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**FULL PREPARATIONS BY** THE ADMINISTRATION FOR **SHAHIDI JOD MEL: CHIEF MINISTER** 

#### CORPORATES & INDUSTRY

TATA PLANNING **RS 40,000-CRORE SEMICONDUCTOR UNIT IN ASSAM: CM** 



TWO CRORE TOURISTS **VISITED JAMMU AND KASHMIR UNTIL NOVEMBER** 

## 1150 crore will change the face of focal points in Punjab: Anmol Gagan Mann

PHDCCI 17TH PITEX INAUGURATED BY TOURISM MINISTER GOVT'S PRIORITY TO DEVELOP ECO-TOURISM, ADVENTURE AND WATER SPORTS

**JAGMOHAN SINGH** 

Amritsar

Punjab Minister for tourism and cultural affairs and investment promotion Anmol Gagan Mann has said that the government's top priority is to develop ecotourism, adventures Activities and tourism in Punjab. The

efforts being made by the gov-

ernment in these activities will

exemplary results in the future.

PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry is organizing 17th PITEX 2023, on this occasion Punjab Tourism and Cultural Affairs Minister Anmol Gagan Mann addressing the businessmen of abroad and India. She said that first time in Punjab a government of common people has been formed. She said the Industrialists never got these

The Cabinet Minister said that a special plan has been drawn up for the improvement

kinds of facilities before.

of focal points in Punjab. Under Punjab in just two years. which these focal points are being reconstructed by spending 1150 crore rupees. Under this scheme, industrialists are being given benefit by improving the focal points in Punjab. She said that due to the pro-industry policies of the Punjab government, many large industrial companies have established their industries in the state so far and capital investment of 60 thousand crores has come to

She said that the overall potential of the tourism sector in Punjab is being developed so that Punjabis living abroad, foreign tourists, people coming from different regions of India can experience the historical and touristic places and heritage aspects of Punjab. May you enoy abundance. Mann said that PITEX has played an important role in promoting tourism in Punjab and aligning with our vi-

sion of investment growth. Such events are truly invaluable platforms for marketing, networking and partnership building that contribute to the economic development of Punjab.

She said that at present the cheapest electricity is being provided to the industries in Punjab and the opportunity to do business which this government has given to the industries has never been seen before. He asked the industrialists to cooperate with the government so that Punjab can be brought back on track.

Speaking on the occasion, Amritsar Deputy Commissioner Ghanshyam Thori said that it is a matter of pride for Amritsar that every year a fair is organized here and big businessmen come here to display their products. He said that the PITEX is running well from the 17 years and now it become a big form.

Bollywood artist Jimmy Shergill, who arrived on this occa-

sion, said that a huge number of people are participating in the fairs like PITEX. This is a proof that Punjab is now becoming a colorful Punjab while walking on the right way.

On this occasion D. P. S. Kharbanda C.E.O of Punjab Bureau of Investment Promotion said that after the formation of the new government in Punjab, many reputed companies have invested in Punjab, after that not only employment has increased in Punjab, but also industrial companies have also been established. He said that the proposed investment in Punjab is increasing every year.

On this occasion PHDCCI Punjab Chapter Chairman R. S. Sachdeva said that this is the 17th edition of PITEX which is being organized with the support of the Punjab government. It is being continuously expanded with the support of Punjab Government.

## RBI retains repo rate at 6.5%, GDP growth at 7%, inflation at 5.4 pc



by economists, the Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) did not change the reporate from 6.5 per cent.

Announcing the decision of the MPC after its threeday deliberations, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Friday that the committee unanimously decided to keep the repo rate at 6.5 per cent.

He also said that five out of six MPC members voted for the continued stance of withdrawal of accommodation.

the economic factors, the MPC has predicted GDP growth at 7 per cent in FY24.

As regards the inflation rate, the MPC forecast was 5.4 per cent for 2023-24 taking into account the various domestic issues, including potential agricultural produce. Das also said uncertainty exists due to the geopolitical situation.

The MPC is alert and prepared to take necessary actions that are needed, he said.

The MPC met on Decem-

#### **Punjab MP in Rajya** Sabha seeks release of Sikh prisoners

NEW DELHI: Rajya Sabha MP Vikramjit Singh Sahney on Friday raised the issue of release of Sikh prisoners undergoing imprisonment in cases related to Punjab militancy, saying many of them were facing serious physical and mental

> health ill-The AAP MP from Punjab said in the Rajya

rooted in historical, political and legal considerations. These individuals who were arrested and imprisoned were involved in incidents related to militancy in Punjab. The prolonged incarceration of Sikh prisoners has raised concerns". "Justice delaved is justice denied," Sahney said. "We have witnessed the release of convicts of Bilkis Bano case after completing 15 years in jail and also assassins of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi after completion of 30 years in prison," he said.

#### NCRB report on atrocities against Dalits, tribals expose BJP-RSS's

#### conspiratorial agenda to divide society: Kharge **NEW DELHI:** Congress Presi-

dent Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday took a swipe at the government over crimes against Dalits, SC, ST communities saying that it exposes the BJP-RSS's conspiratorial agenda to divide the society. In a post on X, Kharge said: "According to the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) report, it is the BJP's black letter to make the life's of

SC. ST com-



decade to divide the society." "The regular atrocities on Dalits and tribals exposes the BJP-RSS's hypocrisy of its 'sabka saath', "Kharge said attaching the graphics of the NCRB report. In the graphics he posted that as compared to 2013 there has been an increase of 46.11 per cent crime against Dalit communities while there has been an increase of 48.15 per cent growth in crime against Tribal communities

#### Democracy in India ends where Jammu and Kashmir begins: Omar Abdullah **FW DESK**

Former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said on Sunday that democracy in India ends where J&K begins. Addressing During a zonal

workers' convention at Tikri in Jammu's Udhampur district, Omar lamented the absence of elections in Jammu and Kashmir. He highlighted the discrepancy between the democratic process witnessed in other states and the lack thereof in J&K, stating, "We can only witness the spectacle in other munities un- states, not here. Democracy safe. Injustice, ends where J&K begins."

Abdullah criticized the actions of central government, free education up to university sion of democratic institutions within Jammu and Kashmir. He expressed dismay over the union government's reluctance to involve locals in decisions affecting the region.

They not only disdain the idea of an assembly but also disregard panchayats and ULBs. It wouldn't be surprising if they dismantle DDC councils too, Omar said. "What fault lies with the people of Jammu and Kashmir that they're denied their democratic rights, even the chance to elect their assembly?" Abdullah further questioned



the government's narrative regarding Article 370, pointing out the lack of tangible benefits resulting from its revocation for the people of J&K. He highlighted the advantages the article had provided, including land rights and access to arginalize society.

"These individuals speak incessantly about the negatives of Article 370, yet its revocation brought no substantial change for the people of J&K," Omar

"Contrarily, Article 370 safe- **NEW DELHI:** The governguarded our people's land rights and facilitated free education, benefiting numerous, including the landless, poor, and workers, regardless of their religious or regional affiliations. Its abrogation, however, has led to the people's suffering," he added.

## AAP electoral debacle, a fading charisma of alternative politics!

**SUNIL THAPLIYAL** 

New Delhi

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which has positioned itself as an alternative to the BJP and the Congress in the national capital and Punjab, has been striving to take on these parties in national politics since its inception. However, the party's performance in the recently held elections in the five states was disastrous. Though the party contested in only three states - Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh - it could not win a single seat and lost not only its deposits but also its credibility. The cies it contested in these three



winning the MCD elections and forming a government in chief minister Manish Sisodia, suggesting a deliberate suppres- level, particularly benefiting AAP lost in all 205 constituen- Punjab. The party that started former minister Satyendar Jain states and did not even get 1 the best policy" and the dream Singh, are in Tihar jail facing percent of the votes. The elec- of corruption-free politics seems tion results were an eye-opener to be failing miserably in this rebeen able to get bail for months.

on it and urge the industry to

come up with ideas as we plan

to come up with Jan Vishwas

Addressing the inaugural ses-

sion of 'FICCI's 96th Annual

General Meeting and Annual

Convention' on the theme-'The

World's Growth Engine', he

Bill 2," he said.

spect. The entire top leadership of the party is facing corruption charges. The party's top leaders, including former Delhi deputy and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay corruption charges and have not

#### **RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat** meets Radha Soami sect chief JAGMOHAN SINGH

Amritsar

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat here today visited Radha Soami sect Beas Headquarter, nearly 45 kilometers away from Amritsar to meet sect head Gurinder Singh Dhillon who has worldwide following all over the world. RSS Chief reached Dera Radha Soami Beas with a large convoy amidst thick security blanket. At the time of visit to Beas some prominent faces of RSS were also with him. On reaching inside the Radha Soami headquarter also known as Dera Baba Jaimal Singh RSS Chief held a closed-door meeting with Dera chief Baba Gurinder Singh Dhillon for one hour. At the time of meeting some state level RSS

officials were also present. After meeting over the lunch,

the RSS chief also walked to the langar (community kitchen) of Dera Beas and keenly watched the Chapati making process, besides dedication of Sewadars (volunteers) working inside the Community kitchen. The visit of RSS Chief ahead of the 2024 General

In view of the Lok Sabha elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and several Union ministers

Election is being closely watched.

of the BJP government have met the Dera chief in the past and the RSS chief visit may sidered in the same line since the Radha Soami sect have worldwide

#### Trinamool MP Mahua Moitra expelled from Lok Sabha over 'cash for query' charge

Speaker Om Birla said that MP Mahua Moitra's conduct was 'immoral and indecent' and therefore, it is not appropriate for her to continue as an MP

NEWDELHI: Trinamool MP Mahua Moitra was on Friday expelled from the Lok Sabha after a discussion on the report of the Ethics Committee in the 'cash for query' that was tabled in the Lower House today.

Mahua Moitra, who was not allowed to speak during the discussion inside the House, the Trinamool leader read out her statement outside the Lok Sabha. She said that the Ethics committee broke every rule. Opposition staged a walkout after the Lok Sabha adopted the motion to expel the TMC MP. The House was then adjourned till December 11. Speaker Om Birla said, ".. This House accepts the conclusions of the Committee that MP Mahua Moitra's conduct was immoral and indecent as an MP. So, it is not appropriate

for her to continue as an MP...' The Ethics Committee report probing 'Unethical



Congress (TMC) MP had recommended that Moitra "may be expelled" from the Lok Sab ha and called for an "intense, legal, institutional inquiry" by the central government in a "time-bound manner". "The serious misdemeanours on the part of Mahua Moitra calls for severe punishment. The Committee, therefore, recommend that Mahua Moitra, MP may be expelled from the Membership of the Seventeenth Lok Sabha," the report read.

Participating in the debate today over the Ethics Panel report in the lower house. Manish Tewari, who was nominated by the Congress to speak on the issue questioned whether the procedure of the **Ethics Committee overrides** the fundamental principle of

Natural Justice.

#### Informed advocacy essential to address the challenges of equality paradox and ensure human rights for all humans

ment is working on the Jan

Vishwas Bill 2 with additional

provisions to decriminalize and

make compliance easier, said

Union Minister for Commerce

and Industry Piyush Goyal on

"We are already working

**FW DESK** 

ent fields expressed their solidarity to the victims of human rights violation across the globe and raised their concerns on the paradoxes and challenges surrounding the application of human rights principles and laws in the context of Human Rights Day at a National Seminar organized by the Women's Wing of Jamaat e Islami Hind under the caption: Human Rights and the Equality Paradox.

Rahamathunnissa, the national secretary of Jamaat e Islami Hind in her inaugural address said that informed advocacy is essential to address the challenges of equality paradox and ensure human rights for all human beings. Citing the examples of the ongoing inhuman onslaughts on the innocent children and women in Palestine and atrocities against certain selected groups and attempts of ethnic cleansing and genocide in different countries across the globe including India and the double stand taken by

human rights and social activ-

ists, international organizations,

politicians across the world as the constitution and every perwell as the media; she urged that much has to be done by Prominent women from differ- those who still believe in humanity and justice.

> Jenny Rowena, Assistant Professor University of Delhi said that many are out of the boundary human and delegitimization of human rights is constantly happening. Explaining the way her husband Professor Hanie Babu was trapped into jail by purposely creating false evidence she stated that the real problem is structural. Around thirty thousand Adivasis are pushed into jail charging UAPA through this process.

Bhasha Singh, Journalist and writer opined that equality paradox and human rights have direct connection with democracy. The constitution of India assures equality for all but it depends upon who implements it. Politics decides human rights across the world and unless the voting power is not used properly, no change can be expected. She also said that the Media has now changed into an industry to create perception.

Nivedita Menon, Professor

at Jawaharlal Nehru University

said that the very preamble of

son of integrity has been criminalized in India. She threw light on the Islamophobic policies of the present government. Equality doesn't mean sameness or uniformity. Recognizing differences is also essential. Keep

> alive, she urged. Dr. Sabiha Khanam, a social activist explained the history of UDHR and the 30 articles and how each article has been getting violated in Palestine. She expressed her concern over the state sponsored violence in India and how spaces are shrinking in the country with denying permission even to protest. She advocated that if a better, safer and more liberated world is to be created we shouldn't stop

thinking, talking and debating

trying for changing.
Nandini Sunder, a Sociologist expressed her strong opinion that whatever is happening in Palestine is against the Geneva Convention. We must boycott Israeli products and never forget that Palestine was there and will be there. Regarding India, she reminded the contribution of women also in the framing of the constitution and we should never lose hope.



India is gradually converting into inevitable India and that is going to be the journey for next 25 years. "We are looking at a har Bharat- a Bharat that is

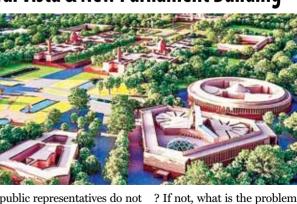
Jan Vishwas Bill-2 in the works to Enhance Ease of Compliance for Industry: Piyush Goyal emphasised that the incredible Bharat of today will indeed be the world's growth engine and collectively India is going to be powering the world economy for several decades to come. Our self-reliant and an Atmanirb- mission is clear to make India a developed nation with a 10x not only vocal for local but a growth to become a \$35 trillion Bharat which goes global. The economy by 2047," he added.

#### People, MPs don't have right to know the exact cost even though RTI on Central Vista & New Parliament Building MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA

The Center is legally bound to

disclose the cost of construction of government properties. The RTI Act strengthened the hand of democracy on this issue during the UPA era. You can argue & wait but will not receive reply, that is what is happening nowadays. According to Urban Development Ministry and Parliament House sources, the government will avoid all questions on the Central Vista issue. This is not the end, the Center has adopted the formula of 'red tape loophole' in the case of RTIs filed seeking to know the detailed cost of the new Parliament Bhawan including Central Vista.

People do not have the right to know where people's tax money is being spent? This question is now gaining momentum around the Central Vista project including the new Parliament building. Because, the Modi government does not feel the need to inform the common people of any information regarding this expenditure. More precisely, the people or



public representatives do not seem to have that right in this age. Now, the full session has started for the first time in the New Parliament Building. And now, the debate about it is building up high. Because, no question related to this project was accepted by the Secretariat in the winter session. At least not on the list for the first five days. But the question is raised the cost of the new parliament building, the cost of the new bungalow of the Prime Minister & Vice President, or the overall Central Vista project, how much money has the Modi government spent? If the public representatives put this question in front of the government, will there be much discomfort

take such questions related to Central Vista an new Parliament Building by the centers? So anger is growing high between the oppositions.

Manoranjan Roy, an expatriate Bengali in Mumbai, wants to know the account of every expense of the new parliament building built with public tax money. Manoranjan Roy has asked for an 'invoice' for everything from chairs and tables to microphones, national flags on Nava Bhavan, marble from Rajasthan, or other decorations. But the answer does not match. RTI letters regarding the cost of the new parliament building have been going on for more than a month now.

## Full preparations by the administration for Shahidi Jod Mel: Chief Minister

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Thursday said that in order to provide the citizen centric services to the people at their doorsteps, the state government will launch 'Bhagwant Mann Sarkar, Tuhade Dwaar' scheme on December 10.

Punjab CM, who conducted surprise checks at Sri Fatehgarh Sahib and Bassi Pathana Saanjh Kendras, said that the move is aimed at providing these services to people in a smooth and convenient manner. He said that this initiative will provide hassle-free and straight access to Government 2 Citizen (G2C) services by launch of the Door-Step Delivery (DSD). Bhagwant Singh Mann said that this initiative will bring all the 43 critical G2C services - such as Certificates of Birth and Deaths,



Income. Residence, Caste, Pensions, Electricity Bill Payments and others right to the doorsteps

CM said that the citizens can avail of the service by calling a dedicated helpline number 1076 and scheduling an appointment at their convenience. He said that citizens will be informed of the documents required, fees applicable and others for the

service to be availed adding that citizens will receive an SMS with the list of documents required and date/time of appointment. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that specially trained personnel will visit their homes/offices at the scheduled time with Tablets and complete the necessary paper-

work, collect fees and give an

acknowledgement receipt with

which the Citizen can track his

Chief Minister said that this scheme will not only enhance the convenience of people but also eradicate the role of middlemen thereby bringing in transparency, efficiency and citizencentric governance. He said that citizens can avail themselves of the DSD Service through both Sewa Kendras and the dedicated helpline number 1076 from December 10, 2023, onwards. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that every effort is being made to facilitate the people so that they can get their routine ad-

ministrative works done easily. Punjab CM further said that elaborate arrangements will be made to facilitate the thousands of pilgrims coming annually to pay respect during Shaheedi Jor Mel. He said that this sacred land is a source of inspiration for not only Sikhs but the entire hu-

manity as all of them converge here every year to pay respect to Chotta Sahibzadas and Mata Guiri on their martyrdom day. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that the state government will leave no stone unturned to ensure that pilgrims do not face any sort of inconvenience during the Shaheedi Jor Mel.

Punjab Chief Minister said that he will personally monitor this work to ensure that it is completed in a time bound manner. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that martyrdom of Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh along with Mata Gujri ji at this pious land had since ages inspired Punjabis to fight against injustice, tyranny and oppression. He said that the supreme sacrifice made by the younger Sahibzadas at a tender age hardly finds any parallel in world history.

## **SGPC President writes a letter** to Bhai Rajoana to withdraw his decision to hunger strike

Amritsar

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President Harjinder Singh Dhami has written a letter to Bhai Balwant Singh Rajoana, who is facing death sentence at Central Jail Patiala and has appealed to him to withdraw his decision to start a hunger strike from December 5, 2023. The SGPC President has written this letter to Bhai Rajoana in light of the decision of the Sikh body's executive committee and the suggestions received in the recent meeting of Panthic representatives. In this letter, Bhai Rajoana has been appealed to withdraw his decision to go on hunger strike, as it is not right as per the Gurmat (teachings of Sikh



Gurus) philosophy. In the letter, Dhami informed Bhai Rajoana about

the decision of the SGPC executive and said that the constitutional review petition filed by the SGPC in his case to the President of India was based on Panthic sentiments, which should not be withdrawn.

Harjinder Singh Dhami wrote to Bhai Rajoana in the letter that in his case, the SGPC has also decided to hold a Panthic protest from Gurdwara Sri Rakab Ganj Sahib in Delhi to Rashtrapati Bhawan on December

#### No farmer burns stubble happily, it is everyone's responsibility to deal with the problem of stubble: Sandeep Pathak

NEW DELHI: Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Rajya Sabha MP from Punjab, Dr. Sandeep Pathak, raised the issue of stubble in Parliament on Thursday and appealed to the Central Government to cooperate with the Punjab Government for a solution.

Addressing Rajya Sabha, Dr. Pathak said that we often blame farmers for burning stubble, whereas some farmers burn stubble not out of hobby but out of compulsion. Governments are clearly respon-

He said that the biggest solution to stop stubble burning is that the

government should provide roper financial assistance government has proposed to give Rs 1000 per acre to the farmers of the state for stubble and has appealed to the Center to give Rs 1500 per acre for this. If the Center agrees to the Punjab Government, then farmers will get Rs 2500 per acre and this

problem will be solved soon.

Another solution to the stubble problem is crop diversification. He said that the MSP of other Kharif crops is very low compared to paddy, therefore farmers prefer to cultivate paddy only. The Punjab government has said that the difference between the MSP of other crops and paddy will be compensated by the state government. If the Central Government also brings a plan to equalize MSP and implements it from this year itself, then good results will be seen.

Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav answered the pathak's questions and rejected the Punjab government's demand of Rs 1500. Sandeep Pathak disagreed with his answer and said that we are not

#### BJP's victory is an endorsement of Prime **Minister Narendra** Modi's policies : Vij

**SATISH HANDA** Ambala

Haryana Home and Health Minister Anil Vij congratulated the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on its victory in the Madhya

Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Rajasthan tions. Vij said that the BJP>s victory is an

endorsement of Prime Minister Narendra Modi>s policies. While interacting to the me-

dia persons today, Haryana Home and Health Minister Anil Vij said that the BJP>s victory is not only of three states but it is a sign of the entire country. Vij said that the people of India are accepting the policies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi

#### ED raids at 13 places of Lawrence Bishnoi aide in Haryana & Rajasthan

**SATISH HANDA** 

Lawrence Bishnoi one of the acised in the murder of Puniab singer Sidhu Moosewala and also involved in many cases reported for ransom demand including threatening to kill film star Salman Khan through his associate gangsters outside the jail. The Enforcement Directorate (RD) alongwith National Investigation (NIA) team on Tuesday had conducted raids at 13 premises in Harvana and Raiasthan as part of a money laundering investigation against an alleged members of his gang including Surender Singh Chiku and Kala Jathedi According to NIA information, these associates are having registered number of cases related to kidnapping, murder, extortion, ransom demand and Arms Act in Haryana state are having close links with Khalistan. besides haing links with 'Khalistani' terror group in money laundering on directions by Lawrence Bishnoi lodged

#### Punjab Police arrest lakhbir rode's associate **Paramjit Singh Dhadi from Amritsar Airport JAGMOHAN SINGH** Terming it as yet another

State Special Operation Cell (SSOC) Amritsar have busted a terrorist recruitment, funding and aiding module with the arrest of Pak-based terrorist Lakhbir Rode's close associate identified as Paramjit Singh alias Punjab Singh alias Dhadi from Sri Guru Ram Das Airport in Amritsar, said Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav in a statement issued here on Tuesday.

Paramjit Singh, a British Citizen and a founder member of International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF), was initially involved in terror activities in Punjab in early 90s and was later arrested in 2003 and was convicted in cases pertaining to terrorist activities. After completion of his sentence, the accused returned to the UK but continued his activities in ISYF by working as a motivator, recruiter and fund



raiser for the organisation in the UK and other European countries.

DGP Gauray Yaday said that in 2021, accused Paramjit Dhadi's name was figured for ing of ISYF cadre in Punjab by arranging and providing funds and militant hardware to target specific persons for disrupting peace and harmony in the state. Following Dhadi's involvement in terror funding and other subversive activities in Punjab, an LOC was got issued to ensure his arrest,

major blow to the terror module attempting to disturb peace in the region, the DGP said that investigation is on to unearth and expose the whole terrorist network

Sharing more details, AIG SSOC Amritsar Sukhminder Singh Mann said that accused Paramjit Dhadi was detained by immigration authorities at Sri Guru Ram Das Airport, Amritsar on Monday, while he was going to board a plane to UK on a British Passport in the name of Punjab Singh. Subsequently, the accused was arrested in a case FIR No. 18 dated 02.09.2021 registered under sections 13, 16, 17, 18, 18-B and 20 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Explosives Act, section 25 of the Arms Act, sections 21, 25, 27-A and 29 of the NDPS Act and sections 120, 120-B of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) registered at Police Station

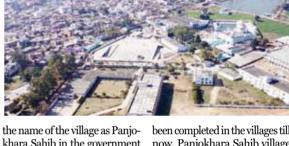
## The name of village Panjokhara of Ambala to be changed as'Panjokhara Saĥib' in the government records

**SATISH HANDA** Ambala

Due to the efforts of Haryana Home and Health Minister, Anil Vij, the historical village "Panjo-

khara" of Ambala Cantonment Assembly constituency is going to be named "Panjokhara Sahib" having famous Gurudwara where pilgrims from distant place visit oftenly according to its religious importance. In this regard, permission has been given by the Central Government to change the name of the village to Panjokhara Sahib and now soon the Harvana Government will again issue its notification

In view of the religious importance of Panjokhara village, Home Minister Anil Vij had earlier discussed with the state government about changing the name of the village to Panjokhara Sahib. Due to his efforts, a proposal to rename Panjokhara as Panjokhara Sahib was passed in the Haryana Assembly session. This proposal was sent by the state government to the central government to mention



khara Sahib in the government records. Now no objection has been raised by the Central Government on this proposal of the State Government, after which the Haryana Government will soon issue its notification. Apart from the Haryana Government, the information about changing the name of the village has also been given by the Central Government to the Home Ministry, Survey of India, Directorate of Map Publication and other departments.

Panjokhara Sahib village was earlier adopted by Home Minister Anil Vij and due to his efforts,

Chaman» and Harkirat Kaur

Chahal and Aman Deep Aman

Meanwhile the research pa-

per presentation session was

chaired by Dr. TM Geethanjali,

Prof Satinder Pannu .. It was co-

chaired by Jyoti Badami, Dr.

Sunder Bains. An open session

was chaired by - Dr Shailaja

Kulkarni and Dr. Satinder Kaur

Kahlon. It was co-chaired by

Prof. Sima Baruah & Surinder

books were also released.

now. Panjokhara Sahib village is now going to be connected to the 40 kilometer long ring road being built in Ambala, which will provide more benefits to the local residents as well as the devotees coming from far away places to visit this village. The road was given a facelift by the Home Minister for the pilgrims to travel from Ambala Cantonment to Panjokhara Sahib. Apart from this, the streets and roads of the village were paved and widened while street lights were also installed, the benefits of which are being

#### availed by the devotees coming satisfied with the minister's here and the local residents. Another case of sexual harassment 258 women poets, writers attend 23rd Rahul Gandhi is a 'Panauti' for Congress, wherever he goes Congress

completely finished: Anil Vij

SATISH HANDA

Ambala

Harvana Home and Health Minister Anil Vij said that Rahul Gandhi is a 'Panauti' for Congress and wherever he goes, Congress faces losses. Vij was intracting with the media persons at his residence in Ambala. He said that Congress was not benefited from Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra in three states. In response to a question asked by media persons in this regard, Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij sarcastically said that he had already said that Rahul Gandhi is a 'Panauti' for Congress, wherever he goes, Congress suffers losses. Ever since Rahul Gandhi started actively attending Congress programs, Congress has been in decline, he added.

At the same time, on the statement of Mamta Banerjee not attending the meeting of the I-N-D-I-A-alliance on December 6, Home Minister Anil Vij said that the I-N-D-I-A-alliance is now fully finished because it was not seen anywhere in the elections of five states and could not even register its presence. Besides, they have disputes among themselves and they do not feel that it should be resolved.

Before the winter session of Parliament, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that anger over the defeat should not be expressed in the House. In

with their problems. In this regard, Vij said that he is a worker, he works wherever recent polls, Vij sdded.



BJP has become winner in recent elections in three states with heavy margin of votes whereas AAP contestants have lost securities whereever their candidates

participated in recent

he is and he tries to solve the problems of the people. On the question of re-organizing the Darbar, he said that its guidelines are yet to be prepared and only after that something will be decided.

In reply to media question as regard recent Vidhan Sabha polls in three states, Vij said that Aam Aadmi Party has become JJP that means 'Jamanat Jabt Party>. BJP has become winner in recent elections in three states with heavy margin of votes whereas Aam Aadmi Party contestants have lost securities whereever their candidates participated in recent polls.

In reply to another media question as regard Janhit Janta Party an alliance political party in Haryana to form government in the state, claiming to contest polls independently have not been able to save their security by any of their contestant in

rassment by the principal of a government school, Uchana in Jind district few days ago in which school principal allegmore than 140 female students. in which the school principal was arrested and sent to the jail, now another similar sexual molestation case has been registered against another principal and a contractor in a government school in Guhla block of Kaithal district in Haryana state, when angry students as well the residents of the village not only applied lock at the school gate but also made a complaint against the principal to the police at dial 112 on Wednesday. The complaint was also made as well as to the State Women Commission whose Chairperson Renu Bhatia, expressing deep concern over the repeated incidents of sex molestation cases in Haryana schools, immediately girls in the school.



edly attempted sexual assault on contacted SP Kaithal to take action within 24 hours and arrest the alleged accused. Police took immediate action in the matter, registered a case against the principal and the contractor and arrested the prime accused identified as Ravi Kumar allegedly sexually harassing girl students in the school and sent to the jail, said Kaithal superintendent of police Upasana that the principal of the school in Guhla block of the district for allegedly sexually harassing four girl students on Thursday. A five-member committee

to the education department under block education officer was formed by the district education officer Rayinder Kumar after attempt was made by the principal and a contractor attempted sexual assault on four

the new domain - hrycrime-

wc-gov.com being started from

#### in educational institutes in Haryana Int'l Poetess Conference at Amritsar including Punjab Women's faces losses, I-N-D-I-A-alliance is Sabha Chairperson Bibi Kushal



**JAGMOHAN SINGH** 

Amritsar

As many as 258 women poets, writers and artists from all over world participated on the 2nd day of 3 days 23rd International Poetess Conference Punjab 2023 at Khalsa College for Women here on Tuesday, Padamshri Dr. Surjeet Patar was chief guest during the occasion.

Giving information, convener of conference and known face of Puniabi literary world and national awardee Dr. Simrat Sumaira said that the women poets, writers and artists from all over India and from twelve

E-ticketing scam worth lskh of ru-

pees exposed in Bhiwani, Karnal

foreign countries including two Padmashri women writers. painters, dancers and musicians are participating in the Kamal Kumari Dash and coconference.

Among others Padma Shri Usha Tomar, Dr. Larry Azad, Dr. Roshan, Sukhi Bath, Gurinder Pal Singh Joson, Dr. Jaswinder Kaur Sohal, Shalini Dutta, Dr. Surinder Kaur, Dalveer Kaur, Dr. Varinder Kaur, Dr. Pankaj Mahajan, Dr. Satinder Kahlon, Dr. Satinder Kaur Buttar, Vijayta Bhard-

participated in the conference. During the occasion, sou-

chaired by Prof. Sima Baruah, Dr. Satinder Kaur Kahlon. Prof Ravinder Kaur, Dr. Mamta and Vinay Sharma The multilingual kavvadhara was chaired by Prof.

waj, Navjot Chabba, Harsimrat

venirs and books of authors and Vinay Sharma.

Kochar . In the end a culture program was organized. chaired by Dr. TM Gitaniali. Prof. Satinder Pannu. It was co-chaired by Prof. Sima Bruha. Dr. Satinder Kaur Kahlon, Prof. Ravinder Kaur, Dr. Mamata

the employees of the ticket booking branch, because the branch is well

# The research session was

needle of suspicion

is also circling on

passenger receipts are being received on which route and which employee has not deposited the cash

in Ambala City, there was a stir Rs 48,400 against conductor Ravindra have already been suspended.

#### **Accused in sexual crime cases in Haryana** Several to be arrested in Haryana Roadways E-ticketing scam **SATISH HANDA** Haryana

and Ambala depots of Haryana roadways in the state. Three operators were suspended in ticketing scam of value Rs 3,31,400 in Bhiwani depot of roadways only in which three operators have been suspended, whereas fraud directions were violated by them. of value worth Rs 86000 has been detected at Karnal depot and as many as 17 roadways bus conductors and two booking clerks were charge sheeted allegedly not deposited the amount collected by e-booking in which a bus conductor Suresh Kumar failed to deposit maximum amount Rs 24,000. Similarly, seven bus conductors were chargesheeted and allegedly not deposited the amount colledted through e-booking in

Ambala depot. According to rules,

the bus conductors have to deposit

the amount collected by r-booking oon after finishing their duty but

According to the General Manager Ambala Roadways the accused bus conductors used the amount collected through e-booking personally instead of depositing soon after finishing their duties and during interrogation failed to provide a satliable to be suspended or register FIRs against them. According to information, If the Roadways Administration officials investigate properly more than 24 em-

ployees may be punished. The

since then. After the scam was exposed

in Bhiwani depot also over the e-ticketing scam. Roadways Bhiwani Depot has suspended three operators. The name of operator Umesh is included for not depositing Rs 2 lakh isfactory reply for which they are 13 thousand for the collection of e-ticketing. Similarly, investigation has proved embezzlement of e-ticketing amount of

response to a question, Anil Vij said that Modi ji is absolutely right. This is democracy, any kind of decision should be accepted and one should not show anger in any way, he said. Similarly, Vij not organizing Janata Darbar these days, people are coming to his home

#### ships and arms licences. According to National Crime Record Bureau, nearly 27% increase in crimes against women has been witnessed in past one year in the state. According to information, 3658 crime cases against females have been recorded in the state in past one year, which include 1716 rape cases registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POSCO) Act during the year. According to state police record 772 cases of

against women and children, the state government Haryana has decided to withdraw all government facilities to them including every type of social pensions, scholar-

In view of increasing sexual crimes

**SATISH HANDA** 



to be derived of all govt facilities

vear 2019 which increased to 883 in year 2020 as such in view of fast increasing crimes against females Haryana state government id going to introduce six fast track courts in the state to punish the accused. The crimes against women

include rape, attempt to rape, sexual harassment, disrobing, stalking, eve-teasing, trafficking and exploitation and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act According to senior raping minors were reported in a senior government functionary

Panchkula district on a pilot basis and would be replicated across the state in due course of time.He said that the data of the accused against whom charges had been framed in a court for a crime against women and children would be fed on the said domain from various stakeholder departments, including the police and prosecution, besides will be liable for suspend all facilities being offered by the government immediately after the filing of a chargesheet against the accused. On the basis of the data, the Social Justice, Empowerment, Welfare of SCs and BCs and Antyodaya (SEWA) Departments would immediately suspend benefits, including pension.

## Anurag Thakur Fires Shots: Congress, Corruption and Cash - An Unbreakable Trio

ED Raids Dheerai Sahu's Premises. Unearths ₹200 Crore in Cash **FW DESK** 

New Delhi

In a stunning revelation, **Enforcement Directorate** (ED) raids on Congress MP Dheeraj Sahu's premises have unearthed over Rs 200 crore in cash, with counting still underway.

Anurag Thakur, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Youth Affairs and Sports, didn't hold back, declaring, "Modi ji is channeling every penny for the

JD(U) asks INDIA leaders

formula for 2024 LS polls

**PATNA**: After a big jolt for

the Congress party in three

states, JD(U) MLC and chief

spokesperson Neeraj Kumar

has advocated implementation

of the 'one seat, one candidate'

formula in the Lok Sabha elec-

The BJP won in three states

and lost the election in Telan-

gana. Narendra Modi is taking

credit for the victory but he

has to take blame for the loss

too. Due to his political sins in

Manipur, he did not dare go

to neighbouring Mizoram for campaigning, "Kumar said.

"Now the time has come for

all regional parties, Left parties

and the Congress to prepare

strategies for the 'one seat, one

candidate' formula to defeat

the BJP in the Lok Sabha elec-

tions in 2024," Kumar said.

Congress party, JD(U) spokes-

person Nikhil Mandal said,

The INDIA bloc should go

according to Nitish Kumar. As

the Congress party was busy in

the elections of five states, its

Following the defeat of the

tions in 2024

to concentrate on 'one

seat, one candidate'



greater good, while Congress is busy amassing black money." Thakur questioned the Gandhi duo, stating, "Rahul and

why the name of Congress echoes wherever corruption

Sonia Gandhi must explain of Scams -Thakur lambasted

Congress, citing a history of scams – from defense to Bofors, and the more recent 2G, Commonwealth, Coal, and others. He quipped, "Congress has perfected the art of looting the nation since independence." Congress and Corruption: An Inseparable Tale -High-

lighting recent instances, Thakur pointed to Chhattisgarh's liquor scam and the Mahadev App scandal, followed by the staggering Rs 200 crore cash discovery in Jharkhand. He challenged Rahul Gandhi, asking why Congress is always linked to corruption and why **CONGRESS**: A Legacy the opposition leader opposes

Nationwide Crackdown on Corruption - Thakur shed light on recent anti-corruption actions, revealing cash discoveries in Bengaluru, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Chennai, and Delhi. He assured the public that every penny looted from the people would be reclaimed, emphasizing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's commitment to a corruptionfree India.

Thakur concluded, "Investigating agencies will act independently, and the black money of Congress will be recovered. The promise to return every looted penny stands strong.

# **Opposition members in** parliament seek timeframe for Assembly polls in J&K



**FW DESK** 

Opposition members in the Lok Sabha pressed for a clear timeline regarding assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir during discussions on two bills related to the region on

Home Minister Amit Shah introduced the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Bill, 2023, and the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2023 for consideration and passing in the Lok Sabha, where both bills were deliber-

ated simultaneously. In the debate, initiated by Congress member Amar Singh, opposition representatives criticized the government's delay in conducting elections in Jammu and Kashmir. They highlighted the government's emphasis on improved law and order in the region but expressed concern over the absence of assembly elections

Several members, including Saugata Roy from the Trinamool Congress, urged the government to announce a definitive timeframe for the forthcoming polls in Jammu and Kashmir. Roy emphasized the need to reinstate the statehood of Jammu and Kashmir and questioned the rationale behind making significant changes without a functioning

Legislative Assembly in place.

He pointed out the unprecedented conversion of a state into a Union Territory under Home Minister Amit Shah's tenure and questioned the necessity of these changes without an elected legislative body. Roy urged the government to prioritize conducting elections in Jammu and Kashmir rather than hastily implementing alterations in the region. The Home Minister is expected to address these concerns and respond to the debate on Wednesday.

He also urged the opposi-

tion not to protest "for the

sake of it". "This is for your benefit. The Opposition has

**Parliament Winter** Session: Cong to seek discussion on unemployment, price rise and rich-poor gap



**KAVITA SHARMA** New Delhi

The Congress party will seek discussion on the prevailing issues like unemployment, rising prices, the widening gap between the rich and the poor in the country, border and foreign policy situation in the ongoing Winter Session of the parliament, which began today.

Briefing reporters in New Delhi, the AICC general secretary incharge of the Communications Department Jairam Ramesh said that the Chairperson of the Congress Parliamentary Party Ms Sonia Gandhi today chaired a meeting of the Congress Parliamentary Strategy Group, which was also attended by the Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, to discuss the strategy for the Winter Session.

Besides, Jairam Ramesh added, since this is going to be the last substantive session ahead of the General Elections. the Congress party expects the government to discuss some issues of public concern like unemployment, rising prices, situation along the border and also the foreign policy. He also said that the Manipur situation was still cause of concern even after six months and the Prime Minister must break his silence. He said, this was not the demand of the Congress party alone, but all the INDIA

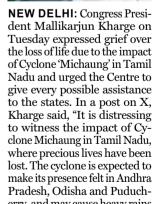
Jairam Ramesh also announced that the Congress president Mallikarjun Kȟarge nad called an informal meeting of the INDIA parties on

On the recently held Assembly elections, Ramesh said while the assembly election results were disappointing despite the victory in Telangana, but the Congress party was not dispirited or dejected.

December 6.

#### **Cyclone Michaung: Kharge urges Centre** to give assistance to state govts





## Our political fight will go on regardless of Supreme Court verdict on revocation of Article 370: Omar Abdullah

**FW DESK** 

Former Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir and National Conference leader, Omar Abdullah, has reaffirmed his commitment to the political battle against the revocation of Article 370, regardless of the impending verdict by the Supreme Court.

We were the first to move the Supreme Court challenging the revocation of Article 370," Abdullah said while addressing reporters in Kulgam. "Regardless of the eventual decision, our political fight will persist."

As the National Capital gets set to

host the inaugural edition of the

Khelo India Para Games from

December 10 to 17, the medical

facilities will be amped up to com-

bat any unforeseen situation. Para

athletes often require specialized and sensitive medical care due to

their unique needs and challenges

and therefore, the National Centre

of Sports Science and Research

(NCSSR) has deputed profession-

als who are trained in managing

diverse medical conditions.

**KAVITA SHARMA** 

New Delhi



The Supreme Court is anticipated to announce its verdict on a series of petitions contesting the abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35-A, which granted

**Union Sports Ministry ensures boost of medical** 

facilities during the Khelo India Para Games

ciences and sports medicine.

During the course of the Khelo

India Para Games, set for a gala

opening ceremony on Monday

December 11, the competitors will

receive comprehensive medical cov-

zational support. This coverage in-

to Jammu and Kashmir.

Abdullah criticized the BJPled Central government, accusing it of straining relations between Jammu and Kashmir residents and the rest of the country with the decision to revoke Article 370. "No one was content with the decision," he asserted during his media address. The contentious move to revoke the special status under Article 370 was executed by the Centre on August 5, 2019, during the **BJP-led National Democratic** Alliance government's second

term, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Article 370, established on October 17, 1949, exempted the erstwhile state from the majority of the Constitution's provisions, allowing it to formulate its own Constitution. The prolonged case challenged the government's decision to annul Jammu and Kashmir's special status under Article 370, along with contesting the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, which divided the state into two Union Territories - Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

## Election results show people have rejected negativity: Modi the Prime Minister said.

**NEW DELHI:** A day after the results of Assembly elections in four states were announced, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the results showed that "people have rejected negativity" and urged the opposition "not to vent the frustration of defeat" inside Parliament.

The Prime Minister was addressing the media ahead of the Winter Session of Parliament. He also said the results of the Assembly elections were very encouraging for those who are committed to the welfare sion at the Sports Authority of of the common people. The Prime Minister said, "Political temperature is soaring." He said that on Sunday the ceive requisite medical support to results of the four-state eleccompete safely and address any tions came out.

> aging. Encouraging for those and proceed with positivity. who are committed to the wel- Please do not vent the frustrafare of the common people of tion of defeat in Parliament, "



the country and to the bright future of the country, "PM Modi said. "After the election results, this session presents a golden opportunity for the opposition to progress with a positive mindset. I request all MPs to come to Parliament with preparation. They must ing victories in the Assembly shed the negativity they have elections of Madhya Pradesh,

a significant role in a democracy. Please understand it. The country does not want to halt on the road to development, "the Prime Minister said. The Prime Minister also reiterated that there are only four "castes" in the country -women, youngsters, farmers and the poor. Those focused on the empowerment of these groups through proper policies and last-mile delivery get a lot of support, "he said. The jibe at the opposition parties came a day after the BJP's thump-Raiasthan and Chhattisgarh

Parliament's Winter Session is beginning on Monday and

#### leaders were not paying atten-The NCSSR, a scheme impletion to the INDIA bloc. Now mented by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Government of India erage as part of the event's organithe Congress has contested elections and the results are and the Sports Authority of India (SAI), aims to support the anchor of the INDIA bloc research, education and innovation on-site medical teams, and access and he is capable of crossing in respect of high performance of to necessary healthcare facilities.

## 27 crore Ayushman Cards issued across India for healthcare facilities, says Dr Akshay Jain

**Outdoor Air Pollution Key determinant for** lung cancer says health experts in lung cancer awareness month

**NEW DELHI:** In a significant stride toward combating lung cancer, India is at the forefront of enabling advanced treatment and diagnosis options for patients. Recognizing the pressing need for comprehensive solutions, our commitment aims to revolutionize the landscape of cancer care with the right health facilities says Dr Akshay Jain, Joint Director, National Health Authority Government of India at the ASSOCHAM 2nd Conference on Lung Cancer- Enabling Innovations in Treatment Pathways held in New Delhi

Dr. Jain emphasized Ayushman Bharat's goal to provide comprehensive, need-based healthcare instead of a sectoral, fragmented approach to health service delivery. The goal of this program is to implement ground-breaking interventions that address the healthcare system as a whole (encompassing preventive, promotion and ambulatory care). Ayushman Bharat is a continuum of care initiative that consists of two interconnected parts: the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) and Health and Wellness Centers (HWCs). There are 27000 health facilities

and 27 crore Ayushman cards are issued across the country. Digital Ayushman Act is the key to move ahead with seamless transaction integration.

Dr. Yutaro Setoya, Team Lead, Non-Communicable Diseases, World Health Organisation. India, delivered a special address where he highlighted how 8.1% of cancer-related deaths are attributed to lung cancer. He mentioned annually, 1 lakh people are diagnosed with lung cancer and the disease significantly impacts the working-age population. WHO also commends India for its proactive ban on e-cigarettes, he added

Dr. Dipjyoti Das, Head Medical Planning and operations, Assam Cancer care Foundation in his address talked about delivering equitable and affordable healthcare in backward regions. He further added, through partnerships with pharmaceutical companies and healthcare providers, we are working to reduce barriers to entry for groundbreaking lung cancer treatments, offering renewed hope to patients in Assam.

Padmashri Prof Dr. D. S Rana Chairperson ASSOCHAM National Healthcare Council and Board of Trustees, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital how smoking directly linked to lung cancer and how it acts as a barrier affecting lung health. Smoking is by far the leading risk factor

in India to foster healthcare for lung cancer. About 80% of lung cancer deaths are thought to result from smoking.

Ms Neelima Dwivedi, Senior Director External Affairs MSD Pharmaceuticals Pvt Ltd stressed on India being the 2nd largest consumer in the world for tobacco and 28% of Indian population consume it. In this lung cancer awareness month. key stakeholders should join hands to curb the risk of most diagnosed cancer. A critical component of our strategy is to raise awareness about lung cancer, its risk factors, and the importance of early detection, she added. There are environmental and

occupational determinants of lung cancer said Dr. Abhishek Shankar Assistant Professor, Department of Radiation Oncology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi mentioning the rise in incidence of lung cancer among nonsmokers. Lung cancer screening implementation can be part of a larger effort to educate the population about preventive healthcare and the benefits of early screening.

By integrating advanced diagnostics, accessible treatments, education, research, and support services, we aim to empower both healthcare professionals and patients in their journey toward better lung health said Dr Sudhir Kalhan Chairperson ASSOCHAM National Digital Healthcare Taskforce.

## Modi's MPs are extremely disrespectful to the tribals of Bengal; Trinamool asking will PM support him

MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA New Delhi

been undertaken by NCSSR on

behalf of the Khelo India divi-

India and the Ministry of Youth

Affairs and Sports to ensure that

all participating para athletes re-

during the games," mentioned

Col Bibhu Nayak, Director-in-

Charge, NCSSR.

The natives means 'Adivasis' of Bengal are marrying Bangladeshi intruders! BJP MP Nishikant Dubey made this disrespectful comment while speaking in the Zero hour in Parliament and he directly alleged that Mamata Banerjee was condoning it. While talking about the welfare of tribals, the Lok Sabha house was turned into an uproar by the BJP MP's comments. Loksabha votes are very near. Before that, the opposition is well aware that the NRC issue will make the Saffron camp. But the Trinamool MPs



exploded because it was beyond imagination that the BJP would not stop disrespecting the tribal community in this way.

BJP MP from Godda, Jharkhand, Nishikant said in Lok Sabha at 'Zero Hour', once Mamata Banerjee said

Many political observers

organisational post in the party

he is expected to contribute im-

that Bangladeshi infiltrators are coming to West Bengal and changing the map of Bengal. But she did not stop it after becoming the chief minister. Districts like Maldah, Murshidabad are filled with Bangladeshi infiltrators. Bangladeshis are coming and marrying tribal women and taking away the land. And that is why the population of the whole country is increasing but the tribals are not increasing. This incident is happening in districts of Jharkhand, Bengal, Bihar. Therefore, NRC (National Register of Citizens) should be introduced to chase Bangladeshis out of the country".

Opponents are raising ques-

and occupying land, and then obtaining citizenship? Otherwise, he would not have raised the NRC issue. His allegation is that the Mamata Banerjee-Hemant Soren government is aiding infiltration. According to a Trinamool MP, Nishikanta must have forgotten that he disrespected the tribal community while establishing the issue of infiltration. However, Kakali Ghosdastidar joined the session in protest. Alongwith Sudeep Bandyopadhyay, Aparupa Poddar, Pratima Mandal are also joined in tune

Nishikanta? Bangladeshis

infiltrating, marrying tribals erry, and may cause heavy rains in Jharkhand.

## Pandian's entry into BJD may end succession debate and speculation about dynastic politics

Aravinda Mohapatra Bhubaneswar

Former IAS officer and 5T chairman VK Pandian's recent enrolment as a member of the ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) marks his formal entry into politics. This is also likely to put an end to the succession debate in Odisha's longest surviving regional party as Pandian has joined BJD with the blessings of chief minister Naveen Patnaik.

This is yet another political master stroke of Patnaik who with this move has successfully projected himself as someone who does not believe in dynastic politics. He has given a lie to the speculation about him choosing a successor from within the family. Instead by projecting



believe that his entry into the ruling BJD is the best thing to mensely to its growth and even have happened to Odisha poliguide the party's campaign in the next general elections. tics in recent years. Irrespective of whether or not he holds any

Till recently people only used the state enjoyed such a strong to guess about the role he was playing in strengthening the

party which has emerged as the most successful regional party in the history of Odisha. Never before has a regional party in

cadre base nor functioned in

वय वर्ग वर्ग

such an organised manner. Pandian, who was till recently private secretary to the chief minister, was easily the man behind BJD's success. In collaboration with chief minister Naveen Patnaik he turned the party into an election winning But all this while he never re-

ally stepped out of the line and embarrassed his boss. When things started getting difficult for him and Patnaik's political opponents began questioning his visits to districts, he took the conscious decision to give up his job as a highly successful and powerful bureaucrat so that he could don the political garbs formally. That transition is complete with his joining the BJD.



## GST at 6.5 years: A turning point in tax reform journey

s the Goods and Services

Tax (GST) crosses six and a half years, India witnesses a notable financial milestone. The GST has amassed almost Rs 3.4 lakh crore in October and November, marking these months as some of the highest in monthly collections. October saw a 13.4% increase, while November witnessed a 15.1% rise in GST inflows, indicating a resurgence after a period of slowing gains. This uptick, likely fuelled by festive spending, places the average monthly collection for 2023-24 at a robust Rs 1.66 lakh crore. Economists even predict central GST receipts to exceed budget estimates, despite potential slow-downs in the year's final quarter. This financial buoyancy, partly due to stringent compliance and a crackdown on tax evasion, signals an opportune moment for the government to recalibrate its GST strategy. The tax system, initially promised to be 'good and simple', still grapples with complexities. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's recent acknowledgment of the GST's transition from "uncertainty to certainty" reflects the need for clarity and stability in India's tax regime. This journey towards certainty must encompass broader aspects to assure investors of a stable and predictable tax environment. Crucially, the backlog of taxpayer appeals against central GST levies, which surged to nearly 15,000 cases by October, calls for immediate operationalization of appellate tribunals. This move will not only reduce pendency but also establish clearer precedents for future tax disputes. With general elections looming, some hesitation in undertaking these reforms is expected. However, the GST Council must remain focused on its unfinished agenda, continuously deliberating on crucial reforms. Post-election, these discussions should rapidly translate into action, ensuring the GST evolves into the efficient, streamlined system it was envisioned to be. Such proactive measures will reinforce India's commitment to fiscal responsibility and economic transparency, fortifying investor confidence and contributing to the nation's sustained economic growth.

#### LETTERBOX

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HARBANS MUKHIA BELIEVES PERIODISATION'S FLEETING NATURE WILL GROW CLEARER WITH DIVERSE HISTORICAL RESEARCH

# Problematising periodisation in history



he all-too-familiar triad of historical periodisation — ancient, medieval, modern — now universal, has rather specific provincial and temporal origins. All societies evolved their own modes of dividing their history into periods: dynastic and regnal was the one prevalent in India, Iran, the Turko-Mongol regions, besides Europe. The creation of eras, such as Vikrami, Shaka, and Ilahi or the era of piety in Islam coinciding with the Prophet and the first four caliphs and the steady decline afterwards were among many other modes.

The triad took birth in Europe around the 16th-17th centuries, first in the history of theology and steadily in society's history, finding its largely evolved form in 1688 at the hands of Cellarius, a German. This was the era when over the past few centuries, Europe had been creating its new self-image of rationality, science and progress, in short, modernity; to reinforce it, the inverse image of its immediate past, the medieval, was also created as one of irrationality, regression, and superstition which were constituted as the synonym of religion/religiosity — in short, the "Dark Age" from which Europe was progressing into Enlightenment.

With the expansion of Europe to the rest of the world during the 18th-20th centuries, besides its trade, arms and politics, its intellectual concepts also found entry into what were becoming its colonies. The indigenous notions of historical time and space were replaced by the European triad through what Jack Goody calls "The Theft of History" in an unequal power relationship. Thus, the Dark Age of Europe was transferred to the rest of the world from which Europe must rescue it by bringing to it Enlightenment through colonialism. A very "rational" legitimation of colonial-



ism. The triad first came to India with a further distortion; whereas in Europe, its premise was the retreat of backwardness in the face of progress, James Mill introduced it as the Hindu, the Muslim and the British periods underlining the legitimation of modern British rule which would rescue India from the dark age of medieval Muslim rule.

Periodisation is riven with problems. Being a human construct, rather than a ground reality, it is, by its nature, transient. Some signs of its transience have already appeared with several qualifications getting attached to it: Late Antiquity, Early Medieval, Late Medieval, and Early Modern. What shape the transience is going to take in the near or distant future is hard to predict. One wonders if our modern period will still be considered modern in the 22nd or the 23rd century. For sure, there is great regional variance in the application of the triad in the regions around the world with China taking its "medieval" into several centuries BCE and some such as India drawing the 18th century CE into it. Indeed, some powerful voices such as Jacques Le Goff's have questioned the very notion of dividing history into tranches.

On the other hand, the notion of periodisation is premised on the very tranches, once characterised as stages of development, each self-contained and autonomous in a sequence of succession, indicating irreversible change or progress from the preceding stage. Change and continuity are envisaged here as dichotomous. Are they really? Historians have got round to witnessing much continuity

in what is seen as change and change in continuity. The idea of stages of development has quietly disappeared from their horizon

#### The notion of modernity

At the heart of periodisation lies the notion of modernity, for the triad originated from the "modern" and travelled back to the medieval and the ancient; it thus created the image of history of a travel back from the present to the past instead of the other way round. It vested modernity with the attributes of what it saw as developments in Europe from the 17th-18th centuries onward, ones we have recounted above and much else besides, from where the rest of the world was obliged to emulate them mostly by force. The modern world that we inhabit was thus essentially the West's creation. This perception has held unquestioned sway for over a couple of centuries everywhere. It is only in the past three or four decades that the view has come under sharp scrutiny in the West as elsewhere. Today, it has become hard to speak of modernity in the singular; "modernities" has far

greater space in the academic discourse. Modernity that had for long been accepted as an objective reality "out there" in Chris Bayly's words has become subjective in each variant context.

Implied in this transformation is the premise that the modern world that we inhabit and its "modernity" are not the gift of any one region of the globe and any single segment of humanity nor confined to a given time bracket but rather the cumulative outcome of contributions of all societies and civilisations throughout the period of history known to us. Whether in terms of material objects such as crops, metals or technologies or ideas and concepts such as philosophies, sciences, religions, the fine arts, literature, economic systems, and state systems, all civilisations have at different times added to humanity's multi-faceted capital to give us the world we live in.

This calls for the treatment of history as a universal entity of which regions form constituents — a call made several times by historians in the past. It also implies history to be a continual process rather than an aggregate of disparate tranches.

The transience of the notion of periodisation is likely to become increasingly manifest as history embarks on exploring areas of research such as climate, and planetary history, and even what is increasingly being questioned as pre-history and to an extent archaeology. These are far less susceptible to getting tied up in temporal boxes than the history that is still the predominant norm. The question also is this: how long will this remain the predominant norm?

Harbans Mukhia taught history at Jawaharlal Nehru University. Views are



SANJAY VALENTINE GATHIA SAYS PRO-DEMOCRACY FORCES REMAIN COMMITTED TO FIGHTING FOR A FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC UNION

## $My an mar's \ actual \ political \ unification \ begins$



ndian think-tanks, analysts, writers and the media dub Myanmar's Spring Revolution as militancy and militant action against Myanmar's military, but there are many developments which we in India should take into account.

In 2022, the parallel governance system set up by the National Unity Consultative Council (a decision-making political alliance of pro-democracy forces and ethnic armed organisations established with more than 400 diverse representatives on March 8, 2021) organised an online "People's Assembly convened in January 2022", which adopted the Federal Democracy Charter (FDC) declared on March 31, 2021 by the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH), thereby leading to the formation of the National Unity Government (NUG) and in shaping "Myanmar's Spring Revolution".

#### Charter, a political guideline

Events set in motion after the formation of the NUG, of having a historical FDC which underwent multiple processes of being drafted and approved by various representatives of the elected lawmakers, political parties, civil disobedience movement, protest/strike leaders, civil society organisations, women, gender and youth organisations/representatives and other political stakeholders, are a political milestone in Myanmar's post-colonial independence, nation formation process, with recognition of equality for diverse ethnic groups. The charter in itself is not a legal document and still needs to address many constitutional checks and balances. Yet, it has laid the ground for some negotiated and consensual constitutional framework, serving as a political guideline for any constitutional development in the future



of the country. Even with the existing shortcomings, the charter's consensual adoption cannot be questioned as a frivolous political exercise. It is the strongest reflection of the will of all the people of Myanmar, and their inclusive political aspirations for a federal democratic structure addressing basic human rights, non-discrimination, minority rights, women and gender equality.

The post-coup political developments in Myanmar need to be understood as a historical and a fantastic collective work of deliberations, negotiation and political consensus undertaken by the diverse pro-democratic groups in Myanmar.

Arriving at a pivotal political moment in the country's history, the diverse ethnic groups involved in the pro-democracy movement have proven that peace in Myanmar is possible and achievable without the political involvement of the military.

#### NUG formation is a political feat

The composition of the NUG should not be seen by Indians to be just another NLD-led body (which many continue to identify it

as so). One needs to have a good look at the composition of the NUG which has representatives from the National League for Democracy, Kachin Political Interim Coordination Team Chin National Front/Interim Chin National Consultative Council, New Mon State Party, Shan Nationalities League for Democracy, Karenni National People's Liberation Front, Ta'ang National Party, Kayan New Land Party, All Burma Federation of Trade Unions, and many individual representatives. It is a political feat while the country is still having an armed revolution and an active civil disobedience movement, and is also working on interim arrangements on a consensual basis ("a multiethnic governance structure").

Myanmar's military has been hit by the sliding morale of and defections in the armed forces, and also hammered by coordinated attacks across the socio-political landscape on every front, politically and militarily, even when the Spring Revolution is fought in a very asymmetrical manner. An article in November in the Irrawaddy (independent Myanmar media) said: "Operation 1027 is creating a new political template for Myanmar's future." The ongoing increased coordinated armed offences against the military have only proven that the decades-old notion of the Myanmar military being essential for the future of the country has been proven false.

In another article in the Irrawaddy in January 2023, "Reviewing Myanmar's Spring Revolution, 2 Years on From the Coup", Banyar Aung emphasised how Myanmar's military has always used the constitution and law as a tool for itself and for its own interests. The military went on to claim widespread fraud in the general elections in 2020, and used the pretext of a threat to sovereignty and

territorial integrity to stage a failed coup, while seizing power by force. In a few days, the whole country erupted in protest against the military coup, leading to widespread civil disobedience movement and a violent uprising once the military started its violent pogrom against its own people including Bamar people, irrespective of their ethnic background.

#### Pushing back against the military

The ongoing ensemble of coordinated and collective efforts by the revolutionary prodemocracy forces is pushing the military out of many ethnic- and Bamar-dominated areas. Stakeholders have shown an unprecedented and unwavering strong politico-public commitment to fight against the military and build a long-lasting politically sound, federal and democratic union — something which was not seen during the 8888 revolution.

The process of Myanmar's actual unification has just begun. The collective effort of the NUG is set to ensure that it completes the incomplete process of nation and state building left after colonial rule and shattered after the military took over the country for seven decades, even after the 8888 revolution. Public fury has been unleashed since February 1, 2021, on an unprecedented scale.

"The revolution is here to stay, and we will not rest until the military is removed," my Burmese friends insist.

Sanjay Valentine Gathia is Founder and Director of Borders and Broader Conversations Initiative which organises P2P conversations and networking between India-Myanmar-Thailand (IMT), with a focus on India's Act East Policy and India's Neighbourhood Policy. Views are personal.



**BOOKS: REVIEW** 

# New book unveils Indian cat's tale in art and poetry

n the world of literature, a book that starts with a confession often piques curiosity. "The Indian Cat" by B.N. Goswamy, a renowned art historian who passed away on November 17, begins with such a twist. Despite not being a cat lover, Goswamy's 27th and final book emerges as a whimsical yet scholarly tribute to the enigmatic feline, spanning 290 pages and priced at Rs 1,299 by Aleph.

by Aleph.

At its heart, "The Indian Cat" is a three-part journey exploring the multifaceted presence of cats in Indian culture. The first part delves into ancient texts like the Panchatantra, Jataka Tales, and Anvar-i-Suhaili, where cats are depicted in varied roles - from holy figures to cunning creatures. Here, Goswamy offers a nuanced perspective, showing that despite the cat's reputation for deception, Indian mythology and history harbor no animosity towards these animals.

The book's second part, which

meticulously curates, is perhaps the most engaging. He analyses 58 paintings, illustrating the understated coexistence of cats and humans in Indian art. These aren't mere portraits of cats but scenes of life where cats, often minuscule and easy to miss, make subtle appearances. Goswamy's keen eye and descriptive annotations breathe life into these images, whether it's a cat donning a gold collar or engaged in playful antics. A particular standout is the painting titled "Strange happenings in a sprawling household", which offers a humorous and chaotic snapshot of life, where cats play a discreet yet pivotal role.

In the final section, Goswamy traverses the realms of poetry. Transcending languages like Urdu, Persian, Hindi, and Bengali, he showcases how cats have been immortalized in verses as creatures of wonder and affection, far removed from any negative connotations.

The first part delves into ancient texts like the Panchatantra, Jataka Tales, and Anvar-i-Suhaili, where cats are depicted in varied roles - from holy figures to cunning creatures

Poets like Mir Taqi Mir, Asadullah Khan Ghalib, and Jibanananda Das are featured, celebrating the cat's noble and endearing qualities.

Goswamy's exploration arguably leads him to a silent admiration for cats, a sentiment that he subtly transfers to the reader. "The Indian Cat" stands not just as a historical or cultural study but as a testament to the transformative power of research and storytelling. Goswamy's



The Indian Cat By B.N. Goswamy Aleph; 240 pages; Rs 1,299.

narrative is both enlightening and entertaining, making the book an ideal bedside companion for nightly reading.

In essence, "The Indian Cat" does for cats what viral videos do on the internet – it spreads joy and an irresistible urge to share the love. Goswamy's final work, thus, is more than just a book; it's a celebration of an animal that has captivated humans through ages, across myths, arts, and poetry. It's a fitting legacy for a scholar of Goswamy's stature, ensuring that his insights and observations continue to inspire and educate long after his passing.

Continuing with the essence of "The Indian Cat," the book's charm lies not only in its content but also in the way Goswamy weaves cultural and historical narratives. He

doesn't just present facts; he invites readers on a journey through time and space, offering a window into the Indian subcontinent's rich cultural tapestry. The anecdotes and stories are carefully chosen to represent a broad spectrum of the cat's symbolic presence in Indian society. From the cat as a spiritual symbol in ancient texts to its role as a muse in the arts, Goswamy's study is comprehensive and insightful.

Goswamy's approach to the subject is particularly refreshing because of his initial ambivalence towards cats. This detachment allows him to explore the topic with an academic rigor and objectivity that might have been clouded by personal affection. Yet, as he delves deeper into his research, there is a subtle shift in tone. The scholarly distance gradually gives way to a gentle appreciation, mirrored in the increasingly warm and sometimes even playful descriptions as the book progresses. It is this transformation in the author's perspective that lends the book an additional layer of depth, making it a compelling read not just for cat lovers or art enthusiasts but for anyone interested in cultural

# Tata planning Rs 40,000-crore semiconductor unit in Assam: CM

Himanta Biswa Sarma said the Tata Group held initial talks with the state government about the semiconductor assembly and packaging plant, and satisfied with the discussions here, they have approached the Centre

Guwahati : Tata Group is planning to set up a semiconductor processing plant in Assam at an investment of about Rs 40,000 crore, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Friday.

Addressing a function here, he said it has approached the Centre for the final nod after discussions with the state government, and the go-ahead is expected soon.

There is a very good news for us. Tata Electronics Ltd has submitted an application for



setting up an electronic centre at Jagiroad," Sarma said.

"They have submitted a proposal to the Government of India with an outlay of about Rs 40,000 crore," he added.

Jagiroad, in Morigaon district, is about 55 km from the state's largest city Guwahati.

environment for industrialisation. We are in touch with the Centre and hope that the final approval will be given in a month or two," he said. The chief minister said that

the conglomerate has also approached the state government to train 1,000 people for employment in the unit. "We used to always ask why

electronics and IT industry did not come to our state. Now it is changing," Sarma said. In a post on X, he thanked

PM Narendra Modi "for his

continuous guidance in trans-

forming our State". The state cabinet had in August approved the Assam Semiconductor Manufacturing and Electronic Production

## India World's Second Most Coveted CDS to Inaugurate HAL's Avionics Expo Manufacturing Hub, Says Finance minister Sitharaman

ister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday informed Rajva Sabha that India is the second most sought-after manufacturing descontinuously maintained that

> "Manufacturing contrib-

> > nificantly

to economy on the back of various measures like PLI scheme," she said. The union minister added that all sectors are growing significantly because of the Make in India programme and PM Modi>s schemes.

At preset, the manufacturing sector is contributing 13.9 per cent to the economy. The Purchasing Managers Index

**NEW DELHI:** Finance Min- (PMI) in November was 56. "Our second quarter growth has been very high and it is the highest in the world and we

> growing economy," she added. Sitharaman informed that the second quarter growth is the highest in the world and we continue to maintain the momentum of being the fastest

growing economy.

momentum of being the fastest-

"During the same same quarter-July to September, 2023, the third and fourth largest economies of the world contracted. For India to reach 7.6 per cent in the second quarter, its a very significant number. In just last eight years, India has become the worlds fifth largest economy," Sitharaman told the House.

## 2023 in Delhi; Focus on HAL Capabilities & Self-Reliance in Avionics

ARUN KUMAR RAO Bengaluru

from HAL said.

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) is all set to showcase its rich legacy in the design, development and production of a diverse range of avionics systems during Avionics Expo-2023 to be held at Dr Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi on December 7-8, 2023. The Expo will be inaugurated by the Chief of Defence Staff, Press statement

"We will demonstrate HAL>s capabilities and contributions toward self-reliance in avionics, to our stakeholders, including the Indian Armed Forces, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Civil Aviation, DRDO and other important institutions", said C B Ananthakrishnan, CMD (Additional Charge), HAL. "The event will serve as a hub

for professionals, industry leaders and stakeholders from the aviation sector. They will have ample networking opportunities to establish meaningful connections, foster collaborations and explore potential business partnerships. It is a testament to HAL>s commitment to advancing aerospace technology in India", said Dr D K Sunil, Di-



including advanced flight con-

trol systems, communication

systems, navigation systems

and more. Panel Discussions: Engaging panel discussions will feature experts from the Indian Armed forces, HAL, partner organizations, and academia. Topics will span emerging trends in avionics, challenges in system integration, and the future of aviation electronics, providing a



#### holistic view of the sector. Live Demonstrations: 'HAL Avionics Expo 2023' will offer live demonstrations of avionics products and systems, providing in India", said Dr D K Sunil, Director (Engineering and R&D).

## **Guidepoint Expands Indian Footprint in Mumbai**

MUMBAI: Guidepoint, the world's leading expert network and research enablement platform, proudly announced today the expansion of its Mumbai office in support of the firm's rapid growth in the Indian market.

Jon Adkins, Guidepoint's Director and Head of International, commented, "This investment in India underscores our unwavering commitment to providing our Indian clientele - investors, consultants, and corporations — with unparalleled local perspectives to help harness global expertise."

Guidepoint's new office is strategically situated within the prestigious Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) in Mumbai - a distinguished business epicenter housing a multitude of international corporations, financial institutions, and headquarters of major Indian enterprises.



President of Client Services, expressed, "With a rapidly growing team of dedicated professionals in India, we aim to continue exceeding the expectations of our clients with timely and invaluable expert perspectives, enabling them to make well-

standing and empower decisionmaking through real-time access to data and hard-tosource knowledge. Backed by the world's largest network of expertise, the company provides critical context and dimension on any topic, letting top compa-

#### **Sweets and Namkeen Manufacturers Raise Voice Against** Inconsistent GST Charges



World Mithai and Namkeen Convention 2023, sweets and namkeen manufacturers voiced concerns regarddistribution challenges and shortage of skilled labour. The Federation of Sweets

and Namkeen Manufacturers (FSNM) director, Firoz H Naqvi, said, "Consuming rasogolla at a retail sweet shop incurs a 5 per cent GST without input credit while the same incurs a 5 per cent GST when consumed at home. A uniform tax practice should be established." FSNM is organising the sixth edition of the World Mithai and Namkeen Convention 2023 in Kolkata from December 17 to 19.

The three-day event will host 300 representatives from 20 countries, showcasing modern machinery and high-quality raw materials.

FSNM president, Virendra Jain, said, "Over 30,000 B2B visitors, with 5,500 industry per cent growth rate (CAGR) the country's development and members will be attending

## **India's Hand Tool Market to** touch \$416.2Mn by 2029



**MUMBAI**: The hand tools market of India is estimated to reach USD 416.2 million by 2028 with a CAGR growth of 4.3 per cent, said R.K. Rai, Director, Office of the Development Commissioner, Ministry of MSME. Currently the market is valued at USD 342.8 million in 2022 and the protection is for 7 years.

Speaking at International Hardware Fair 2023 organised by Koelnmesse Pvt. Ltd., he said, "India is set to rival China in the Asia-Pacific hand tools market. Additionally, the industrial fasteners market is expected to hit Rs 460 billion by 2023, growing at a strong 9.6 per cent CAGR since 2018.

'India's Hardware & Building Materials market is also thriving, with a projected 1.68 2023-28) globally, contrib- manufacturing sector, experts

global exports," he added. Speaking at the event

held initial talks with the

state government about the

semiconductor assembly and

packaging plant, and satisfied

with the discussions here, they

have approached the Centre.

major investment in the state

"If all goes well, we will see a

powered by EISENWAREN-MESSE - International Hardware Fair Cologne, Arun Kumar Garodia, Chairman of the **Engineering Exports Promo**tion Council (EEPC), said for India to achieve a goal of USD 1 trillion in merchandise export by 2030, engineering exports must have a significant share of USD 300 billion.

"Despite facing global challenges like the pandemic and geopolitical conflicts, Moody's projects India's 2023 growth at 6.7 per cent the highest among G20 nations," he emphasised.

The Indian engineering sector, particularly the hardware industry, is a rapidly growing and diverse segment, making a substantial contribution to

## **AVer Audio Tracking Camera Takes Silver at Taiwan Excellence Awards**

TAIPEI, TAIWAN: AVer Information Inc., an award-winning provider of video conferencing solutions, once again received nationwide recognition at the Taiwan Excellence Awards. Today, the AVer CAM570, a unique 4K dual-lens audio tracking camera, is honored with the Silver Award at the Taiwan Excellence Award

AVer Vice President Kings Wang announces: "We are delighted that the CAM570 has risen amongst the tough competition in this year's Taiwan Excellence Awards, a testament to the efforts AVer has made for audio-visual research, development, and innovation. We will continue to raise our standards and provide our customers with the best audio-visual solutions we can.

The CAM570 is AVer's first 4K dual-lens audio tracking camera, incorporating top-level camera specifications. It has a PTZ camera boasting 36X total zoom and an AI lens with a 95° field of view. It utilizes its three pairs of built-in audio sensors that make beamforming possible, receiving human voices from up to 10 meters away. With the touch of a button, audio tracking allows the camera to track the speaker so that meeting attendees can focus on the presentation.

What truly stands out is the exclusive AI technology the device offers. AI functions include



ery meeting participant. The 95° wide-angle AI lens provides a panoramic view of the conference room, detects meeting attendees at all times, and triggers the PTZ camera to automatically frame everyone when needed. Smart Gallery, a function that applies AI technology to frame each participant, presenting everyone equally on-screen in headshot or half-body frames. These features allow a clear view of each participant's facial expressions and body language, creating an immersive virtual collaboration experience.

In the 32nd year of the Taiwan Excellence Awards, a total of 948 products have been submitted with only 30 products receiving the Gold and Silver Awards. Aside from the CAM570 audio tracking camera, AVer products that received the Taiwan Excellence Award include the VB350 dual-lens munity and the environment, PTZ video bar, A30 all-purpose and it employs stringent green alizer, PTZ310I

MD120UI PTZ camera, and Founded in 2008, AVer is

an award-winning provider of education technology and video collaboration camera solutions that improve productivity and enrich learning. From accelerating learning in the classroom to increasing competitive advantage for businesses, AVer solutions leverage the power of technology to help people connect with one another to achieve great things. AVer's product portfolio includes professional-grade artificial intelligence-enabled auto-tracking cameras, Zoom and Microsoft Teams Certified enterprise-grade USB cameras, document cameras, and mobile device charging solutions. AVer strives to provide industry-leading service and support that exceeds customer expectations. AVer is deeply committed to the com-

## informed decisions. Guidepoint is a leading research enablement platform designed to accelerate under-

Jagjeet Kang-Pabla, Ph.D., nies and investors rapidly turn answers into action

#### Apprenticeship Openings Jump By 75 per cent Across India, **Engineering, Industrial Sectors Take Lead: TeamLease Report** preceding quarter. This trend

**NEW DELHI:** There is an exceptional surge of 75% in apprenticeship opportunities across India which marks a 9% growth over the January-March, 2023 quarter, revealed by TeamLease Degree Apprenticeship Outlook Report. According to the report, the

Net Apprenticeship Outlook (NAO), a crucial indicator of employer sentiment, has reached an all-time high, signalling a remarkable 75% increase in employer intent for apprenticeship engagement during the upcoming October-March 2023-24 half-year. NAO has seen significant

Year-Over-Year (YOY) growth, rising from 41% in January-June, 2021 to 56% in January-June, 2022 and further to 66%

Aqil Ashique, addressing a

press conference, announced

that the company's strategic

vision to position Karnataka

as its gateway hub connecting

South India to the rest of the

Over the next year, Driver

Logistics plans to hire more

than 150 individuals for its

Karnataka operations, with a focus on engaging young

graduates. The company is set

to expand its footprint across

Karnataka, offering Ware-

housing, Full Truckload (FTL),



in January-March, 2023. The NAO has now reached an astounding 75% for the October-March, 2023-24 period.

This Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of nearly 30% reflects how organisations perceive apprenticeships as a pivotal talent development strategy, driving skill enhancement, workforce development and talent pipeline creation, the release mentioned.

The HY1 April-September, 2023 and HY2 October, 2023 24 half-year compared to the

to March, 2024 Apprenticeship Outlook Report highlights a compelling landscape, with

Engineering and Industrial

(96%), Electrical and Electron-

ics (94%), Telecom (93%) and

Ecom and Tech products (90%)

leading as the sectors with the highest Net Apprenticeship Outlook (NAO) Notably, these industries, along with five others, have witnessed a significant increase in NAO during the October-March, 2023-

indicates robust growth prospects for apprenticeships, affirming their pivotal role in shaping the workforce of the future, as per the release "The primary reasons driving

the growth are real-time skill availability, cost effectiveness, and driving community engagement under CSR. Also, initiatives from the government such as PLI and Make in India are driving the employment opportunities for which employers are relying on apprenticeships to build a talent pipeline. 63% of employers have reported satisfactory performances of the apprentices, which is encouraging for employers to scale up the intake," Sumit Kumar, chief business officer, TeamLease Degree Apprenticeship, said.

## Rajant wins IET Industry excellence platinum award 2023

**UK-based Institute of** Engineering & Technology Distinction Given to Raiant Kinetic Mesh

**MALVERN PENNSYLVANIA:** Rajant Corporation, the pioneer of Kinetic Mesh wireless networks, is an Institute of Engineering & Technology (IET) **Industry Excellence Platinum** Award winner for 2023. IET is a UK-based 149-year-old organization with membership of 170,000 engineering and technology professionals in 148 countries. The announcement was made on November 25th during the IET Malaysia Prestige Lecture and Award Dinner 2023, which recognizes the hard work and achievements of individuals and industry players who have contributed immensely to the nation of Malaysia and beyond.

There to receive the award were representatives from Rajant and channel partners Automation & Control Systems and Red Team. Sentiments about the significance of this award are:

"Automation & Control Systems has been a Kinetic Mesh Partner of Rajant since 2019. Rajant Corporation's unique wireless mesh technology has been a game-changer for our clients, especially those opment Director, Automation Control Systems Malaysia

"Red Team serves clients with mission-critical applica-



tions that require extremely reliable, low-latency wireless connectivity. We found the performance of Rajant Kinetic Mesh networking to be unparalleled in the market. This prominent award from IET simply reaffirms the engineering leadership of Rajant Corporation." Dato Shahril, Managing Director, Red Team Sdn Bhd

"I'm honored to receive this award on behalf of Rajant Corporation. This notable distinction from the Institute of Engineering and Technology underscores the contribution Rajant makes to solving communication and connectivity challenges for high broadband industrial applications."- Ong Beng Hui, Sales Director, Rajant Corporation

This industry award for excellence underscores the unique nature of Rajant's technology, which extends communications in hard-toreach places. Rajant Kinetic Mesh, the leading industrial wireless mesh network, is fully mobile and intelligently adapts to change—instantly and without outside interven-

tion—to keep mission-critical and safety operations moving. The simultaneous combination of mobility-enablement for M2M communications, scalability, and high bandwidth with low latency, without the need for costly infrastructure or ongoing management, gives Rajant the edge over other fault-tolerant networking op-Rajant Corporation is the

broadband communications technology company that invented Kinetic Mesh® networking, BreadCrumb® wireless nodes, and InstaMesh® networking software. With Rajant, customers can rapidly deploy a highly adaptable and scalable network that leverages the power of real-time data to deliver on-demand, missioncritical business intelligence. A low-latency, high-throughput, and secure solution for a variety of data, voice, video, and autonomous applications, Rajant's Kinetic Mesh networks provide industrial customers with full mobility, allowing

#### Steering Committee to **Assess National Trade Facilitation Action Plan** 2020-23



NEW DELHI: The Steering Committee jointly chaired by Secretary, Department of Revenue and Secretary, Department of Commerce will be convened later this week to review National Trade Facilitation Action Plan 2020 - 23

To ease trade related processes, a national level mechanism was created through 'Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)' under World Trade Organization (WTO) in each member country including India.

Besides implementation of the TFA, the ongoing mandate of the Steering Committee includes identification of the agencies departments involved in the implementation of trade facilitation measures; conducting gap analysis and assessment of compliance of the agencies involved in trade facilitation and identifying changes required - including regulatory, procedural, and infrastructural for trade facilitation.

The Steering Committee consists of public and private partners involved in the compliance of TFA and other critical aspects of

Ministries and departments such as Finance, Commerce, Indian Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), Ports & Shipping all national trade and industry bodies CII, FIEO, FISME, ASSO-CHAM, IPAI, FICCI, EICIINDIA are member of the Committee.

#### Driver Logistics launches Karnataka operations to Invest 525 Crores Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and Andhra Pradesh. CEO Aqil **ARUN KUMAR RAO** DRIVER Bengaluru Driver Logistics, a growing logistics service provider, unveiled its multi-client warehouse and Partial Truckload operations in Karnataka. CEO

and Partial Truckload (PTL) Logistics has achieved an imservices to clients in key towns.

With a bold investment plan

totalling Rs 525 Crores over the next 5 years, Driver Logistics aims to revolutionize the lo-

gistics sector. The infusion of funds will drive technological advancements, benefiting shipand the local job market. Established in 2019, Driver

pers, logistics service providers, a pivotal hub for Driver Logistics, facilitating the consolidation of operations in Kerala,

pressive growth rate of over 30% annually, expanding its presence to 7 states. As part of its expansion strategy, the company plans to increase its warehouse count from 53 to over 100 in the next 18 months. Karnataka is positioned as

external funding. mism about the central govern-

ment's initiatives such as Gati Shakti, anticipating exponential growth in the logistics sector and a significant boost for companies in the 3PL sector. Beyond national expansion, Driver Logistics eyes the growing trade between India and South East Asian countries as a catalyst for increased demand in professional logistics services. In line with this vision, the company is exploring expansion into South East Asia, commencing with operations in Thailand.

Ashique emphasized the company's resilient and efficient business model, highlighting its substantial growth without Aqil Ashique, expressed opti-

running mission-critical and safety applications. I'm happy that IET recognizes Rajant's engineering contribution with the prestige of this award." Steven Chan, Business Devel-

them to take their private network applications and data

anywhere.

trade facilitation in the country. Besides representation from

## IT MoS envisions 20% GDP boost CGTMSE Approves Guarantees to 78 from *Digital Economy* by 2026

economy has the potential to contribute 20 per cent to India's GDP by 2026, said Rajeev Chandrashekhar, Union MoS **Electronics and Information** Technology, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

Currently, India's digital economy is at 11 per cent of the GDP and will surge to 20 per cent by 2026, he said. Speaking at the inaugural function of Startup Conclave 2023', held in Gandhinagar, he highlighted the growth of digital economy from 4.5 per cent of the GDP to 11 per cent. The digital economy is outpacing overall GDP growth, growing at two and a half times faster

**Disinflationary RBI** 

growth objective:

**ASSOCHAM** 

policy well aligned with

"While

inflation

for the past

few months,

RBI seems

its target of

taming it to its target of four

per cent. It has so far kept a vigil eye on both global and domestic

events for a stance that would

bring more confidence to inves-

tors, borrowers and consumers

as the focus of the credit policy remains on price and financial

stability," ASSOCHAM Secre-

tary General Deepak Sood said.

robust and resilient trajectory

of economic growth, revising

its outlook for fiscal 2023-24

upward to 7 per cent from its

earlier projections of 6.5 per

cent. This puts a stamp of RBI

reinforcement of India remain-

ing the fastest growing economy

of the world amongst the major

economies". The ASSOCHAM

also welcomed several other

measures unveiled by the RBI

Governor Shaktikanta Das. En-

hancing the UPI transaction

limit from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh

for hospitals and educational

institutions is a pragmatic mea-

sure. "Based on the feedback,

sectors as UPI has emerged as

a great enabler for micro, small

and medium enterprises, "the

He said RBI has reinforced a



than the overall GDP growth. By 2026, it is anticipated to constitute 20 per cent or one-fifth of India's GDP.

The minister emphasised that the goals outlined by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the 2015 launch of the Digital India programme have significantly most exciting period.

novation ecosystem, and global standing both qualitatively and quantitatively. India's position has transformed from being the consumer of technology for nearly three decades to being the producer of devices, products and platforms for the world. The minister highlighted the evolution of the economy from dominance by a few groups to a highly diversified one. Stressing India's status as the world's fastest-growing digital economy, the minister expressed enthusiasm for the current state of the innovation and technology sector in the country, deeming it the

Lakh MSEs In Last 23 Years: MoS MSME **NEW DELHI:** The Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE) has permitted and extended the guarantees to 78,06,655 Micro and Small Enterprises under the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Micro and Small Enterprises, in-

the Rajya Sabha on Monday. He noted that the scheme was started in 2000 and the data of guarantee extended is as of October 31, 2023.

formed Minister of State for

MSME, Bhanu Pratap Singh

Verma in a written reply to

As informed by CGTMSE, during the current year 52 programmes and training sessions



for Banks/Financial Institutions have been organized, said the MoS MSME.

As per the guidelines of Credit Guarantee Scheme for Micro and Small Enterprises, CGTMSE provides credit guarantee to its Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) for the credit extended by them to

Micro and Small Enterprises under the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Micro and Small Enterprises.

CGTMSE (Credit Guarantee fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises) is setup by GoI, & SIDBI in August 2000 to make collateral free credit facilities available to MSEs (Micro & Small Enterprises).

As per RBI guidelines, MSE advances guaranteed by CGTMSE will attract zero risk weight for the guaranteed portion and no provision is to be made for the guaranteed portion in case the advances covered under CGTMSE, be-

## **State Bank of India Predicts RBI** to Maintain No Rate Reversal Cycle till June 2024 MUMBAI: The Reserve

Bank of India (RBI) is expected to continue the pause its stance in upcoming policy, said the SBI in its latest report.

"We expect the RBI to continue the pause stance in upcoming policy. Domestically, we believe at 6.50 per cent, we are in for a prolonged pause, no rate reversal cycle till June '24 stance," said SBI in the report.
"We believe the stance

should continue to be withdrawal of accommodation as inflation is unlikely to tread below 5 per cent in rest of FY24; as amidst the structural change in liquidity is making its forecasting difficult, it should be looked at with a completely different prism," it added.

The RBI had kept repo rate unchanged at 6.50 per cent for four consecutive times, after cumulatively increasing it by 250 bps from May 2022 to December 2022.

The SBI report added that growth continues to remain resilient and risk is mostly from sources outside of home. Higher oil prices pushing up inflation, and tighter global financial conditions are key risks weighing on the currency, inflation and growth dynamics, it added.

All scheduled commercial banks' (ASCBs') credit grew as credit grew by 20.6 per cent. As per sectoral credit data of October 2023, personal, services, agriculture, MSME reported excellent credit growth on-year.

While housing, com-

need immediate consideration

is multiplicity of audits and

the quantum of notices that

are being issued, past issues



aviation reported growth of 67 per cent on year. "Overall, industry credit reported growth of 6 per cent. However, sectors such as chemicals, metals, textile, glass, food processing etc. reported double digit growth. In infrastructure, road reported 9 per cent growth while telecommunication and railway reported growth of 7 per cent each," stated the report.
Wheat sowing deficit

decreased to 5 per cent for the week of November 24. However, sowing of major wheat, pulses and some oilseeds have been slightly delayed this year due to late harvest of kharif-grown paddy in a few states due El Nino's adverse effects.

"Despite the government's efforts to increase MSP, mandi prices remain low in ragi, moong and cotton. However, interestingly, the price of cotton at e-NAM is higher than MSP," stated SBI.

SBI stated that CPI inflation is expected to come around 5.4-5.5 per cent by March 2023, although November and December inflation could overshoot 6 per cent. "With inflation expected to come down further, MPC is likely to maintain the status quo this fiscal," it said.

## No Research on Pros & Cons of Foreign **Investment in MSME Sector says MoS MSME**

**NEW DELHI:** The MSME NEW DELHI: RBI's continu-Ministry has conducted no ing focus on 'disinflationary' specific study on the advantages and disadvantages of monetary policy retaining key REPO rate unchanged at 6.50 foreign investment in MSMEs per cent is well aligned with sector from competitiveness the intention of the Monetary and viability point of view, Policy Committee for an ecoinformed the Minister of State system, favourable to a sustainfor MSME, Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma in a written reply able growth which promises to be robust braving global to the Lok Sabha on Thursday. headwinds, ASSOCHAM has

The MoS termed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) as an enabling policy, which is uniformly applicable irrespechas been tive of scale and size of eligible declining investee entities.

To promote FDI, the Government has put in place ous schemes and programmes an investor-friendly policy, wherein most sector/activities including MSMEs except certain strategically important sectors/activities are open for 100 per cent FDI under the automatic route, he mentioned



aimed at promotion and development of MSME sector in the country.

These schemes/programmes include MSME Champions Scheme, Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE), He gave details of the vari- Prime Minister's Employ-

ment Generation Programme (PMEGP), Micro and Small Enterprises - Cluster Development Programme (MSE-CDP) and Raising and Accelerating MSME Performance (RAMP)

Further the Government has taken a number of initiatives to support the MSME Sector,

## **U Gro Capital Proposes NBFC-MSME Category**

NEW DELHI: Shachindra Nath, Managing Director of U Gro Capital has pitched for a new category of non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) serving micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME), reported Mint.

"Just like NBFC-MFI and HFC (housing finance companies), there should be NBFC-MSME," Nath told Mint exclusively. Gauging the impact of the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) recent move to increase the risk weight on consumer loans, he said that it will have an impact on NBFCs with the bank borrowing cost increasing.

"However, it does not impact the NBFCs serving the MFI and housing finance segments. The RBI move is going to increase our borrowing cost from banks," he added without revealing further details. The publicly-listed MSME lender on Tuesday partnered with Laghu Udyog Bharati, an organization dedicated to supporting micro-enterprises, to launch awareness programmes to em- in India," said Gupta.



about government schemes and digital credits, reported Mint.

"A research report shows that when it comes to credit, 28 per cent MSMEs are selffinanced; 12% have raised financing through informal channels; while only 10% are financed through formal institutions such as banks and NBFCs. NBFCs share in MSME lending is just 10 per cent," Om Prakash Gupta, All India general secretary, Laghu Udyog Bharati, said during a press

"We will organize awareness programmes for MSMEs with U Gro in 100-150 locations across India in next few years. We believe the awareness around credit will be a gamechanger for small businesses

#### Govt approves Rs 2500 cr for continuation of interest equalisation scheme up to June '24

where demands have been **NEW DELHI**: The Union confirmed and interest paid Cabinet on Friday approved however there is now a dispute an additional allocation of Rs on credit, better clarity on GST 2,500 crore for the continuaon corporate guarantees and tion of interest equalisation or need for a relaxation/amnesty subsidy scheme on pre- and scheme for GSTR 2A-3B no- post-shipment rupee export tices where law was not clear credit up to June 30 next year.

This would help exporters from identified s that It was good to hear the MSME manufacturer export-Governments perspective ers to avail rupee export credit on each of these issues and at competitive rates at a time that they are being looked at when the global economy is

## Tax revenues consistently clocking more than 1.6 lakh crores with room for growth: Shashank Priya

**FW DESK** New Delhi

We have embarked on a journey of one nation, one tax, one market and we need to continuously keep working towards addressing these problems that keep coming at the field level. Our tax revenues have been consistently of data. We also felt that there clocking more than 1.6 lakh crore and we shall continue to the states and the center does grow because there are areas if we are all working on one where revenues can still be tapped. We are looking at easing compliance, but at the same time, we are trying to see how at a central level and ground we can bring in regularity of level grievance redressal this limit can be revised for other compliances and timely return mechanism, state coordinafiling and tax payment" said tion committee meetings and Shashank Priya, Special Secretary & Member (GST), CBIC place to address problems that

GST organised by ASSOCHAM. "CBIC has taken a major

decision to become a model two state, which means now we will not have our own back end system. We will be migrating to the back end system of GSTN because at the field level, there were problems regarding loss will be a synergy between what It may not be possible that

everything can be addressed mechanisms have been put in are arising in implementation



of the law." he added.

Taxes, ASSOCHAM in his is a tax which impacts all of

of the some of the provisions us. GST collections have been good over the past few months, Pratik Jain, Chairman, and we are likely to exceed National Council on Indirect our collection target for FY 24. There is no doubt that welcome address said, "GST GST has brought in structural

that the Government needs to be push 'ease of doing business' agenda hard now. More than legislative aspects, tax administration needs to be streamlined now. There is a need for stakeholders to come together and adopt a consultative approach as we move Ritesh Kanodia, Co-Chair-

uniform tax rates across the

states. However, industry feels

Council on Indirect taxes focused on GST law which is constantly evolving and while there are certain challenges, we have also seen Government proactively. While resolution facing headwinds. coming out with positive clarifications on some key issues e.g. ISD vs cross charge. Some important issues that however

issues. He further stressed may not be immediate, but the direction is to achieve ease of

and there were also system

Exporters get subsidies under the 'Interest Equalisation doing business by better use Scheme for pre and post-shipment Rupee export credit.

## MOU Signed between Indian Banks' Association and United Forum of Bank Unions

#### BANK EMPLOYEES TO GET AN ANNUAL INCREASE IN SALARY AT 17 PER CENT



long

**b**ank

employees and officers will get an annual increase of 17 % in their salary with effect from 1.11.2022. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Indian Banks' Association (IBA) representing Management of Banks, which are parties to the Bipartite Settlement, and United Forum of

Discussions were held between the Indian Banks' Association representing agreed at 17 %, of the an-Managements of Banks and the authorized representa- FY 2021-22, which works out tives of Workmen Unions to Rs. 12,449 crores for all and Officers' Associations on public sector banks includwage revision for Officers and Workmen in banks.

and officers, acknowledge the need for a robust bankneed' to further improve the on a loading of 3 %, amountproductivity, efficiency and ing to Rs 1795 crore. responsiveness to the needs of the customers and various distribution of annual wage



mitment, it has been agreed to resolve the pending wage Bank Unions, other Unions settlement issue and enter and Associations on the basis into an MoU. This wage reof discussions held on 7th Devision will be effective from cember, 2023 on wage revision. 1.11.2022 for a period of five years. An annual increase in salary and allowances is nual pay slip expenses for

The management and the constructed after merging Unions / Associations repre- Dearness Allowance corsenting the workmen staff responding to 8088 points (average Index point as applicable for the Quarter of ing system which is adaptive July, August and September, to the challenges facing the 2021) to the basic pay as on banking industry and the 31.10.2022, and adding there-

It has also been agreed that

and Officers will be worked out separately and proportionately based on breakup of establishment expenses for FY 2021-22.

Without prejudice to the demand of unions/associations for updating of pension for all retirees, it is also agreed that as a one-time measure applicable for the current bipartite / Joint Note period, monthly ex-gratia amount will be considered along with The new pay scales will be pension by PSBs to pensioners and family pensioners, who were drawing pension as on 31/10/2022

The applicability of the said ex-gratia for the retirees of

the current settlement period will be discussed further. The said ex-gratia amount will not attract any other allowance including dearness allowance. To draw out a detailed

Note on the various issues on which consensus positions are reached the parties will meet and others for management on mutually convenient dates. The parties will endeavour

to finalize the Bipartite Settlement /Joint Note within a period of 180 days from the date of these minutes. Now the way for holiday on

all the Saturdays have been paved and now the banks will remain closed on all Saturdays instead of second and fourth Saturdays. IBA has already recommended to the Government for declaration of all Saturdays as holidays under NI Act for Banking industry in line with earlier negotiations with unions /associations and the same will be pursued. The unions/associations urged for implementation of the same before signing of the final bipartite agreement/joint note.

It has also been agreed that all other issues of the Managements and Unions/ Associations discussed during the process of negotiation including payment of ex-gratia to pensioners and family pensioners of private sector banks and foreign banks will be settled to the mutual satisfaction.

The signatories include V. Rao MD &CEO, Central Bank of India (Chairman- Negotiating Committee), Shanti Bipartite- settlement/Joint Lal Jain MD & CEO, Indian

Bank (Alternate Chairman Negotiating Committee) And for Workman Unions All India Bank Employees> Association, National Confederation of Bank Employees, Bank Employees Federation of India, National Organisation of Bank Workers, All India Bank Officers Confederation, Indian National Bank Officers Congress, National Organisation of Bank Officers along with others. However, the retirees of the

banks don't see this agreement favourable to them. They wanted updation of the pension and not improvement.

The MOU signed on 7th instant says that proposed hike in pension will be in the shape of monthly ex gratia. About the quantum of monthly ex gratia, the MOU is silent means will be decided later on. It is also stunning that this so-called ex gratia

will also not attract any DA. A Bank retiree says, "Deviation from the RBI line may be the assassination of the Bank Pension scheme. So, the proposal is not at all acceptable to the community of Bank pensioners.

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

#### **Logistics Startup Shiprocket Launches New Financing Platform for SMBs**

an e-commerce logistics and shipping software company on Tuesday announced the launch of Shiprocket Capital, a new financing platform to facilitate up to Rs 10 crore in revenuebased financing to small and medium businesses (SMBs) operating online.

The company said it aims to enable around Rs 100 crore capital to SMBs in the next 12 months (December 2024). The funds will be collateral-free without any equity dilution to help enterprises

ramp up their inventory, boost marketing, en-

hance production or expand sion by the SMB. Saahil Goel, Cointo new markets. The repayment involves a one-time fee and a percentage of revenue generated by the SMB, according to the details available on the company's website.

Shiprocket Capital will cater to e-commerce businesses operating across diverse categories, including fashion, consumer electronics, beauty and personal care, home and kitchen, and jewellery and accessories. In its pilot phase, Shiprocket Capital said it has disbursed over Rs 35 crore to around 150 SMBs.

"According to a report by IBEF, India is home to over 5 lakh e-commerce businesses, but traditional financing methods have long presented challenges for e-commerce entrepreneurs. Offering a swift

NEW DELHI: Shiprocket, and efficient means of accessing much-needed capital, revenuebased financing is increasing the startup growth by up to 30 per cent. Leveraging this potential, Shiprocket Capital presents a big opportunity for the 3 lakh merchants on the platform with a GMV of 30,000+ crores to scale their business," Shiprocket said in a statement.

> burse capital through its partner non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) including InCred, Indifi, Klub, Stride, Vedfin, Velocity, and Get-

Shiprocket Vantage within two days of document submis-

founder and CEO, Shiprocket, said, "India is on track to build a thriving ecosystem of 1 million eCommerce businesses by 2025. As an eCommerce enablement platform, we aim to empower them with flexible capital to grow their businesses and prove to be their partner in growth through Shiprocket Capital." Launched in 2017, Shiprocket provides a technology stack to help retailers integrate their shopping websites on Shopify, Magento, WooCommerce, Zoho, and others with the platform's multicarrier API to manage orders, prints, and shipping labels. It also avails tracking information from multiple providers including managing Cash on

Delivery orders and payment

reconciliation.

#### **AWG downgrades** India again as lessors fail to get back planes from Go First

Global watchdog group Aviation

Working Group (AWG) down-

graded India to "negative" from "positive" as foreign lessors have not been able to get back their aircraft from Wadia group's grounded airline Go First, which declared bankruptcy seven months ago. AWG's The company said it will disdowngrade is expected to increase the cost of leasing planes for India's commercial airlines such as Air India, IndiGo, Spicejet and Akasa. AWG had issued a positive watchlist notice in their CTC compliance index with a projected increase in India's score after the government issued a notification dated Oct 3, 2023 providing that the moratorium under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 will not apply to aircraft, aircraft engines, airframes and helicopters governed by the Cape Town Convention. This had come as a positive development as AWG had put India on a watchlist with a negative outlook in May, saying the country failed to comply with international aircraft repossession norms after foreign lessors were unable to recover their leased planes from bankrupt Go First. The government's notification to exempt transactions involving aircraft, aircraft engines, and helicopters from the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) was issued in consonance with India's international treaty obligations

as the country was a signatory to

the Cape Town Convention and it

Aircraft Protocol (CTC).

## Rishi Sunak in danger of losing his Premiership

LONDON: Rishi Sunak, 42, the Indian-origin British Prime Minister, is fighting with his back to the wall to save his premiership as well as his political career.

Sunak, who has staked his future on passing an immigration bill in the British Parliament, which, he thinks, will ensure asylum seekers to the United Kingdom are sent to Rwanda and consequently deter such people from illegally coming to Britain. The United Kingdom has signed an agreement with Rwanda to despatch illegal immigrants to the east African country.

Summoning a media conference on Thursday, he told journalists the bill will make prospect of courts blocking any deportation decision "van-ishingly rare". He said: "That means that this bill blocks every single reason that has ever been used to prevent flights to Rwanda from taking off."

Three weeks ago, the UK's Supreme Court struck down

the move as in its view, the main opposition Labour party, policy was unlawful, violated human rights, among other the Liberal Democrats are decontraventions. It also felt Rwanda was not a safe place. Commenting on this, Sunak said: "You had better believe we've blocked those too (in

However, passage of the bill in the House of Commons next fidence vote on Sunak. The want the bill to go further by is... I sought to be honest and

the bill)." He emphasised the

UK was also willing to ignore

injunctions from the European

Court of Human Rights.

the Scottish nationalists and termined to oppose it. If about

28 ruling Conservative party

MPs join them, the legislation

could in fact be defeated. Perhaps most vocal among the dissatisfied Conservative MPs is Suella Braverman, whose father is Goan and mother Tamil and who was last month sacked as Home Secretary in the Sunak govweek has boiled down to a con- ernment. She and her allies

disapplying the European sometimes honesty is uncom-convention on human rights fortable. If that upsets polite

The Guardian newspaper commented: "It is not yet clear whether his (Sunak's) legal arguments are as robust as his rhetoric, and today he sounded more uncertain and defensive than he did when going over this ground last month". The Daily Mail and the Sun, both generally supportive of the Conservative party, asked questions at the media conference which reflected doubts in their minds in the matter.

Braverman has behaved like a woman scorned since her dismissal from the cabinet. She, first, made public a searing letter written to Sunak. Following that, she has been suspected on British media of plotting to unseat Sunak. She was asked: "Isn't the truth that you're a headline grabber that does it by spreading poison even in your own party?' She answered: "The truth fortable. If that upsets polite society, I'm sorry about that.'

She is of the view that the bill, even if passed by Parliament, "just won't work". Other right-wing Conservative MPs and activists feel the draft in its present form would still give rise to legal challenges and stop planes from taking off for Rwanda.

If Sunak's gamble fails, commentators believe he's toast. He could resign, be confronted by a leadership contest or be forced to call a snap general election, which he will almost certainly lose. Labour are 20 percentage points ahead of the Conservatives in opinion polls.

It is not just the hard right but also centrists in Sunak's party who have reservations about the bill. The latter because they are worried that disregard of international human rights norms will damage Britain's prestige in the world.

# Biden expresses concern over Israeli hostages in Hamas custody



US President Joe Biden has expressed deep concerns about the 135 Israeli hostages who are in the custody of Hamas.

Israel Prime Minister's office in a statement said that Biden had a long telephonic call with Benjamin Netanyahu in which he shared his concerns about the fate of the Israeli hostages. Biden has, according to

Israel PMO, reiterated the position of the US that the Red Cross be allowed to visit the hostages and take stock of their physical and mental health. The White House in a statement said, "He noted that it was Hamas's refusal to release young women civilian hostages that led to a breakdown in the humanitarian pause. The leaders agreed to remain deeply engaged to pursue every possible opportunity to free the remaining hostages.

"The President underscored the importance of the continuous and sustained flow of humanitarian aid into Gaza. He welcomed the recent Israeli decision to ensure that fuel levels will meet requisite needs, but stressed that much more assistance was urgently required across the board. The President emphasized the critical need to protect civilians and to separate the ci-hundreds as hostages.

The President and the Prime Minister agreed to remain in regular consultation both directly and through their respective national security teams"

vilian population from Hamas including through corridors that allow people to move safely from defined areas of hostilities. "President Biden reiterated

his concern about extremist violence committed against Palestinians and the need to increase stability in the West Bank. "The President and the Prime Minister agreed to remain in regular consultation both directly and through their respective national security teams. It may be noted that the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) has been involved in a ground invasion in Gaza since October 27 after Hamas terrorists attacked Southern Israel and slaughtered 1, 200 people, including children, women and elderly and took

#### Israel to increase fuel supply to Gaza



The Israel security cabinet has voted in favour of the country's decision to allow more supply of fuel in Gaza.

This was announced by the Israel Prime Minister's office on Wednesday night. However, two ministers of the security cabinet, Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben Gvir, voted against this.

The two ministers are considered far right leaders and are known for their hawkish positions.

It is to be noted that the US has been putting pressure on the Israeli government to increase the supply of fuel into the

The US has asked Israel to allow a supply of 1,80,000 litres of fuel daily as against the present supply of 60,000 itres per day.

The Israel PMO in the

statement said that Israel would allow a minimal amount of fuel per day that was required to prevent a humanitarian collapse and spread of epidemic in South Gaza strip.

#### New multipolar world order to replace unipolar system: Putin

A more just multipolar world order will inevitably replace the old unipolar system, Russian President Vladimir Putin said during a ceremony as he met with 21 new foreign ambassadors and received their diplomatic cre-

dentials. "The world is in a state of turbulence and is undergoing a radical transformation. An underlying trend

however is the fact that the previous unipolar system is being replaced with a fairer multipolar world order, "he said on Monday. Putin called this transition an "objective process" which is also "irreversible", Xinhua news agency reported.

#### Israel expands ground operation to south Gaza: IDF chief JERUSALEM: Israel's military

chief Herzi Halevi has said that the military has expanded the ground operation against Hamas to the southern Gaza Strip, an area previously considered as a "safe zone". "We fought strongly and thor-

oughly in the northern Gaza Strip, and we are also doing it now in the southern Gaza Strip, 'Halevi, the chief of the General Staff of Israel Defense Forces (IDF), said on Sunday during a tour at Israel's Gaza Division outside the besieged enclave, according to a statement released by the military. He said that the Israeli ground

troops, in combination with air and sea forces, have almost completely "dismantled" two Hamas brigades, killing brigade in the southern Gaza Strip." He commanders, company com- vowed that the offensive in the



manders, and "many" operatives, Xinhua news agency reported.

Halevi said that on Saturday morning, a day after a fragile seven-day ceasefire between Israel and Hamas had collapsed, the forces "started the same process

southern Gaza Strip "will be with no less strength than that, it will be with no fewer results than that, and Hamas commanders will meet the IDF everywhere in a very, very strong way." Halevi added that the offensive in the northern Gaza Strip would continue with full force. The expanand they need everything, "the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA), wrote on

sion of Israel's ground operation

has heightened concerns over

the severe humanitarian crisis

'People have lost everything,

the social media platform X. "Gaza's population will soon begin dying from diseases as well as Israeli bombardment, " the agency warned. Meanwhile, rocket fire from Gaza continued on Sunday, targeting mainly southern Israeli communities. Rockets and anti-tank missiles were launched at northern Israel from Lebanon, lightly injuring at least four people in the community of Beit Hilel in the Galilee, according to Israel's Magen David Adom rescue service.

#### Indian students to suffer as Canada doubles fund requirement for study visa OTTAWA: Canada's decision one-year tuition fees. If students bring one family member with them, they will need to show an additional \$4,000. Of about 8,00,000 international students currently studying in Canada, 3,20,000 are from India. Students from Punjab roughly make up about

on Thursday, Immigration Minister Marc Miller said, "Ahead limiting visas, to ensure that will have to show at least in their pared to take necessary mea-\$20,635 account on top of their sures, including significantly



provide adequate and sufficient

Since the huge influx of international students has caused a housing crisis, the minister said. "It would be a mistake to blame international students for the housing crisis. But it will also be a mistake to invite them to come to Canada with no support, including how to put a roof over their heads. That's why we expect learning institutions to only accept numbers of students that they're able to provide for, territories cannot do this, we will in finding

off campus housing.'

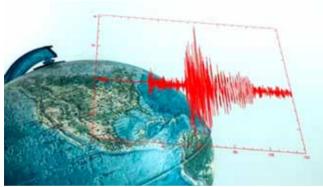
colleges that have sprung up across Canada to lure international students, the minister said, "There are, in provinces, the diploma equivalent of puppy mills that are just churning out diplomas, and this is not a legitimate student experience. There is fraud and abuse and it needs to end."

Threatening to reduce study visas, he said, "If provinces and do it for them and they w like the bluntness of the instruments that we use.'

## 5.2-magnitude quake rocks Philippines

quake jolted Mindanao island in Philippines on Wednesday, the GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences said.

The quake that hit the island at 0155 GMT was epicentreed 8.67 degrees north latitude and 126.69 degrees east longitude, and Its dep 10 km. Xinhua news



to double the amount of money that international students need to show to get a study visa will impact students from India the most as they make up about 40 per cent of all international students in Canada.

To get a study visa to Canada. a student currently needs to show \$10,000 in his or her account for covering the initial cost of living.

70 per cent of them. Making this announcement

student support."

# Promising to shut fraudulent

Climate is the existential issue of our times. The Indian diaspora contains reputed experts contributing to solutions in various areas of environmental sustainability and climate change. Moreover, as evidenced during the recently concluded G20 Summit, India is playing an instrumental role in developing solutions in this realm.

As part of Indiaspora's mission to inspire and position the global Indian diaspora as a force for good, and to build bridges among diaspora leaders and prominent leading lights resident in India, Indiaspora is privileged to serve as a platform to bring diverse and constructive

Act." Distinguished speakers

from various sectors, including government, industry, and civil society, will participate in engaging panel discussions on topics such as sustainable technology, green finance, renewable energy, and the role of diaspora in climate advocacy. Kev speakers include Dominic Waughray (World Business Council for Sustainable Development), Madhav Pai (WRI-India), BK Sister Jayanti (Faith Leader) and Vivek Oberoi (Indian Film Actor). Our partners in this endeavor are Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), Dasra, India Climate Collaborative, Indian Youth Climate

Network (IYCN). MR Rangaswami, Founder and Chairman of the Board of Indiaspora, said, "This Climate Forum represents another step in Indiaspora's objective of being a convener for the Indian diaspora and leaders in India on some of the most pressing global issues. From our earlier work on climate, it is evident to us that these key stakeholders play an important role in advancing a globally beneficial environmental agenda.

Sreekumar Nair, CEO of Indiaspora-India, added that "Indiaspora's Climate Forum builds upon our work over the past 3 years in organizing virtual global Climate Summits. Given the caliber of expertise on stage at our Forum, it promises to be an insightful and impactful dialogue. We are excited to hear from an eclectic group of speakers including policymakers, entrepreneurs, business lead-

executives.

#### Pakistani woman cross over to India to marry with Indian guy



JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

Pakistani woman Jawaria Khanam, hailing from Karachi province of Pakistan today crossed over to India through the Attari-Wagah Border.

On reaching India, Jawaria Khanam was received by her fiancee, Sameer Khan and his family members. They welcomed her with Dhol with the beat of the drum. Talking to the media, Jawaria Khanam said in the beginning of new year (first week of January of 2024) to tie the knot with Sameer Khan a man from West Bengal.

Adding further she said that she along with the family of boy going to Kolkata by air where the marriage will be solemnized. I am enormously happy as it took five years to take our love to the marriage destination with the consent of both families".

Currently, Khan's family relative is staying in a village in Gurdaspur district of Punjab. The couple's marriage will be solemnised as per Islamic rituals. Khanam said that initially, the Indian government denied granting a visa to the Pakistani national but finally they agreed to grant the visa and thanked the Indian Government. The couple is planning to extend the visa soon after the completion of the marriage ceremony, she said.

## Under the Shadow of Tactical Nuclear Weapons, Israel-Hamas War in a Decisive Mode

**GOPAL MISRA** here is ing apprehension worldwide that with the Israel-Hamas War entering the third month, hostages being exchanged and the four-day ceasefire ended, the desperate Hamas and its patrons, including Iran might use tactical nuclear weapons.

the defence planners that the nuclear devices, which could yield .3 kiloton of explosive energy is much useful in a limited cratic members abstaining. conflict such as the Russia-Ukraine War and now Israel-Hamas conflict entering into the Hamas attack on October an unprecedented fierce phase. Iran accusing Israel killing

It is being discussed among

its soldiers in Syria has added a Boston. He was seen detailing new dimension in the ongoing the audience with accounts conflict. It may directly intervene or could provide tactical nuclear weapons to the terrorists, who are facing existential crisis in the war

Meanwhile, the US Congress has passed a controversial resoanti-Semitism is considered Israel's "revenge" action against Hamas.

Interestingly, US President, murdering them. Joe Biden's administration is of the "extremist Jew settlers" imposes visa restrictions on oppose the resolution in the ians. It is also being stated



Congress. It was passed by a thumping majority Most of the Democratic Party members abstained. On December 5, the House of Representatives had passed it by a huge margin in a 311-14 vote, with 92 Demo-

Interestingly, Joe Biden was seen giving graphic details of 7 at a fund-raising meeting for his party on December 5 in of "unimaginable cruelty", and further stated there were reports of women violated, repeatedly raped, and their bodies being mutilated while still alive. He also expressed his anguish on women's corpses lution defining anti-Zionism as being desecrated, and further added that Hamas terrorists yet another effort for justifying have been inflicting as much pain and suffering on women and girls as possible and then

Iran Joining the Confacing dilemma, while it con- **flict:** It is true that Israel has demns the notorious behaviour ramped up its bombardments across central and southern on the occupied West Bank, Gaza. The civilian casualties are mounting up, as Gaza them; however, during the vot- hospitals facing a Herculean ing Democratic Party fails to task to save the lives of civil-



in the tunnels are using the innocent Palestinians as a human shield. It has naturally perturbed Iran, but much depends whether it has obtained the tactical weapons from its patrons, especially China and North Korea. It is also stated that at present, the United States, Russia, and China possess smaller numbers of nonstrategic (or tactical) nuclear warheads that are not subject

to any treaty limits. The UN agencies have been closely watching Iran's nuclear programme, but Tehran's reluctance to allow UN inspectors to visit all nuclear facilities has caused anxiety worldwide about Iran violating the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). About 14 years ago in 2009, the UN had built a seismic monitoring station in Turkmenistan near its border with Iran, to detect tremors from nuclear explosions. On the basis of its reports the UN Security Council had demanded Iran freeze all forms of uranium enrichment. Iran's arguments was that the demand 'unfairly compels' it

technology for civilian energy purposes

During the last 14 years, there have been numerous reports regarding Iran's quest for nuclear arsenal, but it has been denying such allegations. It is true that Zongo Said-

ou, a sanctions advisor for the U.N., had stated that as far as he knew, none of the U.N.'s member nations had alerted the sanctions committee about allegations of sales of uranium to Iran from Kazakhstan. The intelligence reports, however, had claimed that some rogue employees of Kazakhstan were prepared to sell Iran 1,350 tons of purified uranium ore in violation of UN Security Council sanctions. Interestingly, both Russia and Kazakhstan had

promptly denied such reports. In September 2011 Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported several statements about Iran's nuclear program and China's foreign policy in the Middle East, Yin Gang of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences has expressed his opinion on China policies toward region, and accordto abandon its rights under ing to Haaretz he made surthe NPT to peaceful nuclear prising statement: "China is

opposed to any military action against Iran that would damage regional stability and interfere with the flow of oil. But China will not stop Israel if it decides to attack Iran. For all these reasons, Israel and the Middle East need a country like China Israel needs China's power." In March 2012, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiech had reiterated his country's policy that "China is opposed to any country in the Middle East, including Iran, developing and possessing nuclear weapons.

Israel and Atom Bomb: It is widely believed that Israel, which is not a signatory to the NPT, possesses nuclear weapons. In 2018, however, Israel had claimed that its intelligence agency, Mossad seized about one hundred thousand documents of Iran's nuclear program. It is yet to be explained why it did not submit the documents to the UN. There is no confirmed information so far regarding Iran obtaining any kind of nuclear weapon. Meanwhile, the reports that Iran has developed Shahab -4 with a range of 2,000 km and a payload of 1,000 kg. The fear of even limited use of tactical nuclear weapons in the ongoing war cannot be ruled out.

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

## **Climate Action Forum: Indiaspora Convenes Climate Experts at COP 28**

The daylong Forum will address critical climate change issues and highlight innovative projects and initiatives by the Indian diaspora that contribute to global sustainability efforts

WASHINGTON/DELHI: Indiaspora, a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to uniting the Indian diaspora for a stronger, more interconnected global community, is hosting the Climate Action Forum at COP 28 on December 7th from 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM at the Anantara Downtown Dubai Hotel, Business Bay, Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

voices together during COP 28. Indiaspora will host its daylong Climate Action Forum featuring 28 speakers from 5 countries under the theme of "Empower, Educate, Inspire, ers, academics and nonprofit





Ambassadors and representatives of Fiji, Bangladesh, Uzbekistan, Indonesia and Kyrgyzstan during the 17th edition of the Punjab International Trade

## **Two crore tourists visited** Jammu & Kashmir until November

**FW DESK** Srinagar

For the first time after independence, Jammu and Kashmir has recorded the arrival of two crore tourists up to November this year, Union Tourism Minister G Kishen Reddy said Thursday in parliament. Replying to a query in the

Parliament, Reddy said that for the first time after India's independence, Jammu and Kashmir has seen two crore tourist arrivals including foreigners up to November this year. "The figure is set to go up further by December end," he said. He said that there has been 155 percent increase in the overall tourist arrivals in 2023 compared to 2021 and 2022. "85 lakh foreign tourists visited India this year so far," he said. The Union Minister said that Prime Minister Narendear Modi has played a huge role

in showcasing India's tourism potential

"PM Modi has been the brand ambassador of India's tourism industry. In his (PM's) every foreign visit, Modiji showcased India's huge tourism potential that attracted lakhs of tourists to India," he said. On Wednesday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, told the Parliament that J&K will surpass 2 crore tourist arrivals this year and the previous record set by BJP will be broken by none other than BJP itself.





**POTPOURRI** 

#### **Anupam Kher's** 'The Freelancer' look is Kirron Kher's favourite



MUMBAI: Veteran actor Anupam Kher, who is gearing up for the second season of his streaming show 'The Freelancer', has spoken about his look in the series saying that his wife Kirron Kher loved his look from the series and that it's her favourite look of the actor from this year.

The senior actor essays the role of Dr. Arif Ajmaal Khan in the series headlined by actor Mohit Raina, who plays the titular role.

Elaborating on his look in the series, Anupam said, "My look in 'The Freelancer' is my wife's favourite. I did a lot of work in 2023 but my wife didn't compliment me at all

for anything this year." "She asked me if Neeraj Pandey's number is the same because she messaged him for 'The Freelancer'. I told her to call him, so 2023 was great for me as far as Kirron ji is concerned." 'The Freelancer' series is based on the book 'A Ticket to Syria' by Shirish Thorat, which also stars Anupam Kher, Kashmira Pardeshi, Sushant Singh, John Kokken, Gauri Balaji, Navneet Malik, Manjiri Faddnis, and Sarah Jane Dias, among others.

Created by showrunner Dhulia as the director, 'The Freelancer: The Conclusion' will stream on Disney+ Hotstar from December 15.

## Dinesh Phadnis, 'Fredericks' of 'CID', passes away at 57



Phadnis, who played the role of 'Fredericks' in the India's longest running television show 'CID', passed away in Mumbai. The actor was 57 years old, and was on ventilator support.

He was suffering from extensive liver damage, and was hospitalised on December 1. As per media reports, the 57-year-old actor was admitted to Mumbai's Tunga Hospital. Earlier, there were reports that the actor had suffered a heart attack which actor Dayanand Shetty had dismissed.

Shetty, who shared screen had been sharing updates

MUMBAI: Actor Dinesh about the actor's health and confirmed that the actor passed away at midnight.

All the actors from 'CID', who are known to be very close to each other, are at residence of Phadnis. His last rites will be conducted today at the Daulat Nagar crematorium.

'CID' started airing on television in 1998 and had a glorious run till 2018. It is one of the longest-running shows on Indian television. Dinesh played the role of Fredericks on the show and his character was loved by the audience for his comic timing and fun banter with other characters space with Phadnis in 'CID', on the show, especially Shivaji Satam's ACP Pradyuman.



## Deepika **Padukone** attends Academy Museum Gala in **LOS ANGELES**

Mumbai : Deepika Padukone is in attendance at the Academy Museum Gala in Los Angeles. She is the first Indian star to be invited to the prestigious event.

The Academy Museum Gala is the second biggest stage after the Oscars which is organ-

ised by the same board. Earlier this year Deepika was seen on the stage at the Oscars to present the Indian

> Deepika took to Instagram Stories, where she shared a string of pictures dressed in a dark purple velvet floor-sweeping gown

with a plunging neckline. She completed her look for the event with some sparkly diamonds. On the work front,

Deepika had a fabulous year with 'Pathaan' and 'Jawan'. She will next be seen in 'Fighter' alongside Hrithik Roshan and Anil Kapoor.

Deepika also has 'Kalki 2898 AD' with Prabhas and Amitabh Bachchan.



## **Vicky Kaushal:**

## 'Katrina is perfect candidate for reverse psychology'

MUMBAI: Bollywood star lywood megastar Shah Rukh Vicky Kaushal, who is receiving a positive response to his recently released film 'Sam Bahadur', graced the latest episode of the streaming chat show 'Koffee With Karan' with his 'Lust Stories' co-star Kiara Advani. During the episode, Vicky revealed that his wife, actress Katrina Kaif is "the perfect candidate for reverse osychology'

During the 'Koffee Shots' round, the show host Karan Johar, asked the guests if they have cracked the code to get their spouses to do what they

While Kiara didn't have an answer to this, Vicky spilled the beans about how consen- me. A long message saying, sus is reached in the Kaushal house

Talking about the same, Vicky said, "Katrina is a perfect candidate for reverse psychology. If I want her to agree on something, I have to wholeheartedly, with abundance agree to what she wants. And then she turns around and says, 'BTW I see the point in what you're saying', and then she comes around

Vicky also shared his experience of working with Bol-

Khan. Vicky said, "I'll share an incident, one of the shoot dates, he had to rush to Delhi for some very important work and it couldn't have happened at another time or another day and it was a very critical kind of a moment in the film for my character which was with him and he just couldn't be there for that shot and I had to give that shot with a body double and he had to rush".

The 'Uri' actor continued, 'After he got done with his work which was like insanely important in Delhi, late in the night, he had called which I missed because there was an event and then he messaged 'Vicky, wo shot hum d karenge. I am really sorry I missed that, I couldn't be there to give just the cues, couldn't be there, We'll do that shot again'. I had to call him and convince him ki nahi Raju sir is happy and it went okay and there is no need and pata nahi mujhse waapis hoga ki bhi nahi but I was nervous, But he was like, no, we will do it again, I am feeling terrible that I couldn't be there".

## Kay Kay Menon wishes 'The Railway Men' could qualify as India's entry to Oscars

Kay Menon wishes his series 'The Railway Men' was eligible to be sent as India's entry to the Oscars. He feels the series would have done India proud at this prestigious global stage

Kay Kay said: "I wish The Railway Men' was eligible to be qualified as India's entry to the Oscars. Neeraj Pandey with Bhav This series shows the world what we, as a country, faced on that fateful night and also shows the spirit of selfless Indians who put their lives at risk to save countless



people from dying." The 4-part mini series is set during the 1984

Bhopal gas tragedy that rocked of his best works to date the country. It has been directed

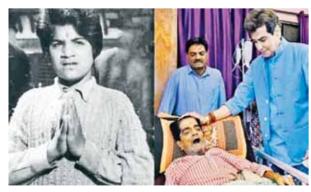
plunging neckline.

by debutant director Shiv Rawail. Kay Kay added: "This series truly deserves to represent India at every global stage and tell people worldwide about our resilience and character in insurmountable danger and grief. The Railway Men is a show that every Indian should be proud of."

Known for delivering acclaimed performances throughout his stellar career, Kay Kay feels 'The Railway Men' is one

He said: "It rests in my filmography as one of the best projects that I have ever been a part of. I'm thrilled with the response that the series has received globally already. It deserves all the love. It is our tribute to the undying human spirit, a tribute to Bhopal and its resilience and it is also a tribute to all the unsung heroes of Bhopal whose sacrifice saved hundreds of thousands of people unaware of how to fight the silent killer in the air."

# Bollywood comedian 'Jr Mehmood succumbs to cancer at 67



MUMBAI: Veteran Bollywood comedian, singer, director and character actor Naeem Sayyed - popularly known as 'Junior Mehmood' – passed away after a protracted battle with cancer, here on Friday morning.

Jr Mehmood had been admitted to the Tata Memorial Cancer Hospital for treatment of stomach cancer and was on the path of recovery at home.

His condition suddenly deteriorated and he was put on ventilator support but failed to make it through early today. Initially taken to hospital for a minor tummy ailment, it was

later diagnosed as stomach cancer in the final stages as it had spread to the liver, lungs, with a tumour in the intestine and complicated by a bout of jaundice. The funeral of Jr Mehmood shall be performed this afternoon at the Juhu Muslim Cemetery, which a large number of Bollywood personalities are likely to attend.

Starting his film career as a child actor in 'Mohabbat Zindagi Hai' (1966), Jr Mehmood went onto work in over 250 films in multiple Indian languages, besides directing expressed concerns over his half a dozen Marathi films and

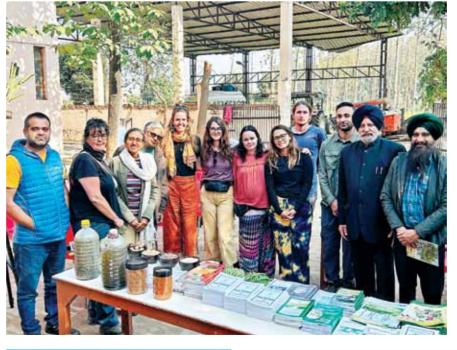
He enacted big and small roles with films like 'Naunihal' (1967), 'Brahmachari' (1968), 'Kati Patang' and 'Aan Milo Sajana' (1970), 'Caravan', 'Haathi Mere Saathi', 'Hare Rama Hare Krishna' and 'Jr. Mehmood in Hong Kong' (all 1971), 'Aap Ki Kasam' and 'Amir Garib' (1974), 'Geet Gaata Chal' (1975), 'Shehzade' (1989), 'Aaj Ka Arjun' (1990), Judaai' (1997), 'Journey Bombay to Goa' (2007), and many

Jr Mehmood was also seen in character roles in tele-serials like 'Pyar Ka Dard Hai, Meetha Meetha Pyaara Pyaara', 'Ek Rishta Sahjedari Ka' and 'Tenali Rama' among others.

more.

Incidentally, Sayyed considered the legendary comedian Mehmood Ali as his 'guru' who bestowed on him the title of 'Jr Mehmood'.

During his spell of hospitalisation, scores of Bollywood personalities had called on Jr Mehmood in hospital and deteriorating health.











PHOTOS: PRABHJOT GILI