urges Centre to cut taxes on hybrid vehicles

**NEW DELHI:** Toyota Motor has urged the Indian government to cut taxes on hybrid vehicles by as much as one-fifth, arguing these are far less polluting than petrol cars but do not get commensurate policy treatment.

In its letter to the government, Toyota's India Country Head Vikram Gulati has stated that the 5 per cent differential favouring hybrids over petrol cars is insufficient given the reduced emissions and better fuel consumption hybrids offer.

It is to be noted that India taxes EVs at just 5 per cent, while the levy on hybrids is as high as 43 per cent. Taxes on petrol cars are at 48 per cent. The Central government has



focused on pushing sales of EVs offering companies millions of dollars in incentives to build EVs and batteries.

The tax differential over petrol cars should be as much as 11 per cent points for hybrids and 14 points for flex-hybrids, the

letter stated. "We would kindly request for a proportionate policy support," Gulati wrote.

According to a recent report by GameChanger Law Advisors and Speciale Invest, the Indian EV battery market will grow from \$16.77 billion

in 2023 to \$27.70 billion by 2028, with a CAGR of 10.56 per cent during the period spanning 2023 to 2028.

The Indian EV market was valued at \$3.21 billion in 2022 and is expected to grow to \$113.99 billion by 2029 at a compound annual growth rate of 66.52 per cent.

It is worth highlighting that Toyota has faced criticism from investors and climate groups for still supporting hybrids, which it says make better sense for markets where the infrastructure is not ready for EVs.

In the Indian market, Tata Motors and Mahindra & Mahindra are backing EVs, while Toyota and Honda Motor want support for hybrids.

# IndusInd Bank announces strategic collaboration with Viamericas

**CHANDIGARH:** IndusInd Bank on Thursday announced a strategic collaboration with Viamericas Corporation to offer digital inward remittance services to Non Resident Indians (NRIs) in the USA through IndusInd Bank 'Indus Fast Remit', a remittance service platform. This collaboration enables NRIs to benefit from highly competitive exchange rates for digital inward remittances to India.

# SBI empowers district managers to expand Jansuraksha schemes at grassroots level

**CHANDIGARH:** The State Bank of India (SBI), India's largest bank, organised a comprehensive workshop aimed at enhancing the outreach of Jansuraksha Schemes at the Gram Panchayat level. The workshop brought together bank officials from 11 states and Union Territories with the goal of empowering the Lead District Managers to facilitate the adoption of two important schemes: Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyothi Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) among eligible citizens.

# India poised to surpass Japan to become world's 3rd largest economy by 2030: S&P

**NEW DELHI:** India is likely to surpass Japan to become the world's third-largest economy with its GDP doubling to \$7.3 trillion by 2030, according to the latest S&P Global Market Intelligence report.

"India's nominal GDP measured in USD terms is forecast to rise from \$3.5 trillion in 2022 to \$7.3 trillion by 2030. This rapid pace of economic expansion would result in the size of the Indian GDP exceeding Japanese GDP by 2030, making India the second largest economy in the Asia-Pacific region," the report states.

Japan is currently the third largest economy in the world next to the US and China.

The acceleration of foreign direct investment inflows into India over the past decade reflects the favourable long-term growth outlook for the Indian economy, helped by a youthful demographic profile and rapidly rising urban household incomes.

By 2022, the size of Indian GDP had already become larger than the GDP of the UK and also France.

By 2030, India's GDP is also



forecast to surpass Germany, the report adds.

Japan's nominal gross domestic product will be overtaken by Germany this year as it slips from No. 3 to No. 4 in the world on a US dollar basis, according to new projections by the International Monetary Fund.

India was among the outperformers in the emerging market space with private sector sales in the country having risen at the second-fastest pace in over 13 years, thereby supporting output expansion.

Robust growth was also reported in Russia, but mainland China's expansion slowed while Brazil slipped back into contraction in the latest survey period, S&P said. The report also observes that global economic expansion continued to decelerate at the end of the third quarter, slipping to the slowest in eight months.

Worse may be to come, as global new orders shrank for the first time since January and backlogs of work fell sharply, signalling further weakness in the coming months.

# SATYA Micro Capital Limited secures INR 500 Cr debt funding from Japan based sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation

**NEW DELHI:** RBI registered NBFC-MFI, SATYA Micro Capital Limited has successfully raised INR 500 Cr (USD 60Mn) from Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation which is a Japanese multinational banking financial services institution owned by Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group, Inc.

The infusion of debt funding will engender an advancement in scaling up SATYA's operational model while continuing to formulate innovative credit offerings, expanding product portfolio, providing complete end-to-end business processes for its esteemed clients. The funding will also be leveraged towards catalysing financial inclusion amongst women micro entrepreneurs and shaping a new paradigm of women empowerment through microfinance.

Vivek Tiwari, MD & CEO of SATYA MicroCapital Limited said, "Our association with SMBC Bank serves as the propelling force and motivation for SATYA to continue its mission of driving financial inclusion and empowering women entrepreneurs across India. The



level of trust SMBC Bank has bestowed in our business model will form the helm of our expansion goals. SATYA's business model is eventually gaining impetus across global landscape. Moving forth, SATYA will stay ardently committed to creating sustainable impact and enabling brighter future for countless households at the bottom of the pyramid."

SATYA Micro Capital Limited- Established in October 2016, and headquartered in the capital city of New Delhi, SATYA initiated the course of its operational journey in Janu-

ary 2017. With the foremost and fundamental goal of empowering rural women, digitally - socially - financially, SATYA has come a long way since its incorporation. Since then, the company has registered an impressive growth by achieving Assets Under Management (AUM) of nearly INR 5000 crore. With a network of more than 500 branches spanning over 50,000 villages across 25 states, SATYA is harnessing technology as a catalyst for inducing progressive change in the lives of its clients, where it has consistently integrated

cutting-edge innovations into its operations. This in turn has resulted in SATYA emerging as one of the fastest growing highly-technology driven MFIs in the country. At present, SATYA is furnishing its affordable micro credit services to more than 15 lakh women entrepreneurs from rural and semi-urban areas who are excluded from traditional banking channels because of their low, irregular, and unpredictable income. The helm of SATYA's accessible services is to be a catalyst for the socio-economic upliftment of its clients via channelizing income growth and income generation. SATYA is integrally concentrated towards building their financial capacity and ability to boost financial self-sufficiency. The taskforce of more than 6000 employees plays an intrinsic role in SATYA's ongoing growth trajectory. In addition to yielding financial aid to unbanked sections of the population, SATYA MicroCapital consistently associates with institutions of the same wavelength to disseminate the importance of digital and financial literacy in rural areas.



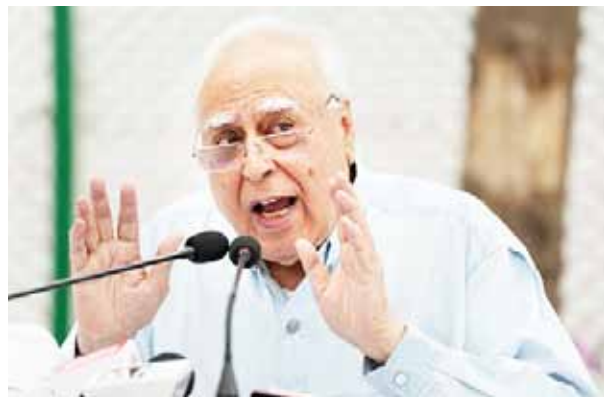
# INTERNATIONAL

## PM Modi must intervene, says Sibal after Qatar court announced death for 8 ex-Navy personnel

**NEW DELHI:** In the wake of news that eight former Indian Navy personnel, who were in custody in Qatar since last year, have been awarded the death sentence, veteran leader Kapil Sibal on Thursday sought the intervention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying the government must explore all options for their release.

In a post on X, Sibal, who is also an eminent lawyer, said, "Our Vishwa Guru (PM Modi) must intervene. Eight Indian ex-Navy officers given the death penalty by a Qatar court."

"Held accountable on charges which have not been even made public by Qatari authorities. Our government must explore all options for their release," the former Congress



leader said.

The eight persons were arrested last year after being charged with spying for Israel by Qatari authorities.

The men also include decorated officers who once commanded major Indian

warships, were working for Dahra Global Technologies and Consultancy Services, a private firm that provided training and related services to Qatar's armed forces.

Their bail pleas were rejected numerous times and their

**“Held accountable on charges which have not been even made public by Qatari authorities. Our government must explore all options for their release”**

detention extended by Qatari authorities. On Thursday, the Court of First Instance of Qatar passed a judgement.

Earlier in the day, the Indian government on Thursday expressed shock over the news and said it will contest it.

## China, US need to have dialogue: Wang Yi tells Blinken

**WASHINGTON:** Visiting Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told US Secretary of State Antony Blinken that the world's two biggest economies "need to have dialogue" following a period of volatile bilateral relations.

Yi, who is in the US on a four-day official visit, also said that "not only should we resume dialogue, the dialogue should be in-depth and comprehensive so that with dialogue we can increase mutual understanding, reduce misunderstanding and misjudgment, constantly seek to expand common ground and pursue cooperation that will benefit both sides so that we can stabilise China-US relations and return it to the track of healthy, stable, and sustainable development". He made the remarks to reporters before a one-on-one meeting with Blinken which is part of a reciprocal visit following the Secretary's travel to Beijing and recent high-level meetings as part of ongoing efforts to maintain open lines of communication and responsibly manage US-China relations, according to the State Department.

## Canadian agency issues alert along US border after mass shootings



The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) has issued an "armed and dangerous" alert to its personnel stationed along the country's border with the US after the two mass shootings in the American state of Maine led to the death of at least 18 people.

In its alert issued late Thursday, the CBSA asked its officers to be on the lookout for the suspect, identified as 40-year-old Robert Card a trained firearms instructor and a member of the US Army Reserves, who also injured 13 people in the shootings in Lewiston city on Wednesday night, reports Xinhua news agency.

"The CBSA is aware of the tragic

events in Maine. Our officers have been alerted to the high risk of this situation, and we are on the lookout with our law enforcement partners. Our thoughts are with the citizens of Maine and all those affected," it said in a post on X. The Agency added that it is working with Canadian and US law enforcement partners to "protect Canada's borders against any threat or attempt at illegal entry". The city of Lewiston is located some 260 km southwest of Canada's New Brunswick province. As of Friday, hundreds of police have continued a massive manhunt to nab Card, who is considered "armed and dangerous".

## IDF infantry hits several tanks inside Gaza, ground assault imminent



As the deadly Israel-Hamas conflict continued for a 20th consecutive day on Thursday, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) claimed of destroying several tanks inside the besieged Gaza Strip.

In a statement, the IDF said it moved in and fired at the Hamas outposts in Gaza on Wednesday night and destroyed many tanks and missile launching capabilities. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has clearly said that the entry of the Israel armed forces in Gaza Strip is imminent and the ground assault will commence soon. The Israeli forces are, according to former officers of the IDF, well versed in underground fights in tunnels and that they have exact and perfect knowledge of the construction of these tunnels and their precise locations.

## French President Emmanuel Macron arrives in Israel



French President Emmanuel Macron arrived in Tel Aviv on Tuesday, joining a list of world leaders to visit the war-torn nation since the October 7 Hamas attack. According to an Elysee Palace source, the President plans to express solidarity and discuss a two-state solution, CNN reported. Macron is expected to meet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, President Isaac Herzog and opposition leader Yair Lapid. The other world leaders who have visited Israel since the brutal assault were US President Joe Biden, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, and Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte.

## World's first AI Safety Institute to be set up in UK: Rishi Sunak

**LONDON:** The UK is to be the headquarters of the world's first AI Safety Institute as the country takes the lead in examining and testing new types of artificial intelligence, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced in a speech in London. Ahead of hosting the first Global AI Safety Summit next week, the British Indian leader who completed one year in office this week said that he genuinely believes that technologies like AI (Artificial Intelligence) will bring a transformation "as far-reaching as the industrial revolution, the coming of electricity, or the birth of the internet". But like those waves of advancements and the many positives that they offer, there are also "new dangers and new fears" that need to be tackled head on. "Get this wrong, and AI could make it easier to build chemical or biological weapons. Terrorist groups could use AI to spread fear and destruction on an even greater scale. Criminals could exploit AI for cyber-attacks, disinformation, fraud, or even child sexual abuse," warned Sunak. He even touched upon the "most unlikely and extreme" fears around AI which is sometimes referred to as "super intelligence" or humanity losing control of the technology altogether.

## Dipharma receives Second GMP certification from Brazilian ANVISA

**Caronno Pertusella site (Italy) is the second Dipharma manufacturing facility to receive ANVISA certification**

**MILAN (ITALY):** Dipharma Francis S.r.l. (Dipharma), a leading Contract Development and Manufacturing Organization (CDMO) and a global manufacturer of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients, announced today another new production site of the Group, the facility located in Caronno Pertusella, near Milan (Italy), has received the Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) certification - CBPF (Certificado de Boas Práticas de Fabricação) - from the Regulatory Authority of Brazil, ANVISA (Agência Nacional de Vigilância Sanitária).

This authorization joins the previous one, obtained in November 2022, by the Dipharma Italian site located in Baranzate (Milan), and certifies Dipharma world-class quality system, which has been widely recognized by regulatory authorities. The Caronno Pertusella facility has



been regularly and successfully inspected by the US FDA and the Italian Ministry of Health (AIFA) for more than 50 years.

"We are very proud to have reached another regulatory milestone: this second successful completion of the ANVISA certification recognizes another Dipharma site as being in compliance with the GMP requisites as foreseen by the Brazilian requirements," said Jorge Nogueira, Chief Executive Officer of Dipharma Francis S.r.l. — "Our Company is committed to providing innovative and competitive solutions to our customers and this achievement once again certifies we are an ideal partner for registering new applica-

tions at ANVISA."

Dipharma Francis Group - With revenues over €140 million, the Dipharma Group is a global CDMO and a leading manufacturer of APIs and Intermediates, with more than 550 skilled and highly committed employees, 4 cGMP plants, located in the U.S.A. and Italy, plus sales offices in Italy, the U.S.A. and China. The fully equipped R&D Centers develop innovative chemical processes and crystalline forms for the most prominent pharmaceutical companies worldwide. As a third-generation family-owned company, Dipharma has a long history of stability, commitment, and financial solidity.

## PM Modi 'stood in solidarity with Israel in moment of crisis'

**NEW DELHI:** India's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, R. Ravindra said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi "stood in solidarity with Israel in their moment of crisis" as the country faced the October 7 terror attack.

Speaking on Tuesday at the Security Council's high-level meeting on Palestine held in the aftermath of the brutal Hamas attack on Israel, he said: "Our Prime Minister was one of the first global leaders to have conveyed his condolences for the loss of lives and prayers for the innocent victims and their families. He stood in solidarity with his Israel in their moment of crisis when they were facing these terror attacks."

"The October 7 terror attacks in Israel were shocking and we condemn them unequivocally." On the October 17 Gaza hospital blast that killed more than 425 people, he said: "We have also expressed deep shock at the tragic loss of life."

Stepping away from the blame game for the explosion, Ravindra said: "Our Prime Minister clearly spelt out that those involved must be held



responsible."

Israel has blamed a failed rocket launch aimed at Israel by the Islamic Jihad terror group for the explosion, which the US has said was likely.

On the other hand, the Palestinians have said it was destroyed by a missile from Israel, a claim echoed by several countries at the Council meeting.

Ravindra said that "civilian casualties in the ongoing conflict are a matter of serious and continuing concern. All parties must protect civilians, especially women and children".

Looking towards a solution to the Israel-Palestine crisis, he reiterated India's support for a two-state solution.

"India backed the establishment of a sovereign, independent and viable state of Palestine, living within secure and recognised borders, side by side in peace with Israel, taking into account the legitimate security concerns of Israel."

To achieve this goal, "every effort must be made to create conducive conditions for resumption" direct talks between Israel and Palestine, he added.

## Sikhs in Fiji Police force now allowed to wear turban with official crown



**SUVA:** Navjeeth Singh Sohata has become the first Sikh cop to don a turban with the official Fiji Police crown after the island nation's police force approved changes to the uniform in a bid to promote diversity.

Recognising that the respect for diversity and inclusivity are integral to the success of policing efforts, Acting Commissioner of Police Juki Fong Chew approved the wearing of a turban with the official Fiji Police crown.

Police Constable Sohata, 20, is a member of Batch 66 undergoing the Basic Recruits Course Training in Nasova, after being selected from the open market recruitment drive.

A devout Sikh, Sohata had marched into the academy knowing the training requirements would require personal sacrifices on his part.

"However, the Acting Commissioner of Police, in respecting Sohata's rights, approved the wearing of the turban with the official Fiji Police crown," the Fiji Police said in a statement. Commissioner Chew said the move was a testament of the organisation's commitment in upholding the fundamental principles of equality and diversity.

According to a book by Stanley Brown, "The History of the Fiji Police Force", the first Sikh constables were recruited in force the early 1910s.

Sharing his experience as a recruit, Sohata, who hails from Dreketi village in Northern Division of Fiji, said it was difficult at first being away from his family. "I have a number of people in my life who I look up to as inspiration and role models, and it is my goal to make them proud and be just as good as them when it comes to my professional life," Sohata said.

## Israel police arrest actress-activist Maisa Abd Elhadi for endorsing Hamas



**TEL AVIV :** Police in Israel on Tuesday arrested actress and social activist Maisa Abd Elhadi for seemingly endorsing the Hamas militant group in a series of social media posts. According to Israel au-

thorities, she has made several statements that could be considered as endorsing the raging violence and mayhem unleashed by the Hamas on October 7 against citizens of the Jewish nation.

Available information suggests that Elhadi was arrested from Nazareth on Tuesday morning. The police said that one of her post was an image of the broken border fence between Israel and Gaza with the caption, "Let's Go Berlin Style". This was a clear message, a call for barrier breaking conflict and depicting the image to be like fallen Berlin Wall, the police added.

Israel is on an all out mission to destroy Hamas after the October 7 incidents of violence leading to the death of around 1400 people. At least 212 people have been taken hostages by the Hamas.

## US concerned Israel lacks achievable goals for Gaza ground offensive

**TEL AVIV:** US President Joe Biden's administration is reportedly concerned that Israel lacks achievable military goals for its operations in Gaza, leading US officials to believe that the Jewish nation's military is not yet ready for a ground incursion, Times of Israel reported.

US officials have held marathon meetings and phone calls with their Israeli counterparts to discuss the ground operation, which many thought the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) would have launched by Monday 17 days after the October 7 Hamas massacre, in which over 1,400 people were slaughtered in Israel and roughly 220 were taken hostage into Gaza. The Times of Israel reported. In the interim, the IDF has maintained a near-constant aerial bombardment it



says is targeting Hamas terrorists and infrastructure, which has left thousands dead. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin has held near-daily phone calls with his Israeli counterpart, Yoav Gallant, during which the former has urged the importance of carefully considering how IDF troops conduct the incursion in

Gaza, where terrorists will operate from tunnels and densely populated areas. The New York Times reported Monday, citing unnamed US officials.

In a Sunday interview with ABC News, Austin said the ground invasion Israel plans to launch could well take longer than the amount of time it took

for the US to remove the Islamic State from power in Mosul, Iraq, when he was the head of the US Army's Central Command. "Urban combat is extremely difficult. It goes at a slow pace," he said. "This may be a bit more difficult because of the underground network of tunnels that Hamas has constructed over time and the fact that they have had a long time to prepare for a fight."

US officials told The New York Times on Monday that Israel must decide whether it wants to eliminate Hamas terrorists through a combination of surgical strikes and targeted raids by special forces, as the US did with Iraqi and Kurdish soldiers in Mosul in 2017, or to launch a more expansive ground invasion, as US troops did with Iraqi and British forces in Fallujah in 2004.

## Indo-Canadian man fined \$20K for immigration fraud

An Indian-origin man has been fined \$20,000 for his role in a scheme that charged newcomers tens of thousands for permits to work in the Canadian province of Manitoba.

Avtar Sohi, 42, pleaded guilty on Monday to misrepresentation under the Canada Immigration and Refugee Protection Act, the CBC News channel reported. The Provincial Court of Manitoba heard that Avtar provided a woman with pay stubs to show she was working for him as a nanny from March 2019 to July 2021 while she was illegally employed elsewhere. In addition, he also provided her with a number of signed documents that she used as part of her permanent residency application.

The woman, an Indian national,



came to Canada on a Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA), which is issued after a need for a temporary foreign worker is demonstrated because there is no citizen or permanent resident available to do the job. "His behaviour erodes the trust of our immigration system and must be denounced and deterred," federal crown attorney Matt Sinclair said.

Sinclair told the court that in September 2019 the Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) received information about Avtar's

brother Hartar Singh Sohi, an immigration consultant and owner of Abroad Immigration. In March 2021, CBSA investigators executed search warrants at three properties connected with Abroad Immigration and Education Services — a Winnipeg company that arranges permanent residency for newcomers in Canada.

Court heard that during the search, the investigators found a work permit issued for an Indian national authorising her to work as a nanny for Avtar and his wife. After surveilling the woman, the investigators found she was working at another place without authorisation. During questioning, the woman said that her family paid \$40,000 for her LMIA, but when she arrived in Canada, she was told there was no job for her.

## Massive manhunt underway in US state after mass shootings leave 22 dead

A massive manhunt is currently underway in Maine for the gunman who killed 22 people in two mass shooting incidents, with the police asking residents of Lewiston, the second largest city in the US state, to shelter in place. There were two active shooting incidents on Wednesday evening in the city -- at Sparetime Recreation, a bowling alley on Mollison Way, and Schemengees Bar & Grille Restaurant on Lincoln Street, according to the Lewiston Police Department.

The two locations are at a distance of 6.5 km from each



other. State officials said the shootings began at 6.56 p.m., CNN reported in a statement late Wednesday night, the Lewiston Police Department said the 40-year-old person of

interest Robert Card, who is currently absconding, should be "considered armed and dangerous".

"Law Enforcement is attempting to locate Robert Card

regarding the mass shooting at Schemengees Bar and Sparetime Recreation this evening. CARD should be considered armed and dangerous. Please contact law enforcement if you are aware of his whereabouts," the statement added.

As of Thursday, hundreds of officers continue to search for Card, a trained firearms instructor and member of the US Army Reserves. Xinhua news agency reported citing authorities as saying. Law enforcement officials said Card "recently reported mental health issues".

The Central Maine Medical Center had also confirmed of reacting to a "mass casualty, mass shooter event" and is coordinating with other hospitals in the area to treat the injured.

Although the number of injured persons was not immediately clear, but reports have suggested that at least 50 to 60 people were hurt.

The shelter-in-place order remained for Lewiston and now is also in place for Lisbon, which is around 7 miles southeast of the city, Michael Sauschuck, commissioner of the Maine Department of Public Safety, told reporters.



# Rajinikanth is 'thumping with joy' to collaborate with Big B after 33 years

The 'Ganpath' actor donned a colourful patterned bandana on his head. Wearing a grey shirt, the actor was wearing glasses and wore a pink and blue jacket atop his shirt. The jacket was detailed with various animal figures.



**MUMBAI:** Thalaivar Rajinikanth, who is currently scheduled for his new project tentatively titled 'Thalaivar 170', is "thumping with joy", as he is marking his latest collaboration with his "mentor", the Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan after 33 years.

Excited and glad over the opportunity, the 'Jailer' actor took to his X account, formerly Twitter, and shared a picture of the two acting behemoths standing alongside one another. Captioning the picture, he wrote: "After 33 years, I am working again with my mentor, the phenomenon, Amitabh Bachchan in the upcoming Lyca's 'Thalaivar 170' directed by

T.J Gnanavel. My heart is thumping with joy!"

In the picture, Rajinikanth can be seen wearing white shirt and a black wig, all the while smiling with great happiness. Amitabh Bachchan on the other hand was equally thrilled to be working once again with the Tamil megastar.

The 'Ganpath' actor donned a colourful patterned bandana on his head. Wearing a grey shirt, the actor was wearing

glasses and wore a pink and blue jacket atop his shirt. The jacket was detailed with various animal figures.

Prior to the upcoming film, Big B and Thalaivar last worked together in the Hindi film 'Hum', directed by Mukul Anand which was released in 1991. 'Hum' was a massive rage in the 1990s and a huge success, receiving great acclaim from critics, viewers, as well as a big box office.

The movie, which starred Rajinikanth, Amitabh Bachchan, Govinda, Anupam Kher, Kimi Katkar, Deepa Sahi, Shilpa Shirodkar, Danny Denzongpa, and Kader Khan in pivotal roles, also led to the Thalaivar's 1995 classic 'Baasha', as it employed several unused plot points from the original script of 'Hum'.

'Hum' is also very well remembered for its song 'Jumma Chumma De De'. 'Baasha' is also well known for two of its classic tracks 'Naan Autokaaran', and 'Style Style Thaan'.

Since the announcement of the new mystery project, immense excitement is raging across India as audiences from Mumbai to Chennai are frantic to see the two legends come together on the big-screen.

Apart from these two legends, the film will also star Fahadh Faasil, Rana Daggubati, Manju Warrier, Ritika Singh and Dushara Vijayan. With music by Anirudh Ravichander, the film will hit theatres in 2024.

## Kashmiri pacer joins England squad as a net bowler for World Cup 2023

FW DESK

Kashmiri fast bowler Samiullah Dar has joined the England cricket team as a net bowler for the ongoing World Cup 2023, according to Kashmir Sports Watch. Hailing from Srinagar, Dar's journey with the English team began in Delhi, where he practiced with the squad before traveling with them to Mumbai. His next destination is Bangalore, where the team is set to participate in their upcoming match. This isn't Dar's first experience as a net bowler, as he also fulfilled a similar role for the Kolkata Knight Riders during the 2023 IPL season. Despite his impressive skills as a right-arm fast bowler, he is still awaiting the opportunity to represent the state team of Jammu and Kashmir. Samiullah Dar's presence as a net bowler with the England team highlights the growing recognition of talent from regions not traditionally associated with international cricket.



Mumbai: Actor Sonu Sood on Thursday announced the wrap of the filming of his debut production 'Fateh', and shared some behind the scenes pictures of the shoot.

## Sonu Sood wraps up shoot of 'Fateh'; promises it to be 'most memorable'



Mumbai: Actor Sonu Sood on Thursday announced the wrap of the filming of his debut production 'Fateh', and shared some behind the scenes pictures of the shoot.

Taking to social media, Sonu shared the photos, and expressed his gratitude to his co-star, Jacqueline Fernandez. The photos showcase the undeniable chemistry between

the two actors that has left the audience eagerly anticipating the on-screen magic they will bring to the project.

The pictures provide an exhilarating sneak peek into the film's production, filmed at unique, unexplored Indian and international locations, delivering an authentic feel.

The post was captioned as: "Fateh is just the beginning of a magical journey, and as I wrap up the shoot, I promise this will be your most memorable one. Jackie I truly appreciate your humility, hard work and dedication...Thanks for being yourself. As I promised this is going to be your best one @jacquelinefernandez."

The movie promises an electrifying cinematic experience with its action-packed narrative and Hollywood-inspired stunts, fueling excitement. 'Fateh' stars Sonu in the lead and is based on cybercrime, in the holy city of Amritsar in Punjab. The film is directed by Vaibhav Mishra.

## Hockey Brings glory to India, plaudits for Naveen Patnaik government

ARABINDA MOHAPATRA Bhubaneswar

As the whole of India basked in the reflected glory of Indian men's hockey team's gold winning show at the recently concluded Hangzhou Asian Games Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik was also drawing applause for his unstinted support to the game at the national level. There was general acknowledgement that but for his support the team would not have won its fourth gold in continental hockey.

The focus, no doubt, is back on Naveen Patnaik government's diligent nurturing of hockey. This has been possible not only because of the chief minister's passion for the game but also his concern for the players whose talent cannot flower without monetary support. No wonder the Asian Games gold has the entire hockey fraternity applauding Patnaik for his solid backing of the game.

Odisha chief minister, who played hockey as the goalkeeper of his school team, came to the rescue of Indian hockey at a difficult time when Sahara, the official sponsor of the national team in 2017-18, backed out of sponsorship. Patnaik came forward to help Hockey India and signed a five-year sponsorship deal with it. Thus government of Odisha became the first-ever state government to sponsor hockey at the national level. It became the sponsor of all national teams — junior and senior, men and women. The deal was



to expire this year but the chief minister has generously renewed it for another 10 years.

Patnaik's generosity has been much talked about with most hockey lovers considering him lucky for the game. His government's sponsorship marked a turnaround in the fortunes of the Indian hockey team, both men and women. While the men's team won a historic bronze at the 2020-21 Tokyo Games ending a 41-year medal drought in the sport at the Olympics, the women's team entered its name in record books by reaching the Olympic semi-finals for the first time. The gold for men at Hangzhou and bronze for women is proof that Indian hockey's winning streak continues.

For many hockey has come to be associated with Odia pride as the game has pitched Odisha into international focus. With Patnaik's sponsorship of the game drawing applause Odisha is also getting noticed by the international community. It is the only state in the country to have hosted the Men's Hockey

World Cup twice consecutively in 2018 and 2023. This is proof that the state, once considered backward, has the potential to organize big-time sporting events, especially international hockey tournaments. Boasting of state-of-the-art infrastructure for hockey Odisha is today known as the new hockey capital of India. Patnaik, whose passion for the game is well known, was quick to realize Odisha's potential for nurturing hockey which is a craze among the tribal youth. This also provided him an excellent opportunity to create a new vote-bank among the state's tribal people who account for nearly 23 percent of the state's population.

It is no coincidence that former India hockey captain Dilip Tirkey is a member of Patnaik's BijuJanata Dal (BJD) which sent him to the Rajya Sabha in 2012. Tirkey, who hails from tribal-dominated Sundergarh district which is known as Odisha's hockey nursery, is the incumbent president of Hockey India, the first player to achieve this distinction.

## Bollywood actress Tamannaah Bhatia is brand ambassador for '25th edition of Jewels of India'

ARUN KUMAR RAO Bengaluru

The biggest of retail jewellery exhibitions in India, "The Jewels of India" formally announced 4 days exhibition at an event. The grandeur of the "25th anniversary edition of Jewels of India" was brought to life by the radiant presence of Bollywood actress Tamannaah Bhatia, national movie sensation, who graced the event as its distinguished brand ambassador.

The event is scheduled to take place at St. Joseph's School Grounds, Bengaluru between October 27th to 30th, 2023. Celebrating a golden legacy of 25 years, Jewels of India, has brought together the nation's 100+ finest jewellers under one magnificent roof and is looking forward to spectacular turnout for the event.

Speaking on the occasion, Tamannaah Bhatia, said "Jewels of India has been a treasure trove event for jewellery lovers for more than a decade. Being a brand am-



assador to represent this legacy makes it special for a jewellery lover like me. Wishing all brands participating at the Jewels of India a stupendous success". "Jewels of India is a name synonymous with timeless beauty and exquisite craftsmanship. For 25 years, it has been an illustrious journey of celebrating the artistry of Indian jewellery. As we stand at the cusp of another magnificent event, we are super thrilled to have Tamannaah Bhatia as the brand ambassador of 25th edi-

tion and looking forward to a great show, exclaimed Vikram Mehta and Hemant Jain, the owners of Jewels of India, expressing their excitement for the upcoming exhibition. Jewels of India brings together the top 100+ jewellers under one single roof to showcase exquisitely crafted timeless collections & masterpieces from across the country. The event till now has witnessed a historic turnout of over 50K footfalls, over 20K consumers and over 100 cr annual revenue to date.

## 'Master Chef India': 'Swaad Aa Gaya', says Chef Ranveer Brar on Kriti Dhiman's 'black garlic ice-cream'

**NEW DELHI:** The upcoming episode of the cooking-based reality show 'Master Chef India' features a unique blend of flavours. During the course of the episode, contestant Kriti Dhiman, a 23-year-old home baker from Gobindgarh, Punjab, steals the spotlight with her 'black garlic ice cream.'



Kriti chooses her favourite ingredient - dates, and makes it the base for a delectable date pudding. However, the judges throw a curveball at her by asking her to choose one out of three secret ingredients presented by them. She picks black garlic, and transforms her choice into a velvety black garlic ice cream, which leaves all three judges in absolute awe of her culinary brilliance.

Chef Ranveer Brar, who serves in the judges panel,

heaps praise on Kriti's dish. With a resounding bang of his signature spatula, he says: "Swaad Aa Gaya."

He goes on to say: "Kriti's creation transcends the ordinary. It's a symphony of flavours that are a pure delight to the taste buds. Her choice to incorporate black garlic into her ice cream is nothing short of mind-blowing. It takes courage to experiment with flavours at this level, and her risk has paid off in the most delicious way possible. This is the kind of innovation that sets MasterChef India's contestants apart."

## Bishan Singh Bedi's old house still exists in Amritsar



**AMRITSAR:** Former cricketer Bishan Singh was born and brought up in Amritsar and his education up to Matriculation was also from Amritsar. Congress sitting Municipal Councilor Surinder Chowdhary said, "Bishan Singh Bedi was born to father Gian Singh Bedi who was a politically well known personality in Amritsar and remained attached with Congress party. Gian Singh Bedi who died around 32 years ago was a good friend of mine".

Adding further Chowdhary said, "Bishan Singh Bedi was born in Putligar locality in Amritsar and his old ancestral house that originally belonged to his father still exist there and Bishan Singh during his lifetime used to come here off and on. Last time he visited here around two years back. Presently the old house in dilapidated condition is difficult to live as a reason Bishan Singh Bedi during his visit to Amritsar never stayed there". Chowdhary further informed that Bishan Singh Bedi's sister Vidaya Bedi was running a private school next to his house which was later taken over by the Punjab Education department and land that belonged to Bedi's family was donated to the Education department.

# Legendary spinner Bishan Singh Bedi passes away

JAGMOHAN SINGH

Born in Amritsar, Bedi plied his trade for Delhi on the domestic circuit, and was the leading wicket-taker amongst Indians in First-Class cricket with 1,560 scalps in 370 matches.

New Delhi : Former India skipper and legendary left-arm spinner Bishan Singh Bedi passed away on Monday. He was 77 years old. Bedi played 67 Tests for India between 1967 and 1979 and picked 266 wickets. He also took seven wickets in 10 One-Day Internationals. Later he had served as selector, besides taking over as coach of a number of domestic sides, besides serving the national team in 1990-91.

Born in Amritsar, Bedi plied his trade for Delhi on the domestic circuit, and was the leading wicket-taker amongst Indians in First-Class cricket with 1,560 scalps in 370 matches. Bedi also led Delhi to its first two Ranji Trophy titles — in 1978-79 and 1979-80. The team was also runner-up twice under him. Incidentally, the four finals came in a span of five years.

In international cricket, Bedi along with Erapalli Prasanna, BS Chandrasekhar and S. Venkataraghavan, formed a formidable quartet, who revolutionised the art of spin bowling in Indian cricket. He began his international



cricket journey in 1966, representing India until 1979.

Known for his mastery over flight and spin, Bedi used subtle variations to outwit batsmen, and led India to a historic 1971 series win against England, in the absence of injured Ajit Wadekar.

An outspoken person, Bedi never minced his words even during his playing career. He had inevitably courted controversies while objecting to the use of Vaseline by England bowler John Lever in 1976-7, declaring India's second innings at Kingston in protest against intimidatory bowling by the West Indians in 1976 and, most famously as coach, when he had threatened to dump the Indian cricket

team in the sea after their poor performance Down Under in 1990-91.

After the team lost their match against Australia in the Rothmans Cup, Bedi had said, "The entire teams should be dumped into the Pacific."

There's no bigger scam than IPL: Bedi. Bishan Singh Bedi had never approved of the Indian Premier League (IPL), and on several occasions went on to lambast the cash-rich league, also calling it a "scam".

"I don't want to say anything about the IPL. There's not a bigger scam in India than the IPL. Nobody here knows where IPL's money comes and goes. The second edition of the IPL happened in South Africa,



Anju, and two children: Neha and actor Angad. Taking to social media, Angad shared a note: "Isn't it completely in Dad's character

to bowl us over with the ultimate spin ball, one that even we never saw coming."

"While we are in shock and overcome with grief, we find solace in knowing that he lived a rich, fearless and full life that inspired many. We are moved by each and every message of love we have received, publicly and personally. Thank you to everyone for celebrating his grit,

humour and giant heart," read the note. The post further read: "It is heartwarming to see how many generations Dad inspired through his life. Every day of his life was spent in devotion to his family and faith, and in service to his Waheguru." "He epitomised living a life that was Nirbhau-Nirvair and we are comforted in knowing that he is with His Beloved now.

Dad, we were blessed to have you as our fearless leader. We will strive to live by your motto - to observe and absorb. Keep guiding us from the great beyond," it added. "In love and faith, Anju Bedi, Angad Bedi, Neha Dhupia Bedi, Neha Bedi Gautam Malhotra, Mehr Dhupia Bedi Guriq Dhupia Bedi, Suhavi Bedi Malhotra," the note concluded.

## Tips for Working Mothers on Time Management and Nutrition



**ASMA SAJID**  
Breastfeeding is the best 'gift' for mothers and babies. Breastfeeding is beneficial for nursing women, babies, and the entire family. For mothers, it creates an emotional bond with the newborn, and it helps in spacing out pregnancies as a natural method of birth control. It also has several health benefits for women, protecting them from the risk of ovarian or breast cancers. Breastfeeding protects babies against various diseases, it breaks the cycle of diarrhoea, provides key nutrients for the first 6 months, and also breaks the cycle of malnutrition. Breastfed babies grow strong and intelligent.

### How many nutrients do mothers need each day?

Mothers who breastfeed typically require additional calories to meet their nutritional demands. For well-nourished breastfeeding mothers, an increase of 500 kcal per day is recommended compared to their pre-pregnancy calorie intake.

Age, body mass index, amount of activity, and the extent of breastfeeding for each lactating woman - all



impact the additional calories they require.

### Working Mothers and Breastfeeding

Despite a busy schedule, working mothers need to consume a healthy diet with small frequent meals that include components from all 5 food groups to meet the demands of caring for a newborn and the increased nutrient needs during breastfeeding.

### Tips for Healthy Diet and Time Management

With the crunch of time, people often go for foods that are processed and quick to eat, but these processed foods are high in unhealthy fats and sugars. Some tips for incorporating a healthy diet and time management:

- Cereal mix
- Fruit and vegetable salads
- Boiled eggs
- Dry roasted nuts made into powder and consumed

● Opt for nutrient-dense foods, or those that are high in vitamins and minerals, to satisfy your increased caloric needs. Some of these are whole grains, beans, meat and poultry, nuts, milk and dairy products, fruits, and vegetables.

### Breastfeeding and Hydration

Additionally, breastfeeding increases mothers' fluid requirements, so hydrating foods are another excellent option. Drinking adequate water will enable a mother's body to produce a great deal of nutritious milk for her baby. Include 2-3 snacks every day to boost your energy levels for breastfeeding.

Asma Sajid, Senior Dietitian & Nutritionist, Department of Clinical Nutrition & Dietetics, Fernandez Hospital Hyderabad. Views are personal