



Export leap helps India deal with global headwinds

In a year fraught with economic challenges and logistical nightmares, India's goods exports have delivered a welcome surprise. With an 11.9% jump in February, reaching a staggering \$41.4 billion, the nation has witnessed its healthiest growth in exports in 20 months. This achievement is not just about numbers; it's a beacon of resilience in uncertain times. February's performance marks only the third time in two years that India's exports have crossed the formidable \$40 billion threshold. This surge is particularly noteworthy, given it outpaced the average \$35.4 billion export tally observed in the first ten months of the fiscal year. The backdrop to this achievement includes daunting challenges such as disruptions in the Red Sea and a drought-stricken Panama Canal, which have constricted key trading routes, elevating both the cost and time of shipment. While recent trade figures might suggest India is navigating these logistical hurdles with ease, the reality could be more complex. Some of February's success could be attributed to earlier dispatches, now reaching their destinations through longer, alternate routes. This scenario suggests a blend of backlogged orders coming to fruition and signs of demand picking up, despite the high interest rates casting a shadow over global market conditions. Despite a challenging narrative for exports in 2023-24, with electronics goods exports barely budging, policymakers remain cautiously optimistic. Yet, the latest readings for electronic components trade and a marginal growth in electronics imports and exports in February underscore the need for vigilance and support for sectors like textiles, and gems and jewellery, which are critical for employment and economic stability. As India celebrates its export milestone, the focus must remain on navigating the lingering challenges in global trade. The trade deficit, though widened by a significant jump in imports, including pricey gold, should not distract from the pressing need to bolster support for exporters.

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MK NARAYANAN FEARS AI'S INFLUENCE ON 2024'S GLOBAL ELECTIONS COULD UNDERMINE DEMOCRACIES.

Generative AI puts democracy to test

The rapid development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) models suggests that we are at an inflection point in the history of human progress. The speed with which the development of newer skills is taking place suggests that the day is not far off when Generative Artificial Intelligence (GAI) will transform into Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), which can mimic the capabilities of human beings. Such a situation could revolutionise our ideas about what to expect from machines. Breakthroughs in the AI domain will bring about a new chapter in human existence, including the way people react to both facts and falsehoods.

The potential of AI is already clear. Many such as Sam Altman of OpenAI in the United States, believe that it is the most important technology in history. AI protagonists further believe that AI is set to turbocharge, and dramatically improve, the standard of living of millions of human beings. It is, however, unclear, as of now, whether, as many Doomsday sayers aver, whether AI would undermine human values and that advanced AI could pose 'existential risks'.

AI and the electoral landscape

With the seven-phase general election in India having been announced, and to be held from April 19 to June 1, 2024, political parties and the electorate cannot, however, afford to ignore the AI dimension. This year, elections are also scheduled to be held (according to some reports) in as many as 50 other countries across the globe, apart from, and including, India, Mexico, the United Kingdom (by law, the last possible date for a general election is January 28, 2025) and the United States.

These elections are set to alter the fate of millions of people, and policymakers and the electorate need to ponder over the positive and negative impacts of this new technology. Rapid technological breakthroughs in AI (especially its latest manifestation, such as Generative AI, that provides dynamic simulations and mimics real world interactions) carry their own burdens. It may be too early to fully contemplate the possible impact of AGI—AI systems that simulate the capability of human beings—but all this is indicative of yet another dimension to electoral dynamics that cannot be ignored.

It may, hence, not be wrong to consider the



will be able to confuse the electorate to an extent not previously known or even envisaged. The use of AI models to produce reams of wrong information, apart from disinformation, accompanied by the creation of near realistic images of something that does not exist, will be a whole new experience. What can be said with some degree of certainty is that in 2024, the quality and quantity of disinformation is all set to overwhelm the electorate. What is more worrying is that the vast majority of such information would be incorrect. Hyper realistic Deep Fakes employed to sway voters, and micro targeting are set to scale new heights.

elections of 2024 as a curtain-raiser to whether AI and its offerings (such as Generative AI) would prove to be a game changer. The world is by now aware that AI models such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot are being employed in many fields, but 2024 would be a test case as to whether AI's newer models could alter electoral behaviours and verdicts as well. The good news, perhaps, is that those wishing to employ Generative AI to try and transform the electoral landscape do not have adequate time to fine-tune their AI models. It would, however, still be a mistake to underestimate the extent to which AI could impact the electoral landscape this time as well. What might not happen in 2024, may well happen in the next round of elections, both in India and worldwide.

A recently published Pew Survey (if it can be treated as reliable) indicates that a majority of Indians support 'authoritarianism'. Those employing AI could well have a field day in such a milieu to further confuse the electorate. As it is, many people are already referring to the elections in 2024 worldwide as the 'Deep Fake Elections', created by AI software. Whether this is wholly true or not, the Deep Fake syndrome appears inevitable, given that each new election lends itself to newer and newer techniques of propaganda, all with the aim of confusing and confounding the electorate. From this, it is but a short step to the inevitability of Deep Fakes.

Tackling AI 'determinism'

AI technology makes it easier to enhance falsehoods and enlarge mistaken beliefs. Disinformation is hardly a new methodology or technology, and has been employed in successive elections previously. What is new is that sophisticated AI tools

The potential of AI to disrupt democracies is, thus, very considerable. Simply being aware of the disruptive nature of AI and AI fakes is not enough. It may be necessary, for democracies in particular, to prevent such tactics from distorting the 'thought behaviour' of the electorate. AI deployed tactics will tend to make voters more mistrustful, and it is important to introduce checks and balances that would obviate efforts at AI 'determinism'. Notwithstanding all this, and while being mindful of the potential of AGI, panic is not warranted. There are many checks and balances available that could be employed to negate some of AI's more dangerous attributes.

The wide publicity given to a spate of recent inaccuracies associated with Google is a timely reminder that AI and AGI cannot be trusted in each and every circumstance. There has been public wrath worldwide over Google AI models, including in India, for their portrayal of persons and personalities in a malefic manner, mistaken or otherwise. These reflect well the dangers of 'runaway' AI.

Inconsistencies and undependability still stalk many AI models and pose inherent dangers to society. As its potential and usage increases in geometric proportion, threat levels are bound to go up. As of now, even as the potential of AI remains very considerable, it tends to be undependable. More so, its 'mischievous potential' cannot be ignored.

As nations increasingly depend on AI solutions for their problems, it is again important to recognise what many AI experts label as AI's 'hallucinations'. In simple terms, what these experts are implying

is that 'hallucinations' make it hard to accept and endorse AI systems in many instances. What they further imply, specially in the case of AGI, is that it tends at times to make up things in order to solve new problems. These are often probabilistic in character and cannot be accepted ipso facto as accurate. The implication of all of this is that too much reliance on AI systems at this stage of development may be problematic. The stark reality, though, is that there is no backtracking from what AI or AGI promises, even if results are less dependable than one would like.

We cannot also afford to ignore other existential threats associated with AI. The dangers on this account pose an even greater threat than harm arising from bias in design and development. There are real concerns that AI systems, oftentimes, tend to develop certain inherent adversarial capabilities. Suitable concepts and ideas have not yet been developed to mitigate them, as of now. The main types of adversarial capabilities, overshadowing other inbuilt weaknesses are: 'poisoning' that typically degrades an AI model's ability to make relevant predictions; 'back dooring' that causes the model to produce inaccurate or harmful results; and even 'evasion' that entails resulting in a model misclassifying malicious or harmful inputs thus detracting from an AI model's ability to perform its appointed role. There are possibly other problems as well, but it may be too early to enumerate them with any degree of probability.

India's handling of AI

Elections apart, India being one of the most advanced countries in the digital arena, again needs to treat AI as an unproven entity. While AI brings benefits, the nation and its leaders should be fully aware of its disruptive potential. This is specially true of AGI, and they should act with due caution. India's lead in digital public goods could be both a benefit as well as a bane, given that while AGI provides many benefits, it can be malefic as well.

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GAUTAM BAMBAWALE SAYS BHUTAN-INDIA LEADERSHIP TRUST SIGNIFICANTLY STRENGTHENS BILATERAL RELATIONS.

Ties that epitomise India's neighbourhood first policy

People have always marvelled at how little Bhutan with an area of 38,394 square kilometre and a population of 7.7 lakh as compared with its giant neighbour India with an area of 3.28 million sq.km and a population of 140 crores have been the closest of partners and the best of friends over the past 50 years and more.

The answer is quite simple. Both nations look to each other as equals, we treat each other with the utmost respect and we have long realised that size does not really make a difference in relations between two sovereign nation states. Thus, India has constantly respected Bhutanese identity, Bhutan's unique religious practices and its desire to be economically prosperous while retaining its own way of life. On its part, Bhutan has long known that there is no real threat to its sovereignty or identity from its southern flank. Hence, it has looked to India to help it grow, develop and prosper. India has lived up to this expectation. Over the decades this has developed into a unique level of trust amongst the leadership of the two countries. It has been in evidence in the recent past.

The Gelephu project

The King of Bhutan paid a visit to India in November 2023 during which he hinted at his plans for a Mindfulness City at Gelephu in southern Bhutan. It is to be like a Special Economic Zone to attract foreign investment and advance prosperity for that nation. Naturally, India, including its business



entities, is expected to play a significant role in this effort. Simultaneously, the Gelephu Mindfulness City is to keep sustainability, well-being and environmental concerns at the forefront. Such a project is expected to lead the people of Bhutan to higher income levels while allaying any concerns about its impact on Bhutan as a carbon negative country. Gelephu city is expected to focus on human well-being too with an emphasis on yoga, rest and recreation, spa therapies and mental relaxation channels.

The visit last week by the Prime Minister of Bhutan to India was a follow-up to the king's earlier visit and there were excellent discussions with Prime Minister Narendra Modi as well as the President of India, Droupadi Murmu. This week, Mr. Modi is to pay a return visit to Bhutan. We must understand that any relationship, whether it is between two individuals or between two nations, needs constant tending, regular dialogue and a lot of care and cooperation. The

back-to-back visits of the Prime Ministers of Bhutan and India to each other's nations is a manifestation of this attention placed on the relationship by both governments.

This is a good augury for the continued growth and development of India-Bhutan ties. It epitomises India's Neighbourhood First policy approach.

The anchor of hydropower cooperation

Hydropower cooperation is the bedrock of India's relations with Bhutan. Several cooperative hydroprojects have been completed and commissioned by the two governments which supply clean electricity to India and provide Thimphu with a stream of revenue due to which it has graduated out of the Least Developed Country status. The delayed Punatsangchu-II hydropower project is expected to be completed in 2024 — yet another successful example of the government-to-government model of cooperation in hydropower.

In recent years, a new joint venture model was developed for the construction of hydro-projects between India and Bhutan, but none of the proposed five projects has really taken off. Perhaps, it is time to acknowledge that this new proposed model is flawed and there is a need to go back to the drawing board to work out a more practical and potentially successful new model for hydroprojects.

India has also been a major development as-

stance partner to Bhutan and contributed Rs 5,000 crore to its 12th Five Year Plan which just concluded. Critical in this process of development assistance is the fact that India does not merely undertake projects which are of benefit to it but pays a lot of attention to the priorities of the Bhutanese people so that projects of direct benefit to them are constructed. Such confabulation and discussion is an integral part of the successful partnership for prosperity between New Delhi and Thimphu. It is critical that this model continues in the future too.

Measures to consider

In the years ahead, India must contribute to the success of the Gelephu Mindfulness City and can perhaps consider the following measures: commence direct flights between Mumbai/Delhi and Gelephu; provide our technology and knowledge in building hard infrastructure to Bhutan (the private sector will take the lead); encourage high-end Indian tourists and businesspersons to visit Gelephu in controlled numbers; Encourage Indian businesses to set up shop in the city.

Gelephu is next to remote parts of West Bengal and Assam and the success of the Mindfulness City will have positive socio-economic spillovers for these geographies as well. It will provide yet another example of the win-win cooperation between India and Bhutan.

Gautam Bambawale is a former Indian Ambassador to Bhutan and is currently the trustee of the think-tank, Pune International Centre. Views are personal.

BOOKS: REVIEW

New book helps navigate the soul's dark chambers

In the realm of contemporary fiction, Aparna Sanyal's Instruments of Torture emerges as a haunting anthology that ventures deep into the psychological labyrinths of the human psyche. Published by HarperCollins, this collection of stories is a bold exploration of the dark corners of the mind, where the lines between reality and nightmare blur. Each narrative, ingeniously named after medieval torture devices, serves as a metaphor for the internal torment and existential dread that define the human condition.

The thematic brilliance of Sanyal's work lies in its ability to use historical instruments of physical agony as conduits for delving into psychological torment. In stories such as The Rack, where a child is subjected to hormonal treatment to cure dwarfism, or The Judas Cradle, depicting a perilous love affair, Sanyal skillfully intertwines the physical with the psychological, sug-

gesting that the greatest tortures are often self-inflicted or society-imposed. Sanyal's prose is described by Namita Gokhale as carrying "tenderness in its brutality," a testament to the author's ability to navigate the complexities of human emotion with a gentle yet unflinching hand. Sonali Bendre praises the collection for taking readers on a "hypnotic journey to hell and back," highlighting Sanyal's mastery over twisted tales that probe the darkest facets of human nature. Instruments of Torture is not just a collection of stories; it is an introspective journey that challenges readers to confront their deepest fears and darkest desires. The mirror it holds up to the subconscious reveals not just individual vulnerabilities but also societal flaws—our collective obsession with normativity, the cruelty of unattainable standards, and the violence of suppression and repression. The book's inception, as shared

by Sanyal, traces back to a physical exhibition of medieval torture devices, a macabre inspiration that beautifully encapsulates the essence of the stories within. This origin story adds a layer of intrigue, hinting at the depth of research and the period of gestation these tales underwent in the author's mind before taking shape on paper. Perna Gill, commissioning editor at HarperCollins India, aptly describes the book as "serrated yet mesmerizing," a work that draws the reader's imagination towards the wonders and horrors of the human psyche. This sentiment captures the essence of Sanyal's anthology—it is a work that mesmerizes even as it disquiets, a rare feat in contemporary literature. This anthology marks Sanyal's first foray into fiction, building on her established reputation as a poet with a keen eye for the macabre and the whimsical. Her debut book, Circus Folk & Village Freaks, laid the ground-



Instruments of Torture by Aparna Sanyal
HarperCollins
200 pages, Rs399

the complexities of the human soul and the instrumental roles our inner demons play in shaping our realities. Furthermore, Instruments of Torture transcends the traditional boundaries of fiction, inviting readers into a participatory experience that demands reflection and, at times, self-examination. The stories, while rooted in the grotesque and the unsettling, are imbued with a profound sense of empathy for the human condition. Sanyal's narrative technique, which seamlessly blends the real with the surreal, compels the reader to question the very nature of reality and the constructs of the mind. This collection not only entertains but also educates and enlightens, offering a lens through which to view our own lives and the societal norms that bind and sometimes constrict us. Through this intricate tapestry of pain and introspection, Sanyal achieves a rare harmony between the aesthetic and the therapeutic, making Instruments of Torture a seminal work in the exploration of human consciousness and a significant milestone in the landscape of Indian English literature.

Priyanka Chopra, Nick Jonas offer prayers at Ram Mandir with daughter Malti



AYODHYA: Priyanka Chopra, Nick Jonas offer prayers at Ram Mandir with daughter Malti. Priyanka Chopra, who is currently in India, offered prayers at Ram Jambhoomi Temple in Ayodhya with her husband, singer Nick Jonas and daughter Malti Marie.

In the videos captured by the paparazzi, Priyanka was seen inside the temple premises with her family.

The ace actor can be seen wearing a yellow sari. Nick, too, opted for the ethnic outfit.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Priyanka will be seen in Heads of State, alongside John Cena and Idris Elba. She is also set to lend her voice to Disney's upcoming film Tiger. She will also be seen in Farhan Akhtar directorial Jee Le Zaraa.

Kareena Kapoor lauds Kunal Khemu's directional debut film Madgaon Express



MUMBAI: Kareena Kapoor Khan shared her thoughts on brother-in-law Kunal Khemu's directorial debut, Madgaon Express. The Jab We Met actress posted the

film's poster on her Instagram story and praised Kunal's directing skills.

"So, so funny and brilliantly directed. So, so proud of you, Kunal Khemu. Outstanding

performances. Bravo, guys," she wrote.

The film marks Kunal's directorial debut. It features Divyendu, Pratik Gandhi and Nora Fatehi.

POTPOURRI

Diljit Dosanjh drops song 'Khutti' with 'ice girl' Saweetie; says she 'just landed in Panjab'

MUMBAI: Punjabi rapper and actor Diljit Dosanjh has joined forces with Saweetie for the song 'Khutti' and he quipped that the American rapper has 'just landed in Panjab'.

Taking to Instagram, Diljit shared a glimpse of the music video, where the two are seen twinning in yellow and pink.

Saweetie is seen rapping in English, while the 'Lover' hit maker is seen mouthing his lines in Punjabi.

For the caption, Diljit wrote, 'Khutti out now with ice girl @saweetie. Just landed in Panjab. #bayarea.'

On the work front, Diljit will be seen in 'Crew'



alongside Kareena Kapoor Khan, Tabu and Kriti Sanon.

Vidya Balan, Ileana D'Cruz's Do Aur Do Pyaar teaser out now



MUMBAI: Makers of the upcoming film Do Aur Do Pyaar, starring Vidya Balan and Ileana D'Cruz, unveiled its official teaser on Thursday.

On its official Instagram, Applause Entertainment released a video clip introducing the audience to the world of two couples, Vidya Balan-Sendhil Ramamurthy and Ileana D'Cruz-Pratik Gandhi.

The video provides a peek into the dynamics of modern-day relationships with a perfect blend of romance, humour, and relatable storytelling.

The teaser starts with a married couple, played by Vidya and Pratik, sharing a meal on their couch. When Pratik offers Vidya his ice cream, she declines, mentioning she's vegan. He then points out that her facewash contains milk. The video also features affectionate moments between another couple, played by Ileana and Sendhil.

All four characters are seen attempting to rekindle the passion and excitement in their relationships. They go on movie dates and trips, striving to bring back marital happiness.



Students smeared with Gulaab (colour powder) celebrate Holi, the Hindu spring festival of colours at the Guru Nanak Dev University in Amritsar on Friday. Holi is the Hindu religious spring festival celebrated by Hindus as a festival of colors. PHOTO-PRABHJOT GILL

Quasar Salon Mohali Sets New Standards in Beauty & Wellness

KULBIR SINGH KALSI Chandigarh

Today marked a momentous occasion as Aruna Roy Chauhan, the proud owner of Quasar Salon, Spa, and Beauty, unveiled their exquisite establishment in Sector 79, Mohali. The grand inauguration, graced by Avneet Kaur Sidhu, witnessed the convergence of beauty aficionados and professionals alike. Many artists including Gurnazar, Rupinder Handa, Aatish, Nirman, Karan, and Guri participated!!

Quasar Salon sets itself apart with a distinguished blend of luxury and innovation. Spearheaded by Vikas Bawa, Varun Jain, and Shubham, the salon introduced revolutionary treatments, including the Dubai facial team's expertise, cutting-edge hairstyling, and the novel concept of non-alcoholic wine and champagne pedicures. Notably, Quasar is also a pioneer in



introducing pain relief therapies, promising unparalleled relaxation and rejuvenation.

PPS CID Avneet Kaur Sidhu expressed her joy, saying, "It's a very positive sign that women are leading in various fields across society. In today's world, it's a beautiful thing to see a businesswoman leading both at home and outside, all while maintaining a smile in the face of challenges."

Man to Take Public Shower to Show Meat's Devastating Impact on the Planet



AMRITSAR: Behind a shower curtain that reads, "1 kg of Meat = 1 Year of Showers. Clean Your Conscience: Go Vegan," a People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India and Aashray Foundation supporter will take a public shower in Amritsar tomorrow to mark World Water Day (22 March). Our point? The best thing that people can do to

save water and the environment is to go vegan.

"It's impossible to be truly eco-friendly without going vegan," explains PETA India Campaigns Coordinator Utkarsh Garg. "Just by changing the way we eat, concerned people can save precious water resources and help protect the Earth, our own health, and countless animals."

The meat, egg, and dairy industries put a serious strain on the world's water supply - by watering crops that farmed animals eat, providing billions of animals with drinking water each year, and cleaning the filth from farms, trucks, and slaughterhouses. According to the Water Footprint Network, it takes 322 litres of water to pro-

duce 1 kilogram of vegetables. In contrast, the production of animal-derived foods uses much more water: 1 kilogram of milk requires 1020 litres, 1 kilogram of eggs requires 3265 litres, 1 kilogram of poultry requires 4325 litres, 1 kilogram of pork requires 5988 litres, 1 kilogram of mutton requires 8763 litres, and 1 kilogram of beef requires a staggering 15,415 litres.

The meat and dairy industries are also incredibly polluting; the world's top five meat and dairy corporations alone are responsible for more greenhouse gas emissions that exacerbate climate change - particularly through the methane emitted from cattle and other ruminant animals used for food - than major oil and gas companies ExxonMobil, Shell, or BP. And while 224.3 million people are undernourished in India and 91 million people in the country lack suitable access to water, the production of meat, eggs, and dairy uses a third of the world's freshwater resources and a third of the world's cropland - which could be used to feed humans instead of farmed animals.

Rasna, ropes in actress Tamannaah Bhatia as new brand ambassador



KULBIR SINGH KALSI Chandigarh

Summer is here, we know it Coz Rasna's New Campaign is out! This year like every year Rasna has come out with a fresh new campaign that not only highlights their 21 Vitamins and Minerals that energise us but also highlights the emotions it stirs up that of Vitamins of Love, Happiness, Josh and Success. On the basis of deep market research and blind product taste results, Rasna is reformulated as a vitamin, mineral, and glucose drink with real fruit extracts. The new ad is a result of extensive market research done Pan India to help us understand our customers and their evolving needs. It focuses on the natural, healthier, and great taste aspects targeted towards SEC A and B households and positions it as a tastier, thicker, and healthier drink that satisfy rational aspects as well as working as a catalyst in providing energy, Josh, happiness, and the most important vitamin, Vitamin Love.

This year's highlight of the campaign of course is the onboarding of the sensational Tamannaah Bhatia, the face of youth and the heartbeat of many. In fact, Tamannaah has been a fan of Rasna and consuming Rasna since childhood, and has a distinct memory of herself as a kid saying Love You Rasna in actual life and that is why having her onboard was only natural.

Punjab Kings unveils incredible new jersey at a grand event

KAVITA SHARMA Mohali

Ahead of the 17th edition of the Indian Premier League, The Punjab Kings launched their highly anticipated new match-day jersey. The jersey was revealed in a spectacular event at the Elante Mall in Chandigarh on Saturday in the presence of renowned personalities from all walks of life.

A standout comic performance by Jasmeet Singh Bhatia left the audience in splits. Afterwards, Punjab Kings co-owner Preity G Zinta and team Captain Shikhar Dhawan unveiled the new colors and revealed the stunning new design in all its glory. The other members of the team along with coaching staff also graced the ceremony.

Further adding to the glamour and entertainment on the night was the Punjabi singer & actor Gippy Grewal, who mesmerized the jam-packed squad and set the stage ablaze with his vibrant performance.

The new red jersey, manufactured by PlayR has been made according to international standards and embodies passion, spirit, and vigor - something the Shers of Punjab stand for. The fabric for the new jersey has been imported from Vietnam and the manufacturing of the same has been done in India by PlayR. It is 20% lighter and 30% more stretchable and has been designed with anti-sweat, anti-odour, anti-bacterial, and anti-pilling technologies. The new jersey is also resistant to UV rays, and hence, will avoid colour fading.

We are delighted to launch our new jersey in front of our loyal fans, who are the backbone of the team. The new colors reflect the emotions and pulse of Punjab and everything it stands for. The team will represent the fans on the field and make some unforgettable memories in the new stadium." *said Preity G Zinta, Punjab Kings co-owner*. At the bottom of the jersey, the kesari patterns are inspired by fire, a symbol deeply rooted in our traditions, resonating



with auspicious beginnings. It further highlights the fire within the Shers. The Indian tri-colour, on the shoulder blades, marks a tribute to our nation, and to our honourable armed forces. The nihal blue arrows on the sides reflect upward movement and symbolise the weapons of the warriors of Punjab. The honeycomb pattern on the lower end of the jersey is dedicated to the fans and the spirit of teamwork, inspired by the unity of honeybees, who work in synergy towards one goal.

The love and passion of the shers squad is infectious and it is hard for me to put in words how happy I am, to back here. We have an exciting team this season that will give everything on the pitch as we look forward to don the vibrant new jersey and play at the new home ground in front of all of you." *said Shikhar Dhawan, the Captain of

Punjab Kings* The new jersey will be available on Punjab Kings website and soon-to-be-launched app in India. It will also be available in UK, Canada, Australia and UAE for international fans.

About Punjab Kings

One of the eight inaugural franchises of the Indian Premier League, Punjab Kings (previously Kings XI Punjab) is owned by a consortium of prominent industry figures like Ness Wadia, Mohit Burman, Preity G Zinta, and Karan Paul. Based in Chandigarh, Punjab Kings thrive on their fighting spirit, coupled with the wholeheartedness and positive outlook that represents Punjab. The brand's infectious personality has built a strong affinity with the fans as a team that strives to provide a global platform for local and upcoming talent.

Kashmir hosts maiden Formula-4 car racing event along Dal Lake

Srinagar's Dal Lake on Sunday played host to the region's first-ever Formula-4 car racing event. The picturesque Boulevard road witnessed sleek racing cars roaring against the backdrop of the majestic Zabarwan Hills, captivating spectators with a thrilling spectacle.

The racing demonstration along the banks of the Dal Lake was held to promote motorsports in Jammu and Kashmir.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a social media post, appreciated the efforts of the organisers of the racing event. "This is very heartening to see. It will help further showcase the beauty of Jammu and Kashmir. India offers great opportunities for motorsports to thrive and Srinagar is right



on top of the places where it can happen!" PM Modi said in a post.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, lauded the occasion as a symbol of the Valley's progress,

expressing optimism about its potential to elevate Kashmir's profile, attract tourists, and stimulate the local economy.

Director of Tourism Kashmir, Raja Yaqoob, echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the

region's growing reputation as an adventure tourism destination and its commitment to nurturing local talent.

"With the introduction of high-octane events like this, we are not only entertaining but also investing in the future of Kashmir's youth and tourism industry," Yaqoob said.

He further highlighted that the race would serve as a platform for local talent, nurturing a new generation of sports enthusiasts with aspirations to compete on a global scale.