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CORPORATES & INDUSTRY



ELON MUSK-RUN STARLINK LATEST PLAYER TO GET **DOT SATCOM LICENCE IN**



'SHOOTING LEAGUE OF **INDIA IS MORE THAN JUST** A COMPETITION: OLYMPIC **MEDALLIST SARABJOT SINGH**

Punjab CM Bats for Foolproof Planning and Execution of Flood Protection Work

Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on June 5 emphasized the need for foolproof planning and effective execution of the state's master plan for flood protection across Punjab.

While presiding over a highlevel meeting at his official residence to monitor the progress of ongoing flood protection works. the Chief Minister stated that the master plan would not only ensure judicious use of funds but also help save crores currently being spent on compensating flood victims for crop loss and property damage. He underscored that the plan for managing drains and rivers should be developed in close coordination with engineers from the irrigation department. This would ensure regular de-silting, cleaning, and strengthening of flood protection infrastructure. Mann noted that these mea-

Ludhiana West By-election:

14 Candidates to Contest the

14 candidates will contest the

by-election for the 64-Ludhi-

ana West seat of the Punjab

ficer Sibin C informed that

today, on the last day for

withdrawal of nominations,

after the counting of votes on

Legislative Assembly.

Election – Sibin C

sures will play a vital role in support these efforts on a regular, safeguarding residents from the devastation caused by floods during the monsoon.

Punjab CM instructed officials to prepare a comprehensive final blueprint based on the master plan so that flood protection works can be implemented systematically, rather than following the traditional ad-hoc approach just before the rainy season. He also stressed the importance of earmarking a special allocation and cleaning of drains across in the annual state budget to all 22 districts of Punjab. He

long-term basis. Furthermore, Bhagwant Singh Mann directed officials to formulate an actionable plan in consultation with Chief Engineers, highlighting priority tasks in both the drainage and canal wings of the irrigation department.

In a major move, the Chief Minister approved approximately Rs 116 crore to carry out flood protection works

instructed Deputy Commissioners to ensure these projects are completed before the onset of the monsoon, with strict timelines to be met by June 30. Bhagwant Singh Mann made it clear that any officer or official from the irrigation department found negligent in executing these tasks would be held personally accountable. Punjab Chief Minister emphasized that these funds must be utilized in the most effective way possible, with special attention given to vulnerable areas within each district. He also directed officials to thoroughly inspect and address newly affected areas that experienced flooding last year, particularly due to obstructions caused by road construction. Preventing floods and ensuring that no part of the state suffers during the monsoon is a top priority, Bhagwant Singh Mann said.

PM Modi Tells World: Build Strong, Disaster-**Resilient Infrastructure for Future**

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday underlined the importance of constructing disaster-resilient infrastructure and outlined key global priorities to achieve this goal during his address at the International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, being held in Europe for the

Expressing gratitude to French President Emmanuel Macron and the French government, Prime Minister Modi said. "I thank my friend President Macron and the Government of France for their support. I also extend my wishes for the upcoming United Nations Oceans Conference." Highlighting the vulnerability of coastal and island regions to natural disasters, he said, "The theme of this conference is shaping a resilient future for coastal regions. Coastal regions and islands are at great risk due to natural di-

recent times, we saw Cyclone

Remal in India and Bangladesh, Hurricane Beryl in the Caribbean, Typhoon Yagi in Southeast Asia, Hurricane Helene in the United States, Typhoon Usagi in the Philippines, and Cyclone Chido in parts of Africa. Such disasters cause damage to lives and property," he said. Recalling India's own past

experiences, PM Modi noted, "India also experienced the pain during the super cyclone of 1999 and the tsunami of 2004. We adapted and rebuilt, factoring in resilience. Cyclone shelters were constructed across vulnerable areas. We also helped build a tsunami warning system for

Emphasising India's global role, he said, "The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure is working with 25 small island developing states. Resilient homes, hospitals, schools, energy systems, water security mechanisms, and early warning systems are being built. Given the theme of this conference, I am glad to see friends from the Pacific, Indian Ocean, and the Caribbean here. Further, I am happy that the African Union has also joined the CDRI." He listed out global priorities that need urgent attention, starting with education and skills. "Courses, modules, and skill development programmes on disaster resilience need to become part of higher education. This will build a skilled workforce that can tackle future challenges," he said. Stressing the importance of shared learning, he added, "Many countries face disasters and rebuild with resilience. A global digital repository for the learnings and best

practices would be beneficial."

Equity markets may re-

spond positively in sectors

Punjab Police arrests two for cross-border arms smuggling; eight weapons seized



CHANDIGARH: In a major breakthrough, Punjab Police's Counter Intelligence of Amritsar apprehended two people, Sukhchain Singh and Jugraj Singh, who were actively involved in cross-border arms smuggling and recovered eight weapons, police said on Friday.

Director General of Police, Gaurav Yadav, said that acting on specific Intelligence, these operatives were intercepted while transporting a consignment of illegal arms from akistan-based smuggler Noor.

The DGP wrote on social media handle X that three Glock 9mm pistols, four Px5 pistols and one .30 bore pistol were seized. "A First Information Report (FIR) has been registered in Amritsar. Further investigation is underway to identify additional handlers and unearth the full extent of this smuggling network, " the DGP added.

In another crackdown a day earlier on cross-border drug smuggling networks, Amritsar Commissionerate Police busted two international narco-trafficking cartels with the arrest of its six drug smugglers, including a woman, and recovered four

DGP Gaurav Yadav said that preliminary investigation has revealed that one module is operated by arrested accused Sevenbir, who is in direct contact with Pakistan-based smugglers.

The latter received heroin consignments and operated under the guise of livestock

The DGP added that one of the arrested accused, Jasbir Kaur, is linked to the cartel of the infamous smuggler Ranjeet,

through on Thursday, the police dismantled a cross-border weapon smuggling module with links to Pakistan and arrested two of its operatives after recovering six highly sophisticated

41st Anniversary of Operation Blue Star passed off peacefully amidst the slogans of Khalistan

JAGMOHAN SINGH

The 41st anniversary of Operatio nBluestarpassed off peacefully amidst the slogans of 'Khalistahn Zindabad' raised by supporters and activists of Radical Sikh outfits including activists of Shiromani Akal Dal Amritsar headed by former Member Parliament Simranjit Singh Mann, his associate former MP Dhian Singh Mand and activists of Punjab Chief Electoral Of-Radical outfit Dal Khalsa here today at the Akal Takht. Mann was also present on the spot. Radical Sikh outfit Dal

Khalsa's activists were also one independent candidate. Kamal Pawar, withdrew his seen holding placards bearing nomination. He said that after portraits of slain militant leader Jarnail Singh Bhidnrawala. Sikh the scrutiny of nomination papers, 15 nominations were youth led by Dal Khalsa carrying d valid, and with the with. flags, photograph drawal of one candidate, 14 of damaged Akal Takhat and candidates now remain in the Sikh killed Sikh leaders who were in June 1984, declared It is noteworthy that voting June 6 as a Khalistan Day. will take place on June 19 from The entire marbled periphery 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM, and of Golden Temple near Akal the result will be announced Takht rendered with the slo-



"Khalistahn Zindabad". Jathedar Akal Takht (highest Sikh temporal seat) Gyani Kuldeep Singh in while reading Ardas (prayers as per Sikh rituals) said all Sikh outfits unitedly apply die hard efforts for the release of 'Bandhi Singhs in- ery year honors the family of Balwant Singh Rajona'.

Jathedar today also concluded his address during the Ardas said that this pious spiritual place (Golden Temple and Akal Takht) should never be the place of war as everybody wants peace gans of Khalistahn Zindabad. here. On this occasion, SGPC president Harjinder Singh

holding banners and placards of Dhami honored the family members of slain Sikh leaders who were killed along with Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala in the

Golden Temple complex during

the Army action in June1984.

However, as per tradition, Jathedar Akal Takht who evno were killed in the army actions but this year it was done by the SGPC president, the reason behind the successor of Bhidnrawalla Gyani Harnam Singh Dhuma has objected the recent appointment of Jathedar Akal Takht Gyani Kuldeep Singh as it was not done as per Sikh rituals, since all Sikh

religious outfits were not taken into confidence by the SGPC at the time of appointment of Jathedar Akal Takht.

There was peaceful bandh around the Golden Temple and interior walled city on the call of Radical outfit Dal Khalsa even outer areas were also observed complete Bandh.. It may be mentioned here that 40 years back Indian Army had attacked on Golden Temple with code name Operation Blue Star to flush out hiding militants in the Golden Temple. The Three days operation ended on June6th 1984 when the body of militant leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala was found and identified. Bhindranwala during his lifetime was strongly demanding a separate Sikh year in anger SGPC observeOperation Blue Staranniversary as a genocide day and honor the family members of Sikhs who were killed during the Army attack. During the Operation Blue Star nearly 3000 people including army personnel were also reportedly killed.

RBI rate cut - A boost to capex & consumption: ASSOCHAM President Mr. Sanjay Nayar said.



TANVIR KAUR

New Delhi

ASSOCHAM today expressed delight at the 50-basis point reduction in the policy interest rates by the Reserve Bank of India, describing the continuation in accommodative policy stance as a catalyst for boosting capex and demand across different sectors of the economy.

"The RBI Monetary Policy Committee's repo rate cut of 50 basis points and cash reserve ratio cut of 100 bps is expected duce lending rates, spur growth in the economy and encourage borrowing from industry for capex. It will also induce business growth through enhanced credit, especially in differentials with the US narinterest rate-sensitive sectors such as real estate, automobiles, infrastructure, exports and MSME segment." ASSOCHAM

such as Banking, FMCG, Capital Goods & Housing. Even bond yields may ease further, improving valuation of fixed income securities. Sharing RBI's pro-growth impulse kg heroin. on India's economic growth, ASSOCHAM Secretary General Manish Singhal said, "A rate cut will lower borrowing costs for consumers and corporates, stimulate credit demand and revive consumption. The rate cut will also benefit the agricultural sector as lower rates can reduce borrowing trade, he said. costs for farmers and agribusinesses, especially in presowing season. In addition to this, improved rural demand could support rural consump- alias Cheeta, and maintained ssed on effectivel through rural credit channels". These rate cuts typically put downward pressure on INR,

especially if real interest rate

rows. However, strong forex

reserves and robust capital

inflows in Indian equities and

bonds may buffer volatility.

and across the border In one more major break-

Extending an olive branch

to the outlawed movement.

HM Shah implored militants

to relinquish their weapons

and embrace the mainstream,

asserting that armed resis-

tance cannot impede the prog-

He assured that surrendered

insurgents who contribute to

the region's development will

receive full protection from

both the Union and State

Highlighting the urgent

need for infrastructural ad-

vancement, HM Shah empha-

sised Prime Minister Narendra

Modi's vision for Bastar, pledg-

ing comprehensive develop-

He had lamented the

stagnation that has plagued

the region for half a century,

stressing that true progress

can only be realised when chil-

dren receive education, health-

care facilities are accessible,

ment within five years.

governments.

ress of their tribal brethren.

Poverty in India Reduced Via Tangible Boost in Household Living Standards, Incomes

(2017 PPP) to \$3.00 per day

While the change led to a

global increase in the count of

extreme poverty by 125 million,

India emerged as a statistical

outlier in a positive direction.

and updated survey methods,

India not only withstood the

onstrated a massive reduction

have increased the count of

global extreme poverty by 226

million people. But thanks to

India's data revision, the net

global increase was only 125

million — as India's revised

data reduced the count by 125

million on its own, the data

India's latest Household

Consumption Expenditure

raised threshold but also dem-

The new poverty line would

Using more refined data

(2021 PPP).

in poverty.



NEW DELHI: The World Bank's revised figures reinforce that poverty in India has reduced not just statistically, but through tangible improvements in household living standards and incomes, according to a government factsheet released. India's poverty decline is a

story of technical refinement meeting policy results. In the face of a raised poverty benchmark, India showed that more honest data, not diluted standards, can reveal real progress.

As the global community recalibrates poverty goals, India's example sets a precedent: evidence-based governance, sustained reforms, and methodological integrity can together deliver transformational outcomes, the factsheet read.

The World Bank has announced a major revision to global poverty estimates, raising the International Poverty Survey (HCES) adopted the

(MMRP) method, replacing the outdated Uniform Reference Period (URP). This shift used shorter re-

call periods for frequently purchased items and captured more realistic estimates of actual consumption. As a result, consumption re-

corded in national surveys rose, leading to a drop in poverty estimates. In 2011-12, applying MMRP reduced India's poverty rate

from 22.9 per cent to 16.22 per cent, even under the older \$2.15 poverty line. In 2022–23, poverty under the new \$3.00 line stood at 5.25 per cent, while under the older

\$2.15 line, it dropped further to

2.35 per cent. In 2023-24, the average Monthly Per Capita Expenditure (MPCE) was Rs 4,122 in rural areas and Rs 6,996 in urban areas, excluding the value of items received free through social welfare programmes.

When these are included, the figures rise to Rs 4,247 and Rs 7,078, respectively. This is significant increase from the rural MPCE of Rs 1,430 and urban MPCE of Rs 2,630 in 2011-12.

The urban-rural consumption gap has narrowed from 84 per cent in 2011-12 to 70 per cent in 2023-24, indicating a reduction in consumption disparities between urban and rural households.

Bihar now crime capital of country says Rahul Gandhi

Promises, wherever there is a Congress govt, 50% reservation barrier will be removed

KAVITA SHARMA

Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi have said that Bihar which once guided the world

civilisations with its wisdom and philosophy has now turned into the "crime capital of the country". Addressing the 'Samvidhan Suraksha Sammelan'in Rajgir (Bihar) he said, "Bihar was once considered the land of truth,

iustice, and non-violence. It showed the path to the entire world; people from across the globe used to come to study at Nalanda University' But today, he added, the situation has completely changed. People from Bihar are now

forced to migrate to other states and even abroad because there are no employment opportunities here", he pointed out, while remarking, "Bihar has now become the crime capital of the

Reiterating and reaffirming his commitment to caste census and removing the 50 percent cap on reservations, he said, he will ensure both these are done. And once done, there will be a paradigm shift in the way development is carried out in the country.



He disclosed that after joining politics, he learnt that "90 percent of the country's population has no real representation anywhere". The backward classes, Dalits, Adivasis, and extremely backward communities lack meaningful representation in key areas such as the corporate sector, judiciary, bureaucracy, and among the owners of private hospitals and other institutions. On the other hand, Gandhi added, these 90 percent people can only be found among the MGNREGA and the gig workers. He said, while Dalits, backward classes, Adivasis, extremely backward communities, and the poor from the general category make up 90% of the population, they control less than 5% of the country's resources. "You have 90 percent shareholding in pain and suffering", he remarked about the 90 percent population. Reiterating that the BJP and the RSS come under pressure very easily and they take no time to surrender, he said, he had told Prime Minister Modi in the

Parliament that the caste census

would definitely be conducted.

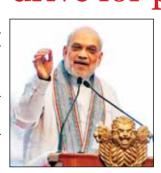
Union Home Minister hails anti-Naxal triumph; pledges relentless drive for peace **BHOPAL**: Galvanised by the tion from security forces.

resounding success of anti-Naxal operations in Chhattisgarh, Ûnion Home Minister Amit Shah has expressed his wish to personally meet the soldiers whose valour, determination and commitment have been instrumental in making these triumphs pos-

In a statement shared on his official X handle, HM Shah conveyed his admiration for the officers who played a pivotal role in the counter-insurgency efforts, commending them for their historic achievements. He further articulated his

eagerness to meet the frontline soldiers whose courage has been the cornerstone of these operations, affirming his intention to visit Chhattisgarh in the near future.

The Centre's campaign against the Naxalite insurgency, a movement long regarded as one of the most formidable internal threats to the Indian state, extends beyond mere tactical victories. It signifies a broader consolidation of central authority, reinforcing the government's resolve to eradicate extremism and restore stability to affected regions.



During his address on April 5 in Bastar when HM Shah participated in the 'Bastar Pandum' festival, he reiterated that Naxals would not be allowed to obstruct the development of tribal communities in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region.

He urged insurgents to lay down arms, emphasising that their continued resistance serves no purpose, and underscoring that no one rejoices in their demise.

He had expressed this at the 'Bastar Pandum festival' in April, where he reaffirmed the government's commitment to eliminating the Naxal menace by March 2026.

He assured that those who

choose to surrender will be

reintegrated into society, while

those who persist in armed

and every citizen possesses essential identification and welfare provisions. The minister had also pro-

vided a statistical overview of the ongoing surrender initiative, revealing that 521 Naxals have laid down arms in 2025, following 881 surrenders in rebellion will face decisive acthe preceding year.

Punjab Offers Rs 17,500/Hectare Incentive to Shift 12K Hectares from Paddy to Maize

CHANDIGARH: In a major push to promote agricultural diversification and combat depleting groundwater levels in the state, the Chief Minister S. Bhagwant Singh Mann led Punjab Government has unveiled an ambitious plan to diversify 12,000 hectares of paddy to kharif maize this year. Farmers adopting maize cultivation will receive a financial incentive of Rs 17, 500 per hectare, aimed at promoting a more sustainable agriculture ecosystem, besides boosting farmers' income.

Revealing the details about the diversification plan, Punjab Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister S. Gurmeet Singh Khudian said that six districts-Bathinda, Sangrur, Pathankot, Gurdaspur, Jalandhar and Kapurthala will spearhead the pilot project, targeting 12, 000 hectares for paddy-to-maize diversification.

The Agriculture Minister

Sirsa women police

suspended allegedly involved in corruption

launched a drive against corrup-

tion in Haryana has taken a sterict

action in a case at Mahila Police

Station Sirsa. In a rape case of

negligence and alleged corrup-

tion, the in-charge of the women

police station, Sirsa Ghanshyam

Devi, has been suspended by Sirsa

SP Dr Mayank Gupta on Wednes-

day. This action was taken after a

complaint in a rape case, accusing

the police officer attempting to

settle a the case demanding Rs 20

lakh from the accused. Accord-

ing to information, woman from

Ellenabad had filed a rape com-

plaint at the police station. She

alleged Instead of taking proper

legal action, the officers involved

tried to arrive at a compromise

with the accused for Rs 20 lakh

money. This complaint reached

the SP's office, who took immedi-

station incharge

SATISH HANDA



further said that the state government has also appointed 200 Kisan Mitras (Friends of the Farmer) to encourage and guide farmers to shift from paddy to kharif maize. The decision to incentivise maize cultivation is strategically aligned with the need to promote water-efficient crops and enhance farmers' income. Maize, a highly nutritious and versatile crop, requires less water in comparison to paddy,

making it a more sustainable option. Moreover, the crop's versatility in terms of its uses, from food to animal feed and content of starch, offers a wider market and income potential for farmers

"By diversifying our crops, we can improve soil health, reduce water consumption, and create a more resilient agricultural system. This will not only benefit our farmers but also is a crucial step towards achieving our goal of sustainable agriculture in Punjab, "said S. Gurmeet Singh Khudian

The Shaheedi Samagam (Mar-

tyrdom Congregation) com-

memorating the June 1984

Ghallughara (holocaust) was

concluded today at Akal Takht

Sahib in a peaceful and spiritu-

Samagam (religious congrega-

tion) was organized by the Shi-

romani Gurdwara Parbandhak

Committee (SGPC) with the

support of various Sikh orga-

nizations including Damdami

Taksal, Nihang Singh Sampra-

Following the concluding

ceremony (bhog) of Sri Akhand

Path Sahib and Gurbani Kir-

tan, Jathedar Giani Kuldeep

Singh Gargajj, officiating

Jathedar of Sri Akal Takht

Sahib and Jathedar of Takht

Sri Kesgarh Sahib, offered

the concluding Ardas (Sikh

prayer). In front of Guru Sahib,

he paid tribute to all martyrs of

June 1984, including the 14th

Head of Damdami Taksal great

Sikh 20th-century commu-

nity's martyr Sant Giani Jarnail

Singh Khalsa Bhindranwale,

All India Sikh Students Fed-

eration President Bhai Amrik

Singh, General Shabeg Singh,

He recalled that in June

1984, the then Congress-led

Indian government launched

a brutal military assault using

tanks, artillery, and bullets at

Sachkhand Sri Harmandar

Sahib, right when the entire

Sikh community was com-

memorating the martyrdom

and Baba Thara Singh.

das, and Singh Sabhas.

On this occasion, a Gurmat

ally united atmosphere.

Dr. Basant Garg, the Administrative Secretary of Agriculture department, said that Kharif maize has already been sown in 1500 hectares so far. The move will go a long way to address the pressing issue of depleting groundwater levels in Punjab. The state's heavy reliance on paddy cultivation, a water-intensive crop, has put immense strain on groundwater resources, leading to concerns about the long-term sustainability of agriculture. The financial incentive will cover the cost of inputs (Seed, fertilizer) etc. making maize cultivation more attractive for farmers. The government would also provide technical support and training to ensure successful implementation of the diversification plan.

Jathedar Giani Kuldeep Singh Gargajj prays for unity within Khalsa Panth

Sahib, was wounded by bul- targeted killings of Sikhs in lets. Many Sikh men, women, youth, and children who had gathered for the fifth Guru's martyrdom congregation were martyred. The assault extended bevond Sri Harmandar Sahib to other Sikh shrines across Punjab, including the highest seat of Sikh authority—Sri Akal Takht Sahib—which was

damaged. In his Ardas, Jathedar Gargajj prayed for strength, unity, harmony, and togetherness within the Khalsa Panth and sought blessings for the community to follow in the footsteps of the community's warriors and martyrs. He also raised concern over ongoing efforts to blur Sikh identity in the country and condemned the government's anti-Sikh policies targeting Sikh Kakaars (articles of faith). He appealed to the community to unite in their efforts for the release of all Bandi Singhs (Sikh political prisoners), including the Zinda Shaheed (living martyr) Bhai Balwant Singh Rajoana. He prayed for such united strength and efforts of the community,

He addressed the issue of

that we could get the Sikh pris-

country and abroad and asserted that Punjab is the sacred homeland of Sikhs, urging that it should never become a battlefield. Referring to the current state of internal con-

flict within the community,

he prayed before Guru Sahib

for adherence to the principle

of unity, as demonstrated by

today's united and peaceful

commemoration of the June

1984 Ghallughara (holocaust). He further prayed that Sikh taksals, religious organizations, and Nihang sampradas remain forever united under the

Khalsa's Nishan Sahib. Speaking to the media after the congregation at the Secretariat of Sri Akal Takht Sahib, Gargajj expressed strong objection to the planned events being held in Batala city under the name 'Crusade' in the context of religious conversions. He stated that Punjab is the land sanctified by the Sikh Gurus, and seeds of hatred must not be sown here. He emphasized the need for the Sikh community to respond to this issue with compassion and to embrace those who have drifted toward other faiths.

Cross-border arms smuggling network busted in Amritsar; two held with eight pistols



Amritsar

Counter Intelligence (CI) Amritsar has busted a cross-border illegal arms smuggling module with links to Pakistan and arrested two of its operatives, said Director General of Police (DGP) Punjab Gaurav Yadav on Friday.

Those arrested have been identified as Sukhchain Singh, a resident of Daoke in Amritsar and Jugraj Singh, a resident of village Bhakna Kalan in Amritsar. Police teams have also recovered eight sophisticated pistols— three 9MM Glock, four Px5, and one .30 bore pistol— from their possession, besides, impounding their black Splendor motorcvcle (PB02DC1197) being used for transporting the consignments.

DGP said that preliminary investigations have revealed that the accused were acting under the directions of Pakistan-based smuggler identified as Noor, a resident of Manihala in Pakistan, who has been using drones to drop weapon consignments from across the border. The arrested accused were further distributing the arms to gangsters across Punjab with intention to fuel criminal activities in the state, he said.

Sharing operation details, the DGP said that CI Amritsar has received specific intelligence about retrieval of weapon consignment from near village Bhaini Rajputtan in the jurisdiction of Gharinda in Amritsar.

Acting swiftly, police teams have intercepted duo on Amritsar-Attari GT Road near Khasa in Amritsar, when they were going to deliver the consignment on their motorcycle, and recovered weapons from their possession, he said, while adding that further investigations are underway to uncover the network's backward and forward

A case FIR No. 34 dated 05.06.2025 under sections 25. 25(1)(A) and 25(1)(B) of the Arms Act and section 61(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) has been registered at Police Station SSOC, Amritsar.

4.50 crore fraud in property tax department in Panipat MC office by female employee

SATISH HANDA **Panipat**

The Joint Commissioner's PA has been dismissed in the case of Rs 4.5 crore fraud in the property tax department of Panipat Municipal Corporation. The investigation revealed that the PA had manipulated the bills of big property Haryana CM Naib Singh Saini tax defaulters, resulting in loss of revenue. Commissioner Dr.

Pankaj Yadav has declared a zero

tolerance policy towards corrup-

tion. Major action has been taken

in the case of fraud of about worth



Rs 4.5 crore in the property tax branch of the Municipal Corporation. Joint Commissioner Sanjay Kumar's PA, allegedly involved in conspiracy, has been dismissed by Municipal Corporation Commissioner Dr. Pankaj Yadav.

The investigation of this case was given to the Joint Commis-

sioner Sanjay Kumar, who took action after the irregularities were confirmed in the investigation. It was observed that the Joint Commissioner Sanjay Kumar had given permission to his PA to run the admin ID to get the property tax related work done. Taking advantage of which his PA Kusum managed to embezzle an amount worth Rs 4.5 crores to provide benefits in property tax to the number of big property owners in which the amount of

day of Sri Guru Arjan Dev. big property tax defaulters was During this attack, even the shown less in the official records. holy saroop of Sri Guru Granth

Khalistani slogans reverberated in Amritsar during Ghallughara Yadgari March organised by Dal Khalsa

Amritsar

On the occasion of the 41st anniversary of the attack on the Darbar Sahib by the Indian Army in June 1984, Ghallughara Yadgari March was organised by the Dal Khalsa (Radical Outfit) in the city.

ate action against the in-charge A sizeable crowd of party police station suspending her activists participated in the immediately. The SP suspended march led by Dal Khalsa lead-Ghanshyam Devi for negligence ership. Activists of SAD Amd by Simraniit Sing edly in corruption. She has also Mann and Panth Sewak Jatha been transferred to the Police Bhai Daljit Singh joined the Lines and a departmental inquiry march. Starting from Burj in the case has also been ordered Akali Phoola Singh, the march against Sub-Inspector Komal reached at Darbar Sahib, ders, children and women were Devi and another police employee where Ardas was performed at Akal Takhat. Youths, el-



holding Khalistan flags and pictures of Sikh martyrs who

Kanwar Pal Singh secretary for political affairs said the people of Punjab abhors war on its borders. To convey their point of view, the organizers were carrying big banners and placards on which it was pleaded that India and Pakiborders for trade and pilgrimage including Kartarpur corridor.

conflict between India and

Pakistan, the leaders of Sikh

organisations said "We don't

see military aggression as a

solution to any conflict.

The organization also called for the Amritsar Bandh) on June attack on Darbar Sahib and other 37 Gurdwaras.

18 Cows died on the spot, several injured by a speeding truck while crossing the road

SATISH HANDA

A speeding truck hit a group of

oners released.

cows near village Dadanpur in Jhajjar district while crossing the road. The accident was so overwhelming that as many as 18 cows were crushed under the truck and died on the spot, while many cows were injured in the accident and immediately admitted to nearby Gokuldham Gaushala for treatment. After the accident, stan should end hostilities and the truck driver left the truck and managed to flee from the the road accident was given to the local police team who reached the spot immediately 6 in protest against the Indian on getting the information and started investigating the case and impounded the truck.



According to information, cowherds from Rajasthan had come to the border of Jhajjar district and as soon as they reached Dadanpur village, the unbalanced truck loaded with LPG cylinders took their cattle in its grip. The cowherds were seen crying because of the death and injuries of such a spot. The information about large number of cattle. In this case, the police have registered a case against the truck driver for driving the truck negligently and the police took the vehicle in their possession, and started searching for the driver.

Corona cases increasing in Haryana, the number of infected has reached 52

SATISH HANDA Chandigarh

in Haryana, especially in Gurugram, Faridabad and Karnal. State health department has declared alert and is making arrangements for treatment in hospitals across the state. Chief Minister Naib Singh Saini and Health Minister Arti Singh Rao while talking to media said that hospitals in the state are ready and people need not fear panic. It has been advised to follow necessary measures to prevent corona spreading. Till Sunday as many as 52 cases of Corona have been reported in Haryana. According to the health department, most of the cases are being found in the NCR area at Gurugram and Faridabad as well as Karnal district. Corona cases have also witnessed an increase in Panchkula adjacent to the Haryana capital Chandigarh. Seven new cases of corona were reported in the state on Sunday, while 52 cases of corona have been reported in the entire state till Sunday.

Corona cases are fast increasing

The health department has been put on alert mode so that no kind of fear spreads among the people and in case the number of corona cases increases, there are full arrangements for treatment in the hospitals all over in the state. CM Naib Singh Saini and Health Minister Arti Singh Rao have assured that the hospitals in the state are on alert mode and all arrangements for treatment are in place. There



suspected patients. Aarti Rao said that all civil sureons have been asked to review the arrangements for protection against corona in hospitals in their respective districts. Instructions have been given to conduct corona tests of all patients suffering or suspected serious respiratory diseases coming to hospitals. So far, the maximum number of 23 cases have been reported in Gurugram with four fresh four cases arriving. On Sunday, One case of corona was reported each in Faridabad, Karnal and Panchkula. A total of 12 cases of corona are active in Gurugram, six in Faridabad, four in Karnal,

Jathedar Giani Kuldeep Singh Gargajj meets Bhai Rajoana at Central Jail Patiala

Martyrs of June 1984 Ghallughara (genocide) should be remembered with unity: Gargajj

involved in the conspiracy.

JAGMOHAN SINGH Amritsar

The officiating Jathedar of Sri Akal Takht, Giani Kuldeep Singh Gargajj, met with Balwant Singh Rajoana currently confined in the death cell at the Central Jail, Patiala. During the meeting, Jathedar Gargajj held Panthic and Gurmat discussion with Rajoana and himself offered Ardas (Sikh prayer) for his Chardi Kala (high spirits), and later served him Deg from Gurdwara Sri Dukhniwaran Sahib.

In a statement, following the meeting, Jathedar Gargajj stated that Balwant Singh Rajoana is very important personality of the Sikh community, and that the government's discriminatory stance regarding his release and commutation of death sentence must be confronted with united resistance from the Panth. He emphasized that Sikh prisoners who have completed their sentences but are still not being released is a clear indication of the government's apathetic attitude towards Sikhs.

In response to a question, Gargajj said that on June 6, the Shaheedi Dihara (martyrdom day) commemorating at all costs.



the June 1984 Ghallughara (holocaust), should not only be observed with respect and homage to the martyrs, but also as a day of the unity. He stressed that all Sikhs must remain committed to upholding the dignity and sanctity Akal Takht Sahib.

On this occasion, Pranam Singh (Head Granthi of Gurdwara Sri Dukhniwaran Sahib). SGPC executive committee member Surjeet Singh Garhi, member Ravinder Singh Khalsa and Jasmer Singh Lachhru were also present.

Jathedar Gargajj noted that June 6 marks the 41st anniversary of the 1984 holocaust, and it is not only a time to pay tribute to the martyrs with reverence but also a responsibility for every Sikh to guard the sanctity of Sri Akal Takht Sahib. He shared that during the meeting, Rajoana conveyed that Sikh commemorations must be observed according to Panthic traditions and Maryada (code of conduct), and the respect for Sri Akal Takht Sahib must be preserved

Rajoana assured Jathedar Gargaji of his full support and appealed that everyone should support the Jathedar with respect and avoid any kind of confrontation. He emphasized that the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) has long held the authority to appoint Jathedars and that all Jathedars appointed by the SGPC should be accorded full respect. Rajoana offered Ardas for the Chardi Kala (high spirit) of the Khalsa Panth and stressed that Sikh institutions should never be disrespected or undermined by any group.

Jathedar Gargajj said that today, more than ever, the community must both understand the pain it has endured and express unity. He added that the sacrifices of community's martyrs—those who gave everything for the Chardi Kala of the Khalsa Panth-must never be forgotten or disregarded. He appealed for the Ghallughara Day to be commemorated peacefully, in accordance with the Guru's will and without disturbance.

Rahul's meetings with Haryana Congress leaders to strengthen state Cong network

Chandigarh

died during the assault and raised

Highlighting the on-going

slogans favouring Khalistan.

On visit to Chandigarh on Wednesday, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi held a meeting with the senior party leaders from Haryana, in which All India Congress Committee (AICC) and Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) observers were present, aiming to build a strong Congress network in the state in an organisation rejuvenation campaign and give a clear message to work for the party in the state with no factionalism (gutbazi) should come in the way damaging the reputation of party as seen in past, and said that if any complaint comes, action will be taken. Congress leader said that with the party's Haryana unit, plagued by factionalism in the past. While addressing a meeting of the appointed observers, Rahul Gandhi stressed the need to nurture promising, ideologically committed leadership across all districts of Haryana state.

Rahul Gandhi said, the Congress, which has been out of power in Haryana for over a decade, has not had a formal organisational structure in the state for the past 11 years and his visit aims to set the process enabling the party to begins revamping the state unit. Rahul Gandhi, leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha, arrived at the Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee (HPCC) headquarters in Chandigarh at noon to hold the party's

'Sangathan Srijan Abhiyan'. During his two-and-a-half-hour stay, Rahul Gandhi held a meeting with the party's senior leaders, followed by another meeting with AICC and PCC observers and with AICC observers separately. Congress leader incharge of party's Haryana affairs, B K Hariprasad said that Rahul Gandhi has given a clear mes-

sage to strengthen the Congress network in the state. He said that factionalism in the state unit has delayed the appointments of District Congress Committee presidents. He also addressed media persons as regarding outcome of Rahul Gandhi's visit to Chandigarh.

Former Haryana chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, HPCC president Udai Bhan, deeveral former HPCC chiefs including Birender Singh, AICC general secretary Kumari Selja and senior leaders Randeep Singh Surjewala, Ajay Singh Yadav, Deepender Singh Hooda MP and Ashok Tanwar were among those present at the

meeting, and gave suggestions pertaining to strengthen the reorganisation of the party unit in the state. Later, Rahul Gandhi also separately met the AICC a minimum of five years and should be committed to Congress ideology, Hariprasad said

observers, one each of those appointed for the 22 districts in the state along with the 69 PCC observers. He addressed a meeting of the appointed Observers, stressing on the need to nurture promising, ideologically committed leadership across all districts of the state. Hariprasad said after June 10, the AICC and PCC observers will visit the respective districts as part of the process to appoint DCC chiefs and recommend a panel of six names from each district for which a format for the applications has been released, and he or she should be an active member of the party for

the appointments of DCC chiefs.

adequate representation will be given to people from SC/ST, OBC categories and women in

people to follow the necessary arrangements made to prevent the spread of corona. Hospitals have been instructed to provide all facilities and medical arrangements to suffering or

one each in Yamunanagar and Hisar and four in Panchkula. Out of 52 cases, 24 patients have recovered. Out of the total cases, Gurugram has the highest number of 23 cases and Faridabad has 17 cases. Six cases of corona have been reported in Karnal, four in Panchkula and one each in Hisar and Yamunanagar.

Threat from Police

of Bhind's Superintendent of Police over their reporting on "illegal sand mining" in the

tices Sanjay Karol and Satish Chandra Sharma declined to pass any interim order protecting the petitioners, journalists Shashikant Jatav and Amarkant Singh Chouhan, from any coer-"Suppose you commit a crime

the Justice Karol-led Bench. It said that before passing any

The apex court told the petia party to the litigation.

on Monday.

During the hearing, the top court remarked: "We appreciate that you are the fourth pillar (of democracy), we also appreciate that if there is a threat to life, we will come to your rescue."

In their writ plea filed before the Supreme Court, the

petition the top court. The plea highlighted that the two reporters have a strong track record of fearless reporting on corruption and illegal activities, especially illegal sand mining in the Chambal river, allegedly carried out with the support of local police. In the plea, the petitioners named IPS officer Asit Yadav and his subordinates as key perpetrators of the abuse, claiming that the tar-

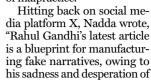
Journalists' Plea Alleging



Chambal river.

interim order, the facts should be brought by the Madhya Pradesh government as well.

tioners' counsel to add Bhind's SP as a party to the petition, observing that it is "very easy" to make allegations against an IPS officer without making him The matter will be heard next



Substantiating his claims, the Union Minister shared a news article, which detailed "lies" of the Congress leader about the Maharashtra Assembly polls outcome. "Here's how he does it, step by step -- Step 1: Congress Party gets defeated election after election due to his antics. Step 2: Instead of introspecting, he cooks up bizarre conspiracies and cries rigging. Step 3: Ignore all facts and data. Step 4: Defames institutions with zero proof. Step 5: Hopes for headlines over facts, "Nadda posted, accusing Gandhi of misleading the public. Gandhi's article, which he also circulated on social media, claimed that the BJP used a multi-pronged strategy to ma-

alleging that they were physically assaulted at the instance

However, a bench of Jus-

like murder, can we grant you no coercive action order? We don't know what crime has been regnipulate the Maharashtra polls. istered against you," remarked

journalists, allegedly facing rave threats to their lives and liberty from the Bhind police, claimed that the duo were forced to flee their hometown due to the intensity of these threats and cannot safely approach the Madhya Pradesh High Court, compelling them to directly

geting is retaliatory, stemming

and BJP National President J.P. Nadda on Saturday lashed out at Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over his recent "match-fixing" claims regarding the Maharashtra Assembly elections, terming his

facturing fake narratives." Rahul Gandhi's opinion piece, published in a national daily, has ignited a fresh political controversy, with opposition parties claiming that 2024 Maharashtra Assembly elections and points to the Election Commission's "silence" on critical questions raised by the opposition alliance. În the op-ed, Gandhi accused

the BJP of orchestrating a massive rigging operation, describarticle a "blueprint for manuing it as a systematic assault on democracy. He reiterated allegations he had earlier voiced during his February 3 Parliament speech and a subsequent press conference, claiming that the Maharashtra elections were marred by extraordinary levels

PM Modi launches 'Aravali Green Wall' project by planting sapling under Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam initiative

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday launched the 'Aravali Green Wall' project, a special drive aimed at reforesting the Aravali range, one of the biggest forest covers, spanning four states --Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi.

To mark World Environment Day, he also planted a sapling at the Bhagwan Mahavir Vanasthali Park in the national capital under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative. He shared pictures of the

special tree plantation drive and wrote, "Today, on World Environment Day, we strengthened the Ek Ped Maa ke Naam initiative with a special tree plantation drive.

This is also a part of our effort to reforest the Aravalli range - the Aravalli Green Wall project," he added.

The Aravalli Green Wall Project is an ambitious project aimed at reforesting the 700 kilometres of the Aravalli range. The Aravali range, stretching across four states, has seen environmental degradation in the past few decades. The new push under the Aravalli Green



in groundwater recharge. Our focus is to rejuvenate

areas linked with this range. We are going to work with the respective local administrations and going to emphasise things such as improving water systems, curbing dust storms, stopping eastward expansion of the Thar desert and more, PM Modi further said.

The project will go beyond conventional methods and encourage new techniques in urban as well as semi-urban areas to address space constraint problems. "Plantation activities will be geo-tagged and moni-

tored on the Meri LiFE portal. I call upon the youth of our nation Wall Project will create a green to take part in this movement zone from Delhi to Gujarat, to and add to our planet's green

Monsoon session July 21 to August 12: Govt ignores the demand for 'Special Session' from opposition

Trinamool leader Derek O'Brian says this as 'Parliamentophobia'

MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju announced the monsoon session of Parliament, which will commence on July 21 and conclude on August 12. The government's decision, which disregards the opposition, has faced criticism from various opposition leaders, including Trinamool MP Derek O'Brien. Derek expressed on social media, "The Modi government is afraid to confront the opposition in Parliament. This peculiar situation is referred to as 'parliamentary-phobia,' which involves avoiding special sessions." Many have praised his choice of words.

Within three months, the monsoon session of Parliament is being organized. In this context, Kiren Rijiju stated that



according to the rules, the opposition can discuss all issues in the upcoming parliamentary session. A significant segment of the political community believes that by announcing an emergency session, the government has effectively made it clear that they are not interested in calling a special session. The central minister informed that the date for the session was recommended during a cabinet meeting chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju mentioned that 'Operation Sindoor' will be discussed during the session.

The central minister stated, "Each session is unique, and we

'Operation Sindoor.' The government desires unity among all, and we have reached out to the opposition, hoping that everyone will stand together with us. The announcement of the parliamentary session's date comes at a time when opposition leaders have demanded an immediate special session of Parliament to discuss 'Operation

Sindoor.'

will discuss all issues, including

Yesterday, 16 parties from the 'India alliance' led by the Trinamool Congress wrote a letter to Prime Minister Modi requesting the convening of a special session. This letter was signed by opposition leaders including Rahul Gandhi, All India General Secretary of the Trinamool Congress Abhishek Banerjee, Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi, senior Congress MP Jairam Ramesh, Deepender Hooda, President of the Samajwadi Party Akhilesh Yadav, and other opposi-

G7 Summit invite to PM Modi shatters JP Nadda slams Rahul Gandhi's 'match-fixing' Opposition's 'foreign policy failure' narrative claims as 'desperation of losing' polls tinued importance and its re-

the Congress and other opposition leaders mocked what they claimed was a diplomatic snub to India over its non-invitation to the upcoming G7 Summit in Canada, the narrative has turned dramatically. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday confirmed that he has accepted an official invitation from his Canadian counterpart Mark Carney to attend the G7 Summit, in Kananaskis, Alberta.

Taking to social media plat-Congress's recent statements, where senior leaders like Jairam form X to announce Carney's invitation, PM Modi wrote: "Congratulated him on his recent election victory and thanked him for the invitation to the G7 Summit in Kananaskis later this month. As vibrant democracies bound by deep people-to-people ties, India and Canada will work together with renewed vigour, guided by mutual respect and shared interests".

The invitation and acceptance directly contradict the

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind

Genocide in Gaza, Rising

Anti-Muslim Violence, and

Bulldozer Injustice in India

The top leadership of Jamaat-e-

Islami Hind (JIH) has strongly

condemned the ongoing geno-

cide in Gaza, the disturbing rise

in anti-Muslim violence across

India, and the continued use

of bulldozers to target Muslim

properties and institutions.Ad-

dressing their monthly press

conference, Jamaat-e-Islami

Hind Vice President, Prof Salim

Engineer stated: "We strongly

condemn the renewed Israeli

offensive in Gaza «Operation

Gideon's Chariots" and the

ongoing genocide against the

Palestinian people. This brutal

assault is marked by indiscrimi-

nate bombings, ground inva-

sions, and the destruction of

homes, hospitals, and schools.

The conflict has so far resulted

in the deaths of over 53,000

Palestinians, including nearly

18,000 innocent children. The

deliberate bombing of schools

at aid distribution points is

nothing short of war crimes.

Gaza's civilian infrastructure

has been systematically de-

stroyed, aid blockaded, and

hospitals targeted, leaving 2.3

million Palestinians on the brink

of famine and without basic

medical care. We denounce the

complicity of the United States

and the shameful apathy of the

international community, JIH

stands in unwavering solidarity with the Palestinian people

and calls for an immediate and

unconditional ceasefire, the lift-

Condemns Ongoing

New Delhi

KAVITA SHARMA

The Congress party has raised

concerns on how India, today

stands completely isolated

diplomatically with not even

our all weather friends/ allies

having spoken a single word

the Chairperson of Social Media

and Digital Platforms Supriya

Shrinate noted that India was

paying a huge price for total

collapse and failure of Modi

"In a complete collapse of

India's foreign policy, it's no

longer just President Trump

taking credit for the ceasefire

between India and Pakistan, but

now even our all weather ally

Russia believes Trump medi-

ated the ceasefire", she pointed

out, while remarking, "Modi's

Maintaining that India had

been isolated diplomatically, she

pointed out, not a single country

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister

Narendra Modi on Tuesday

Assam and Sikkim, as well as

Manipur Governor Ajay Bhalla,

to take stock of the flood situa-

tion in the northeastern states

and offered all possible assistance in dealing with the flood

The northeastern states,

including Assam, Sikkim, Tri-

pura, Manipur and Arunachal

Pradesh, have been battered

by heavy rains in the past few days, thereby bringing life to a

standstill and cutting off the key

supply chain to remote locations

PM Modi assured Assam and

in these states.

silence is deafening"

government's foreign policy.

The party spokesperson and

New Delhi

Ramesh and Supriya Shrinate slammed the government's foreign policy, calling it a failure that India had not been invited. Ramesh had claimed on June 3 that India's absence from the list of invited nations was a "big diplomatic bungle." Shrinate, too, lamented that "even countries like Canada no longer invite India, "contrasting it with then-US President

then-PM Manmohan Singh at a G20 forum.

These criticisms now appear premature and politically moivated. In a rapidly changing diplomatic environment, jumping to conclusions before official announcements are made can be misleading, say analysts. The opposition's attempt to portray diplomatic isolation now appears both ill-timed and

The invitation to PM Modi

misplaced, they add.

Barack Obama's 2010 praise for has highlighted India's con-

in the world stood by us after the

terror attack in Pahalgam. She

said, at the same time, Pakistan

was getting international recog-

nition at multilateral agencies

like the UN and financial aid

from institutions like the IMF,

the ADB and the WB - where

India once yielded significant

influence, but are now mute

She said this was despite the

resence of dreaded terrorists

like Hafiz Sayed, Masood Azhar

and before that Osama Bin

Laden having been given pro-

tection by that country. She said,

Pakistan was deemed to be a

terrorist state. She observed, it

was the failure of the govern-

was not so before 2014 when

tee under different hosts, this year's participation in Canada further reinforces the country's

status as a major global player. As PM Modi prepares to represent India at the summit, the incident serves as a reminder that foreign policy cannot be judged through speculation or political soundbites. Strategic partnerships, bilateral relations, and summit invitations often involve complex negotiations, and India has clearly demon-

ment's foreign policy that had

allowed India and Pakistan to

be de-hyphenated. So much so,

she added, Pakistan was having

a free run with the international

agencies like IMF which granted

it a \$3 billion loan, \$800 million

by the ADB, just two days after

the chairman met Modi and

the World Bank which is plan-

ning \$40 billion investment in

Pakistan. She asked, what did

the Prime Minister gain from

visiting 90 countries, except for

getting himself photographed

there. "Foreign policy does not

mean creating reels with laser

red eyes, it means keeping the

national interest paramount

and above everything", she re-

multi-party delegations that

visited different countries across

the world really achieved and

accomplished, pointing out

that none of the delegations

had been able to meet any of the

heads of the state they visited

nor had any country issued any

She also asked what had the

strated its relevance.

markable clout on the global

stage, particularly in a world which is grappling with geopo-

litical realignments, economic

instability, and climate chal-

It also reflects the maturity

and flexibility of India's foreign

policy, which continues to se-

cure the country's presence in

key global forums. With India

having participated in previous

G7 Summits as a special invi-

it exposes the alleged scale of Congress raises concern on India standing diplomatically isolated

condemned Pakistan.

The party asked how many countries, where the delegations visited, did speak in favour of India or condemn Pakistan. "The fact that our delegations hardly met any heads of states is a failure of our foreign affairs

statement in favour of India or

Ms Shrinate pointed out, Trump had so far mentioned it eleven times that he had mediated the ceasefire between India and Pakistan and still there was no word from Prime Minister Modi, who was observing a pin drop silence.

The Congress spokesperson asked who should be held responsible for Canada not inviting India for the G-7 meet? She recalled it was in the same Canada on whose soil back in 2010, the then US President Barack Obama had said about Dr Manmohan Singh, the then Prime Minister of India, that when he (Dr Singh) speaks the

world listens.

PM Modi speaks to Assam and Sikkim CMs, Manipur Governor on Flood Situation, assures full support

Odisha: Majhi set to

ARABINDA MOHAPATRA Bhubaneswar

complete one year in office

The BJP government in Odisha, Charan Majhi, is set to complete its first year in office with celebrations being planned on a grand scale. The period has been marked by some noteworthy achievements, some of which fulfilled its election promises.

Keen to project a pro-people image the chief minister has been laying special emphasis , personally overseeing griev-ance redressal. He has also con-

wide range of issues, including

requests for medical aid, land and property disputes, pension delays, and public infrastructure concerns. His approach stands in sharp contrast to his predecessor who had evinced little interest in redressing grievances of common people through hearings. Majhi has a more hands-on approach in the matter with hearings held even in Sambalpur, a key district in western Odisha. His government also introduced a singlewindow system under the Chief Minister's Relief Fund, allowing for on-the-spot financial approv-

nipur Governor, of all possible inquire about the flood situation state administration remains assistance from the Centre in the in the state ongoing relief and rehabilita-'I briefed the Prime Minister fully committed to managing on how continuous rainfall in the situation and providing all necessary assistance to those The incessant rains in the Assam and adjoining states has northeast states, including Asled to flooding and impacted affected. sam, Sikkim and Manipur and

many lives. I also apprised him of the relief operation undertaken by the state government," he informed on X. "The Prime rivers of the region, including Minister expressed concern and assured full support from the Central Government for our relief and rehabilitation efforts. Grateful for his guidance and unwavering support to the people of Assam," he further said. Sikkim CM Prem Singh Ta-

Assam CM Himanta Biswa Prime Minister for extending support regarding the landslide Sarma also took to X to inform and flood situation in the state. that PM Modi called him to He also reiterated that the

> In Manipur, the Army and Assam Rifles personnel are collectively carrying out the relief operation. They have so far rescued over 1,000 floodhit people in Imphal East and Imphal West districts, grappling

with a serious flood situation. A flood bulletin issued by the Manipur administration on Monday informed that more than 56,000 people remained mang, taking to X, thanked the affected in at least 174 villages.



als for urgent medical cases.

Modi government's first cabinet meeting after Operation Sindoor, government's 'Jan-Connect' scheme launched

MEENAKSHI BHATTACHARYA New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a meeting with his entire cabinet at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan in Delhi, which was not just a formal meeting but marked the beginning of a strategy to convey the 11-year journey of the Modi

government to the public. And this is being considered critical just before the completion of one year of Modi 3.0. The special thing is that this meeting is the first cabinet

meeting after the success of 'Operation Sindoor'. This is being considered a very confidential and strategic operation. According to sources, the

primary focus of this meeting is to transform the achievements of the Modi government over the past 11 years into a public relations campaign. Each ministry will be required to account for its key schemes, accomplishments, and changes. Some ministries, such as the Ministry of Water Power, will present their reports in the form of presentations



What will be special about abling them to respond to any 'Operation Sindoor'? In the opposition propaganda with meeting, ministers will be factual evidence. Until now, provided with comprehennot much has been publicly sive information regarding the stated about this operation, strategy, process, and success but clear guidance will now of 'Operation Sindoor', enbe provided to everyone at the

internal level.

The Prime Minister has given a clear directive: "This is not a celebration but a dialogue with the public." This means that the citizens will be informed about what the central government has accomplished in these 11 years, how the situation has changed from before to now, and how the NDA's policies differ from those of the UPA

How to send the message across to the public: Emphasis on Social Media: Each ministry has been instructed to

promote its key achievements through social media. Direct Communication: Guidelines have been issued to connect directly with the beneficiaries of the schemes, hold public meetings, and engage in field activities. Booklet Campaign: The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting will compile the achievements of all ministries into a booklet that will be shared by BJP workers and the general public. Articles in Newspapers: All ministers have been directed to write articles in newspapers to present their

plans and experiences to the public. June is set to be an 'action-packed' month for Modi 3.0. On June 5th, PM Modi will participate in tree planting activities for World Environment Day. June 9th marks the completion of one year of the Modi 3.0 government. June 21st is International Yoga Day. On June 25th, there will be a special event commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Emergency. The central government will organise extensive public outreach programmes for all these occasions.

penalty for lynching cases.»

ing of the blockade, and the full Sikkim CMs, as well as the Marestoration of Palestinian rights, including the right to return and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. We urge the Indian government to take a principled stand; moving beyond mere expressions of concern and to other adjoining regions, have demand decisive international action against Israel's ongoing caused water levels in rivers to genocide.»Prof Salim also exswell to menacing levels. Major pressed deep concern about the Brahmaputra, Pachnoi, and landslide and floods in Northeastern part of country, he said Kushiyara, are said to be flowthat Jamaat-e-Islami Hind is ing at alarming levels. Lakhs carrying out the relifactivities of hectares of land have been and demands the government to inundated, confining people to their homes and forcing those take special efforts to safeguard lives and properties of people in living in low-lying areas to move the region. Regarding the situato safer locations. tion in India, Jamaat-e-Islami Hind Vice President, Malik Moatasim Khan added: "The recent attack on four Muslim meat traders in Aligarh, who were stripped, beaten, and falsely booked under the Cow Slaughter Act, is part of a dangerous pattern of mob violence. From the killing of Abdul Rahiman in Bantwal

Despite Supreme Court rulings, anti-lynching laws remain weakly enforced. We demand strict implementation of the Bharatiya Nyaya (Second) Sanhita's provisions, including life imprisonment and the death

to the lynching of Ashraf in

Mangaluru, these crimes con-

tinue with impunity.



Fastest among the slow isn't fast enough

' ndia's GDP data for 2024–25 offer something for every disposition: comfort, concern and caution. Optimists may cheer the fourth quarter's 7.4 per cent growth — well above forecasts and the fastest in a difficult year. Pessimists will point to the year's overall 6.5 per cent growth, the weakest since the pandemic. Realists will find modest cause for celebration and ample reason for pause. Four-quarter gains came from strong performances in agriculture and construction — both critical for employment - alongside continued momentum in services. Manufacturing, however, slowed sharply to 4.8 per cent, less than half the rate recorded a year earlier. This mixed sectoral picture tempers the headline figure. A closer look reveals structural concerns. A spike in tax collections, up 12.7 per cent, contributed disproportionately to the GDP number. Strip that away, and the underlying growth is closer to 6.8 per cent. Private consumption — the economy's mainstay – grew just 6 per cent, its weakest in over a year. The much-touted Kumbhdriven boost failed to show. Only capital formation stood out, rising 9.4 per cent as the government pushed delayed investments. Ministers are right that India remains the fastest-growing major economy. Yet 'not bad' is hardly good enough. A government aiming for a developed India by 2047 must meet the pace its own goals demand. The Economic Survey puts that target at near-8 per cent annual growth for a decade. At current levels, the country is falling short. Chief Economic Adviser Nageswaran has suggested India now enters a phase of low inflation and stable growth. But stability, while welcome, risks becoming complacency. For a country still climbing the development ladder, modest growth may mean missed chances. The numbers do not signal failure. But they do not inspire confidence either. For a nation that aspires to lead, 'better than others' cannot replace 'better than before'.

LETTERBOX

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> **EDITOR* ABDUL WASEY** (*RESPONSIBLE FOR SELECTION OF NEWS UNDER THE PRB ACT)

AMARENDU NANDY EXPLAINS WHY SHIFTS IN ORIGIN, VALUE, AND USE DEMAND REFORM



Remittance map tilts west

emittances have long played a quiet but crucial role in India's external sector balance, but in terms of policy attention, they have often been overshadowed by indicators such as foreign direct investment (FDI) and trade flows. Yet the latest data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s Sixth Round of India's Remittances Survey, released in March, makes it clear that such flows are integral to the stability and structure of India's external accounts. Inward remittances stood at a record \$118.7 billion in 2023-24, not only exceeding FDI inflows but also financing over half of India's merchandise trade deficit. India's persistently high remittance flows constitute a vital stabilising force in the context of global economic uncertainty and tightening financial conditions.

Structural shifts

However, the data also point to deeper structural shifts that merit closer attention. The most striking is the changing spatial composition of remittance sources. The traditional dominance of countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is now giving way to advanced economies (AEs). The U.S. accounts for 27.7% of India's inward remittances, up from 23.4% reported in the Fifth Round (2020-21) Survey. The U.S., U.K., Canada, Australia, and Singapore together account for 51.2% of the flows, overtaking the cumulative share of the six GCC nations (37.9%) by a large margin. This inversion of a historical pattern reflects not only macroeconomic shifts but also a change in the profile of Indian migrants from predominantly low-skilled workers in West Asia to high-skilled professionals and students in AEs.

This has long-term implications for both the volume and stability of remittance inflows. Migrants in AEs tend to have higher and

Top 10 remittance corridors, 2010 Source: 1 (100) She



more stable earnings, and their remittance behaviour is often less sensitive to cyclical volatility in commodity markets. At the same time, unlike temporary workers in the Gulf, high-skilled emigrants in AEs may remit less as their economic and familial integration abroad deepens.

One concern is the growing concentration of large-value transactions. In 2023-24, transfers above Rs 5 lakh accounted for nearly 29% of total remittance value, even though they represented a small fraction (1.4%) of overall transactions. This skew suggests that remittances are increasingly driven by higher-earning, professionally mobile Indians rather than broad-based migrant remitters. While this may reflect the upward mobility of the diaspora, it also creates potential vulnerabilities. A slowdown in high-skilled migration due to adverse host-country immigration policy shifts could affect these large inflows disproportionately.

There is also an accelerating shift toward digital modes of remittance. In 2023-24, digital channels, on average, accounted for 73.5% of all remittance transactions. Transaction costs have correspondingly declined. The average cost of sending \$200 to India now stands at 4.9%, below the global average of 6.65%, though still above the Sustainable Development Goal benchmark of 3%. This progress is impressive and attributable to the rise of fintech platforms and app-based money transfer services.

Despite this aggregate progress, the transition to digital channels has not been uniform across remittance corridors. While migrants in countries such as the UAE (76.1%) and Saudi Arabia (92.7%) have recorded a very high share of remittance transfers via digital channels, others such as those in Canada(40%), Germany (55.1%), and Italy (35%) continue to depend more heavily on conventional methods. These disparities suggest that the infrastructure and regulatory environment remain a binding constraint. For India, the policy challenge lies in deepening cross-border digital payment linkages. Doing so will not only lower costs and increase efficiency but also ensure that remittance flows remain within formal, trackable financial channels

At the sub-national level, the remittance map shows persistent asymmetries. Bihar,

Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan received a total share of under 6% of remittances, while Maharashtra, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu received about 51%. This is not merely a reflection of historical out-migration patterns but of unequal access to migration-enabling infrastructure: foreign language training, credentialing pathways, and employer linkages remain thin. National skilling missions must become far more State-responsive; else, India risks perpetuating remittance elite-regions and households with the social capital to migrate and the financial literacy to leverage returns, while leaving the rest behind.

Missing data

Notably, this round does not provide data on how remittances are used at the housenold level. This limits a fuller understanding of the developmental role of remittances beyond their macroeconomic contribution to the balance of payments. As the profile of migrants shifts towards higher-skilled occupations and as transaction sizes become more concentrated at the upper end, it is crucial to assess whether these flows are being directed towards longer-term financial goals such as savings, investment, or asset creation or continue to be primarily consumption-smoothing in nature. Incorporating this dimension would also help inform the design of complementary instruments - savings-linked remittance products, targeted financial literacy programmes, or investment incentives for remittancereceiving households - that can enhance the long-run developmental multiplier of

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URVI PATHAK ON WHY PATCHY COMPLIANCE PERSISTS DESPITE MASS ADOPTION

Crypto stays at the margins of Indian law



ndia continues to lead in grassroots crypto adoption, for the second consecutive year in the 'Geography of Crypto' report by Chainalysis (2024). A National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) report finds that Indian retail investors poured \$6.6 billion into crypto assets and predicts the industry could create over eight lakh jobs by 2030. India also boasts one of the largest and fastest-growing web3 developer cohorts.

This vibrancy may seem surprising, given the rocky journey of crypto, known as Virtual Digital Assets' (VDA), in India, within the domestic regulatory and policy landscape. In May 2025, the Supreme Court of India questioned the absence of comprehensive and clear crypto regulation in India, with a remark, "Banning may be shutting your eyes to ground reality". This observation reality and VDA policy which has created significant challenges for regulators and market players.

India, as a country of strict capital controls and tightly regulated payment systems, has found it difficult to reconcile these frameworks with the decentralised nature of VDAs. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), as the domestic regulator of monetary policy, began expressing concerns about the potential threats of crypto as early as 2013, highlighting the risks associated with their lack of authorisation from any central bank or monetary authority. Despite this warning, the market saw unassailed growth in India, leading the RBI to issue a second circular in 2018, barring financial institutions from dealing with VDA-related entities. This re-



striction proved short-lived, with the Court overturning the circular in 2020.

The government then turned to prohibitive taxation policies as a stop-gap measure while appropriate regulations were formulated. In 2022, India implemented two key tax policies deducted at source (TDS) on VDA transactions exceeding Rs 10,000 under Section 194S and a 30% capital gains tax under Section 115BBH which disallows loss offsetting. Although these measures were designed to enhance transparency and curb speculation, their effectiveness has been limited.

Estimates by various industry reports and think tanks show that between July 2022 and December 2023, Indians traded over Rs 1.03 trillion worth of VDAs on non-compliant platforms, with only 9% of the estimated Rs 1.12 trillion in VDAs held on domestic exchanges. Offshore trading resulted in a loss of Rs 2,488 crore in uncollected VDA tax revenue for India. Between December 2023 and October 2024, Indians traded over Rs 2.63 trillion on offshore

platforms. The cumulative uncollected TDS from offshore exchanges since July 2022 is estimated to exceed Rs 60 billion, with the nine blocked exchanges accounting for over 60% of this trading volume. Efforts to block access to non-compliant platforms, such as URL blocking, had limited success. Trade volumes on blocked exchanges rebounded after temporary declines, and web traffic to these platforms rose by 57%. Users continued to bypass restrictions using virtual private networks (VPN), mirror platforms or servers, and by migrating to other noncompliant exchanges.

Guidelines by global standard-setting bodies, such as the International Monetary Fund, Financial Stability Board, and the Financial Action Task Force, converge in regulation that is harmonised with international standards (a process that is underway). However, these frameworks and regulations rely on domestic, compliant intermediaries or Virtual Asset Service Providers (VASP) that act as the bridge and eyes for regulators. These intermediaries facilitate the alignment of the VDA industry with existing laws and enforcement of policies, and enhance visibility over the ecosystem, while providing crucial inputs concerning on-the-ground issues.

In contrast, India's existing policy regime, which inadvertently pushes VDA users to offshore, non-compliant platforms, erodes the country's ability to mitigate the risks presented by VDAs, as well as tax revenues that may have otherwise been collected.

In comparison, Indian VASP platforms are sharpening their teeth and maturing rapidly, having shown a willingness to comply with regulations and act in good faith. For example, their collaboration with the Financial Intelligence Unit-India has been instrumental in strengthening anti-money laundering and counter-terror financing controls, earning positive feedback from the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). The aftermath of the devastating hack in 2024, which wiped out \$230 million, further showcased proactive measures by Indian exchanges. Many stepped up efforts such as enhancing cyber security measures, setting up dedicated insurance funds in case of future thefts, and uniting to develop and enforce industry-wide cybersecurity guidelines.

Need for a framework

gnal the critical role played by VASPs towards a safer digital asset ecosystem. Combined with their contributions to national value creation and economic growth, these platforms present a more viable and constructive channel for funds to flow through under the oversight of Indian regulators. To move beyond the current policy stasis — where tax is levied without meaningful regulation — a balanced, pragmatic and future-proof regulatory framework is necessary. India must take decisive action to create the comprehensive legislation that the crypto industry requires while mitigating associated risks.

Urvi Pathak is a lawyer working at the intersection of competition law and technology. Views are personal



BOOKS: REVIEW

A Soldier's Journey: From Battlefield to Raj Bhavan

General S.M. Shrinagesh's memoir, Commanded by Destiny, is a lucid and engaging portrait of a soldier-statesman whose life traversed the colonial, wartime, and post-Independence phases of Indian history. Serving as the fourth Indian Chief of Army Staff between 1955 and 1957, Shrinagesh was both participant and witness to some of modern India's defining military and political moments. His reflections offer not only a military account but also a quietly critical reading of India's early efforts at nation-building.

The book opens with a gentle and affectionate recollection of the author's privileged childhood, his education in England, and his decision to forgo a place at Cambridge in favour of a commission from Sandhurst. These early chapters are marked by a tone of self-effacing warmth and provide an accessible introduction to what could otherwise have been a dry military

Burma to frontline operations in the North-West Frontier Province, Shrinagesh's account balances anecdote with insight. The transition from colonial officer to independent India's senior military leader is charted with precision and dignity, underscoring the challenges of adapting to shifting political landscapes while preserving institutional professionalism.

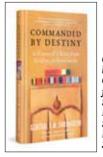
a Pioneer Regiment in Upper

A highlight of the memoir is Shrinagesh's detailed and gripping retelling of his command during the 1947-48 India-Pakistan War. The sieges of Leh and Poonch are described with a clarity that reflects both tactical mastery and long memory. His operational reflections are as instructive as they are vivid, bringing to life a conflict often reduced to broad strokes in official histories

Yet this is not a triumphalist military tale. Shrinagesh engages thoughtfully with the Indian National Army dilemma during World War II, taking a principled stand against mutiny while acknowledging the political complexities surrounding Subhas Chandra Bose. He also offers considered — if cautious views on the uneasy civil-military relations that emerged after Independence.

While he remains an unabashed admirer of Nehru, Shrinagesh is discreet in addressing the Prime Minister's strategic missteps. His reluctance to directly assign blame for India's lack of preparedness against China, or the post-war downsizing of the Army, suggests a man bound by institutional loyalty and personal respect. His silence, however, speaks volumes.

Post-retirement, Shrinagesh continued to serve the Republic, taking on roles in governance and education with characteristic poise. His reflections on the responsibilities of governors in conflict-prone states like Nagaland, and on training civil servants at the Administrative Staff College, reveal a man deeply committed to public service beyond the battlefield.



Commanded by Destiny: A Ğeneral's Rise from Soldier to Statesman Shrinagesh; Penguin Veer; 328 pages; Rs 699

One weakness of the book is editorial rather than substantive. There is no preface explaining how or when the memoir was composed, or why it has been published so long after the general's death. The absence of sources, references, or supplementary materials leaves a gap for readers seeking context or corroboration. Appendices containing notes, correspondence, or military documents would have enhanced its historical value.

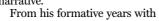
Nonetheless, Commanded by Destiny remains a valuable addition to India's thin corpus of military memoirs. It provides an eyewitness account of a formative period in Indian military history, told with restraint, clarity and occasional flashes of dry humour. What sets the book apart is not just the narrative sweep — from Burma to Kashmir, from the cantonment to the Raj

Bhavan — but the understated wisdom of a man who knew both the cost of war and the fragility of peace. For students of Indian history,

civil-military relations, and postcolonial transitions, this memoir is essential reading. For the general reader, it offers a rare glimpse into a life lived in service of a nation learning to command its own destiny. A further strength of Commanded by Destiny lies in its measured

tone. General Shrinagesh resists the temptation to embellish or selfaggrandise. His narrative is calm, almost austere, focusing on institutional development rather than personal achievement. This lends the memoir an authenticity that many retrospective accounts lack. He gives credit where due, speaks plainly about setbacks, and refrains from naming or blaming colleagues - an approach that reflects the old-world grace of a generation that built the Indian armed forces on professionalism, not personality.

At a time when the politicisation of military history is on the rise, this memoir offers a much-needed counterpoint. It shows how India's post-colonial military identity was forged by men with a deep sense of duty and caution, shaped by war but wary of hubris.



Elon Musk-Run Starlink Latest Player BEL Joins Tata Electronics to Develop To Get DoT Satcom Licence In India

NEW DELHI: Elon Musk-run affordable satellite internet service Starlink has finally received a satcom licence in India to offer its commercial services, possibly later this year or early next year.

According to reliable sources, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has issued the Global Mobile Personal Communication by Satellite (GMPCS) permit to the US company.

The trial spectrum is also set to be issued to Starlink in coming days, as the company has fulfilled all security compliance requirements outlined in its letter of intent (LoI).

Starlink is now the third satcom company to get a GMPCS permit after Eutelsat's One-Web and Jio-SES to provide services in the country.

Starlink now needs approval from the Indian National Space Promotion and Authori-



sation Centre (IN-SPACe), and has already submitted necessary documents, before the spectrum is allocated to the satellite-based internet service.

The initial DoT approval was granted after Starlink agreed to comply with the new national security guidelines for satcom operators.

The Department had announced 29 additional require- executives of Starlink to dis- rural areas.

This marks a sharp rise com-

pared to FY24, when ministries

procured goods and services

worth Rs 73,800 crore from

AHMEDABAD: The month of

May has been a historic month

for India's logistics sector

and Adani Ports and Special

Economic Zone Limited (AP-

SEZ) set a new benchmark by

handling 41.8 million metric

tonnes (MMT) of cargo - an

all-time high for the company,

showcasing the capabilities of

Indian ports on a global scale.

pared to last year is not just

A 17 per cent growth com-

ments, including mandatory interception and monitoring mechanisms, use of local data centres, location tracking for mobile user terminals, localisation mandates, among oth-

In April, Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal held a meeting with top lite internet, especially in its

ers, for existing and potential

plans for the country.

"Met a delegation from Starlink, comprising Vice President Chad Gibbs and Senior Director, Ryan Goodnight. Discussions covered Starlink's cutting-edge technology platform, their existing partnerships and future investment plans in India," Goyal posted on X after the meeting.

The meeting came against the backdrop of domestic telecom majors such as Airtel being in touch with the US company for the possible launch of satellite telecom services in India. Vodafone Idea has also said that it is in talks with Starlink to provide satellite communication services in India.

Union Telecom Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has also stated that India needs satel-

Indigenous Electronics, Chip Solutions



NEW DELHI: In line with the government's vision for selfreliance, navratna defence PSU Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) on Friday announced a collaboration with Tata Electronics towards the development of indigenous electronics and semiconductor solutions.

The memorandum of understanding (MoU) is a significant step forward for BEL and Tata Electronics in jointly exploring end-to-end solutions to meet domestic requirements., BEL said in a stock exchange filing. **BEL** and Tata Electronics will explore end-to-end collaboration in areas such as semiconductor fabrication (Fab), Outsourced Semiconductor

Assembly and Test (OSAT),

and design services.

The goal is to meet BEL's present and future needs for dvanced components, including Microcontrollers (MCUs), Systems-on-Chip (SoCs), Monolithic Microwave Integrated crore in the sa Circuits (MMICs), and other previous year.

The MoU was signed by Manoj Jain, Chairman and Managing Director, BEL, and Randhir Thakur, CEO and Managing Director, Tata Electronics, at Bombay House, Tata Group's headquarters in Mumbai. Both companies will also endeavour to develop optimum manufacturing solutions for BEL's products through knowledge sharing, best practices and other resources.

Tata Electronics is a prominent global player in the electronics manufacturing industry with fastemerging capabilities in Electronics Manufacturing Services, Semiconductor Assembly and Test, Semiconductor Foundry, and Design Services.

Meanwhile, BEL reported an 18 per cent growth in net profit to Rs 2,127 crore for the January-March quarter of financial year 2024-25 compared with the corresponding figure of Rs 1,797 crore in the same period of the

Tesla has to manufacture in India, PM Modi and Elon will work it out soon: Errol Musk



NEW DELHI: Errol Musk, father of Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk, on Monday said he has no doubt that there will be a Tesla manufacturing plant in India and Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his son will work something out that is beneficial to both

Speaking to IANS in the national capital, Errol Musk, who is currently visiting India, said Prime Minister Modi has to look at the interests of India when it comes to bringing Tesla to the country.

"And Elon has to look at the interests of Tesla as a company. So, between them, they will work something out that is to the best advantage of Tesla as well as India. However, I'm saying this as a private individual because Tesla is a public company, " the 79-year-old South African businessman emphasised.

Errol Musk further stated that "I have no doubt that there will be a Tesla manufacturing plant in India".

"There has to be (a Tesla plant in India). India is one of the most important places in the world, "he told IANS. The India visit of Errol

Musk, Global Advisor to homegrown Servotech Renewable Power System Ltd, underscores the growing interest in the country's rapid strides towards sustainable development and its ambition to be a leader in the green and electric technology. India has set ambitious targets for EV adoption. It aims to achieve 30 per cent EV penetration in the passenger vehicle segment, 80 per cent in the combined two-wheeler and three-wheeler segment, and 70 per cent in the commercial

vehicle segment by 2030.

In April this year, Elon Musk

and PM Modi discussed various issues, including an immense potential for collaboration in the areas of technology and innovation. "It was an honour to speak with PM Modi. I am looking forward to visiting India later this year," Musk posted on his X social media platform. PM Modi held a discussion with Tesla CEO on a range of topics. "Spoke to Elon Musk and talked out various issues, in the topics we covered during our meeting in Washington DC earlier this year. We discussed the immense potential for collaboration in the areas of technology and innovation. India remains committed to advancing our partnerships with the US in these domains, "the Prime Minister said on X.

Central Ministries Hits Rs 92,675 Crore MSE Procurement in FY25

CII elects Rajiv Memani as new President for 2025-26



NEW DELHI: The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on Sunday elected new office bearers for the year 2025-26 and Rajiv Memani, Chairman and CEO of EY India, has assumed office as the CII President.

He takes over from Sanjiv Puri, Chairman and Managing Director of ITC Ltd, the apex industry chamber said in a statement. Memani is also a member of EY Global Executive Board as the Chair of its Growth Markets Council. He is a trusted advisor to large Indian companies, private equity funds and multinational organisations, principally advising them on building confidence, mergers and acquisitions, technology and smart capital allocation strategies. In his Emerging Markets (EM) role, his responsibilities include advancing EY's emerging markets growth agenda and connecting their priorities with Prior to becoming the Chairman and CEO, Memani established EY India's market-leading Corporate Finance (now Strategy & amp; Transactions) practice in the late 90s. He was also the President-Designate of the Confederation of Indian Industry for the year 2024-25 and Vice

NEW DELHI: Central ministries significantly exceeded their



The Ministry of Petroleum 1,584 crore worth of goods and and Natural Gas led in total services from MSEs.

However, some ministries procurement value, spending Rs 31,304 crore. It was followed underperformed. The Minisby the Defence Ministry at Rs try of Finance met only 58 per 13,039 crore and the Power cent of its target, the Health achievement, the Shipping Ministry, which procured Rs and Family Welfare Ministry Ministry emerged as the top

achieved just 19.6 per cent, and the Department of Space fell far short, meeting only 2.3 per cent of its goal.

In terms of percentage achievement, the Shipping

Adani Ports sets New Robust Record in Cargo Handling in May

procurement target by 300 per It was followed by the Min-

performer, exceeding its MSE

istry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, which surpassed its goal by 173 per cent, and the Ministry of Civil Aviation, which exceeded its target by 148 per cent.

The government's procurement policy requires central ministries and departments to purchase a certain portion of their needs from MSEs, aiming to boost the small business sector and promote inclusive economic growth.

These results highlight the growing participation of MSEs in public procurement and show a positive trend in government efforts to empower smaller enterprises across the

ICEA, IT Ministry Urge States to Make **India A Component Manufacturing Hub**



Tamil Nadu, Assam, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh are coming up with their own policy for encouraging components manufacturing in their respective states. In an industry event in

Andhra Pradesh, Sushil Pal, Joint Secretary, MeitY, emphasised the government's commitment to fostering domestic electronics manufacturing through a hybrid scheme which offers Capex support and turnover linked incentive for components manufacturing.

He appealed that states

have to play a proactive role in this mission of making India a component manufacturing powerhouse for the world.

Bhaskar Katamneni, Secretary, IT & EC, state government, unveiled the draft Electronics Component Manufacturing Policy

"We are not only promoting ease of doing business of Doing Business'. Andhra Pradesh is crafting a more framework compared to the national landscape," said ecosystem.



He said that the Andhra Pradesh-ECMP will be notified in the next 10 days.

Additionally, he also discussed on the draft policy and its offerings, like catalysing investments across the component manufacturing value chain through 50 per cent capex support for components manufacturers in the state, turnover linked incentives doubling the centre's incentives, building specialised infrastructure and plug-and-play clusters, and enabling talent development, skilling and R&D support.

Pankaj Mohindroo, Chairman, ICEA said that now is the time that industry should proactively resolve for high domestic value addition in the country and build a ro bust supply chain for electronics manufacturing.

The event was attended by senior government officials but also enabling the 'Speed from Ministry of electronics and IT and the state, along with manufacturers. competitive and agile policy industry leaders and other stakeholders of electronics

a statistic — it's a testament to the rapidly evolving econalling its lead over the com-(ECMP) at the event to ennomic structure and the strong and geopolitical uncertain- highlights APSEZ's operationjust India's largest private port electronics components in operator; it is becoming a pillar foundation of infrastructure ties, APSEZ has not only al efficiency and technological

Ports' stellar performance were container traffic (+22 per cent May 2025, a total of 79.3 MMT year-on-year) and dry cargo of cargo has been handled, volume (+4 per cent YoY). (+17 per cent year-on-year). reflecting a 10 per cent year-

development in the country. maintained stability but also The key drivers of Adani expanded rapidly. As of year-to-date (YTD)

upgrades. In May, Adani Logistics recorded 0.06 million TEU rail volume (+13 per cent YoY) and 2.01 MMT GPWIS

On a YTD basis, rail vol-While global port companies on-year growth. A 21 per cent ume stood at 0.12 million

This clearly indicates that the company's strategic focus on multi-modal logistics infrastructure is beginning to show tangible results. While other major ports in

GPWIS volume at 3.8 MMT.

the country - such as JNPT and Paradip Port - recorded growth of around 7 per cent and 9 per cent respectively in May, APSEZ surged ahead with a 17 per cent jump, sigof the country's global trade strategy. APSEZ's role is set to become even more significant. Through multimodal hubs, smart ports, green energy, and digital tracking systems, the company is shaping the future

EV/EBITDA. For Dabur India, it meant

'Cash Consideration' or Rs. 12.6 Crore for purchase of 51% of the total paid up Cumulative Redeemable Preference Shares (CRPS) of Rs. 10 each of the Target Company from its existing shareholders. 'Share swap' for the equity shares and remaining 49% of the total paid up CRPS of Sesa Care. Dabur India also took over debt liability of Rs. 289 Crore by extending Corporate Guarantee (CG).

True North, India's leading home-grown Private Equity fund formed a new entity -Sesa Care Private Limited with majority stake (75.0 per cent). D. K. Patel, the founder, kept the remaining stake. Ban Labs was formed in 1966, and had headquarters in Rajkot, Gujarat. Under the Chairmanship of its Founder, Dr. D. K. Patel, it was initially called 'Bharatiya Aushadh Nirmanshala', and became 'BAN Labs'.

Besides Sesa Hair Oil, Ban Labs had other products in its portfolio including Dr's Care Value (EV) was put at 2.4x in decided about merger with

Sales, and 19-20x in terms of uct portfolio included Sesa Ayurvedic Oil, shampoos, conditioners, etc. In this way, Sesa had legacy of many decades.

Prior to this transaction, two major deals took place which included acquisition of Kesh King by Emami Limited from SBS Biotech in 2015, and acquisition of Indulekha Hair Oils by Hindustan Unilever Limited from Kerala-based Mosons Extractions. Dabur India has Dabur

Anmol Coconut Oil that is among 8 brands of Dabur in Rs. 100 Cr.-Rs. 250 Crore in size, Dabur Sarson Amla Hair Oil which is among 4 Dabur brands of over Rs. 250 Cr.-Rs. 500 Crore in size. Dabur Vatika and Dabur Amla figure among 4 brands of Dabur India having a turnover of more than Rs. 1,000 Crore. Overall, revenue from Operations of the company stood at Rs. 12,404 Crore for FY2023-24. Sesa Care is likely to be value accretive for Dabur India due to its strong presence in Hair Oil space.

Dr. Anil Kumar Angrish-Associate Professor (Finance and Accounting), Department of Pharmaceutical Management,

DISCLAIMER: Views are personal and do not represent the views of the Institute.

President for the year 2023-24. are grappling with recession growth in container handling TEU (+15 per cent YoY) and of logistics. Filling a Whitespace: Merger of Dabur India and Sesa Care



bur India's Board of Directors approved the amalgamation of Sesa Care. Through this transacwhitespace in its existing hair hair oil segment. On October 30, 2024, Dabur India

Care Private Limited ('Sesa Care') through merger along with its foreign wholly owned subsidiary in Bangladesh, viz. Sesa Care Bangladesh Pvt. Ltd. target company for FY23-24 was Rs. 133.3 Crores. Paid-up capital of Sesa Care stood at Rs. 958.28 Crores. The transaction was to be completed in 15-18 months. paid-up share capital of BDT

3.40 Crores. Turnover for FY23-24 stood at BDT 23.19 Crores. SESA Bangladesh was incorporated on 16.03.2020. Dabur Vatika. Dabur ended (Exchange rate between Indian the FY24 with its highest-ever Rupee and Bangladeshi Taka share of Hair Oil at 17.2 per on October 30, 2024: 1 INR =

Sesa Care held 3rd position in India as by March 31, 2024, Egypt Ltd., Egypt.

DR. ANIL KUMAR the ayurvedic hair oil category with a market share of about 11.0 per cent in Indian market. For Dabur India, this transaction presented a strategic opportunity to expand its presence in the Rs. 900 Crore ayurvedic hair oil market. Ayurvedic product formulations of Sesa had tion, Dabur India filled a key certification from Department of Ayurveda. Besides this, prodoil portfolio while improv- ucts were formulated using old ing the growth prospects of ayurvedic composition compristhe combined entity in the ing 18 herbs, 5 oils, pure cow milk, and boiling for 22 hours. For Dabur India, acquisition

Limited ('Dabur India') had made sense as it has 140 years proposed acquisition of Sesa of legacy, and its portfolio has 250+ ayurvedic products. Hair Care business of Dabur comprises pre-wash, in-shower and post-wash products such as hair oils, shampoo, in-shower Consolidated turnover of the conditioners, hair styling and hair serums. Dabur India is currently known as the world's largest Ayurvedic and Natural Health Care company with leadership position in Hair Oils - No. 1 position in Amla Sesa Care Bangladesh had with Dabur Amla Hair Oil and No. 1 position in hair oils, No. 2 in Almond with Dabur Almond Hair Oil, and No. 3 in Coconut with Dabur Anmol and cent. Sesa Care deal will further

Table 1: Consolidated Turnover of Sesa Care from FY22 to FY24

Year	Turnover (Rs. In Crore)
2021-22	111.9
2022-23	130.3
2023-24	133.3
Source : Compiled from filing with BSE Limited by Dabur India (2024, Oct. 30).	

Table 2: Turnover of Sesa Care Bangladesh from FY22 to FY24

Year	Turnover (BDT Crore)
2021-22	8.50
2022-23	21.10
2023-24	23.19
Source: Compiled from filing with BSE Limited by Dabur India (2024, Oct. 30).	

Figure 1: Sesa Care fills White Space for Dabur India



the company held a dominant position with 75.0 per cent share in Hair Oils, 65.5 per cent in Hair Creams and 65.9 per cent in Hammam Zaith that puts Dabur as the leading hair care company in Egypt strengthen position of Dabur through its subsidiary - Dabur

The company is well-placed with its distribution network, supply chain, differentiated & strategic customer relationships across Channels, and international presence. Dabur India has 21 manufacturing units, and has presence in 120+ countries across 4 continents.



Figure 2: Purchase Consideration for Sesa Care settled by Dabur India



*CRPS - Cumulative Redeemable Preference Shares The company has 26 C&FAs

and 4 Mother Warehouses, and product range reaches 7.9 million retail outlets. The company added 40,000 Chemists in 2023-24 alone thereby taking the total reach to 2,72,000. Dabur brands are available in 4.8 lakh cosmetic outlets across India, and 50 lakh outlets in

Enterprise Value of Sesa Care was estimated to be in the range of Rs. 315-325 Crores which included debt of Rs. 289 Crores. Sesa had an EBITDA margin of owned a manufacturing facility at Paonta Sahib in Himachal Pradesh. Hence, the Enterprise terms of Enterprise Value (EV)/ Dabur India then its prod-

detergent and dishwash liquid about 13.0 per cent. Sesa Care and Charm & Glow skincare products. Ban Labs had a revenue of about Rs. 240 Crores at that time. When Sesa Care

NIPER S.A.S. Nagar (Mohali),

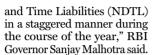
RBI cuts CRR by 1% to Inject Rs 2.5 Lakh Foreign Investors Return to Indian Markets Cr Into Banking System by December As Domestic Buying Stays Strong Cr Into Banking System by December

Bank of India (RBI) announced a substantial monetary policy intervention on Friday, with a 1 percent cut in the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) to inject Rs 2.5 lakh crore into the banking system.

The CRR reduction will lower the reserve requirement from 4 percent to 3 percent of net demand and time liabilities, implemented through four equal installments of 25 basis points each.

The phased implementation schedule begins September 6, 2025, followed by subsequent reductions on October 4, November 1, and November 29, with full implementation completed by December 2025.

"The Reserve Bank remains committed to provide sufficient liquidity to the banking system. To further provide durable liquidity, it has been decided to reduce the cash reserve ratio (CRR) by 100 Basis Points (bps) to 3 percent of Net Demand



This measure represents the most significant CRR reduction since March 27, 2020, when the RBI reduced the ratio by 1 percent and the repo rate by 75 basis points in response to the

"The cut in CRR would release primary liquidity of about Rs 2.5 lakh crore to the banking system by Decem-

ber 2025. Besides providing durable liquidity, it will reduce the cost of funding of the banks, thereby helping

in monetary policy transmis-

sion to the credit market," the

Governor added. The decision comes as India's economic growth declined to a -year low of 6.5 percent in fiscal year 2025, creating pressure for policy measures to stimulate

economic activity.

Enhanced credit availability through this liquidity injection

aims to support broader economic recovery and growth acceleration.

"I would like to reiterate that we will continue to monitor the evolving liquidity and financial market conditions and proactively take further measures, as warranted," he said.

This action follows a previous CRR reduction of 50 basis points to 4 percent, announced in the December 2024 MPC meeting and implemented in two instalments of 25 basis points each, effective December 14 and December 28, 2024.

This move released Rs 1.16 lakh crore into the banking system, easing liquidity constraints. However, the RBI kept the

Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) unchanged at 18 percent. Under this requirement,

banks must hold 18 percent of their total deposits—or Net Demand and Time Liabilities (NDTL)—in government se-



MUMBAI: Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) turned net buyers of Indian stocks on Friday, picking up shares worth Rs 1,009.7 crore, according to latest provisional data from the National Stock Exchange (NSE).

This marked a positive turn as investor confidence continues to grow. Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) also remained active buyers for the 14th straight session, investing Rs 9,342.5 crore in equities.

One of the key highlights of the day was a major transaction by Bajaj Holdings and Investment Limited, which sold shares worth Rs 2,002.2 crore in Bajaj Finsery Limited through a block

1.04 crore equity shares, representing 0.65 per cent of Bajaj Finserv's paid-up capital. Earlier in the day, the company's promoters had

also sold a large number of shares in a pre-market transaction. Market activity also received a further boost after the Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee cut the repo rate by 50 basis points, bringing it down to 5.5 per cent. This move is expected to make borrowing cheaper and support economic growth. Reflecting this positive sentiment, the benchmark indices closed higher for the third straight day.

The Nifty climbed 252 points, or 1.02 per cent, to end at 5,003. The Sensex also moved up by 746.95 points, or 0.92 per cent, to close at 82,188.99. During the trading session,

both indices touched higher levels, with the Nifty reaching 25,092.50 and the Sensex hitting 82,299.89. Strong performances from companies like Eternal Limited and Shriram Finance Limited helped drive this weekly rally. The Nifty gained over 1 per cent this week and the Sensex also rose by nearly 1 per cent, snapping a two-week losing streak. Experts say that recent steps by market regulators and the central bank have made the investment climate even more attractive. Manoi Purohit, a partner at BDO India, highlighted that measures such as extending the deadline for disclosure rules and easing restrictions on foreign investment in corporate debt are building confidence among global investors. "These steps are seen as positive for both equity and bond markets. As global trade conditions improve and India continues to offer solid

economic fundamentals, inves-

tor sentiment remains upbeat,"

Purohit added

Kisan Credit Card scheme a lifeline for millions of Indian farmers: FM Sitharaman



Card (KCC) scheme a lifeline for millions of Indian farmers, said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday.

KCC is a banking product that provides farmers with timely and affordable credit for purchasing agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, and pesticides, as well as for meetng cash requirements related to crop production and allied activities.

In a post on social media platform X, along with an infographic, Sitharaman said Over 465 lakh applications have been sanctioned with Rs 5.7 lakh crore credit limit". "Under the leadership of

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) has become a lifeline for millions of farmers," Nirmala Sitharaman's Office stated on X.

The scheme has led to "easy access to short-term crop loans". About Rs 5.7 lakh crore have also been sanctioned in credit, with "interest as low as 4 per cent with timely repayment' the post added.

With the KCC scheme, farmers can get up to Rs 3 lakh loan at just 4 per cent interest, if repaid on time. An additional Prompt Repayment Incentive of 3 per cent is also being provided to farmers on timely repayment of loans, which effectively reduces the rate of interest to 4 per cent for farmers. Thus, for every one lakh KCC loan, farmers can save up to Rs 9, 000 in interest per year.

The government has also increased the subsidised KCC loan limit from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh, benefiting approximately 7.7 crore farmers, including fishermen and dairy farmers.

Rate Cut; Urges Banks to Pass on Benefit to MSMEs

RBI Gov-

NEW DELHI: The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has reduced the reporate by 50 basis point. The third consecutive rate cut has brough the repo rate to 5.5 per cent.

ernor Sanjay Malhotra, announcing decision, said the move was based on a comprehensive assessment of cur-

rent macroeconomic conditions. Federation of Indian Micro and Small & Medium Enterprises (FISME) has welcomed

the decision. "With coming down to 3.7 per cent down from the 4 per cent, it was time RBI focused on growth which is

under stress due to global tariff wars and disruptions owing to weather uncertainties", says Anil Bhardwaj, Secretary Gen-

FISME Welcomes RBI's Bold India's Forex Kitty Enough to Fund over 11 Months of Imports: RBI Chief

NEW DELHI: India's foreign exchange reserves stood at \$691.5 billion, as of May 30, and are sufficient to fund more than 11 months of goods imports and about 96 per cent of external debt outstanding, RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said on Friday.

For the week ended May 30. the reserves dropped by \$1.2 billion to break an 8-week rising trend. India's foreign exchange reserves had recorded a robust increase of \$6.99 billion to \$692.72 billion in the preceding week ended May 23.

Changes in foreign currency assets, expressed in dollar terms, include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of other currencies held in the reserves.

External commercial borrowings (ECBs) and non-resident deposits have seen higher net inflows compared to the previous year. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor said:



remains resilient as key external sector vulnerability indicators confident of meeting our external financing requirements."

The latest RBI data showed that India's foreign currency assets (FCA), the largest component of foreign exchange reserves, stood at \$586.167 billion. The RBI releases forex data every Friday

According to RBI data, India's forex reserves are still

quite close to its all-time high of \$704.89 billion, reached in September 2024. In 2024, the reserves rose by a little over USD 20 billion. Central banks worldwide are increasingly accumulating gold as a safe-haven asset in their foreign exchange reserves amid uncertainty created by geopolitical tensions. The gold reserves currently amount to \$83.582 billion. The share of gold maintained by the RBI in its foreign exchange reserves has almost doubled since 2021.

A strengthening of the country's foreign exchange kitty also helps bolster the rupee vis-a-vis the US dollar. An increase in the foreign exchange reserves reflects strong fundamentals of the economy and gives the RBI more headroom to stabilise the rupee when it turns volatile.

A strong forex kitty enables the RBI to intervene in the spot and forward currency markets by releasing more dollars to prevent the rupee from going into a free fall. Meanwhile, India's external sector has emerged stronger with total exports of goods and services clocking a robust 12.7 per cent growth in April to touch the \$73.8 billion mark compared with the corresponding figure of \$65.48 billion during the same month last year, despite the global economic uncertainties triggered by the US tariff hikes, according to figures compiled by the Com-

RBI's Jumbo Rate Cut A Boost For Capex And Consumption: Industry Chambers

NEW DELHI: Leading industry chambers on Friday lauded the RBI's rate cut decision, describing the continuation in the accommodative policy stance as a catalyst for boosting capex and demand across different sectors

Assocham expressed delight at the 50-basis-point reduction in the policy interest rates.

"The MPC's repo rate cut of 50 basis points and cash reserve ratio cut of 100 bps is expected to reduce lending rates, spur growth in the economy and encourage borrowing from industry for capex," said Assocham President Sanjay Nayar.

It will also induce business growth through enhanced credit, especially in interest rate-sensitive sectors such as real estate, automobiles, infrastructure, exports, and the MSME segment.

Sharing the RBI's progrowth impulse on India's economic growth, Assocham



rowing costs for farmers and agri-businesses, especially in the pre-sowing season. In addition to this, improved rural demand could support rural consumption if passed on effectively through rural credit channels," he mentioned.

Secretary General Manish

Singhal said that a rate cut

On the global stage, other central banks signal neutral or slightly accommodative stances in 2025 as inflation moderates globally.

SEBI freezes Mehul Choksi's bank accounts and investments to recover Rs 2.1 crore



The amount is related to a penalty imposed on him for violating insider trading rules in the shares

of Gitanjali Gems. Choksi, who was the Chairman and Managing Director of Gitanjali Gems, is accused of sharing unpublished price-sensitive information (UPSI) with an associate, Rakesh Girdharlal Gajera. Based on that information, Gajera sold off his entire 5.75 per cent stake in the company in December 2017, allegedly to avoid losses before details of fraudulent activities involving the company became public. In January 2022, the



SEBI fined Choksi Rs 1.5 crore and banned him from trading in the securities market for one year. However, Choksi did not pay the fine, prompting the SEBÎ to issue a demand notice on May 15, 2025. When he failed to respond or make the payment within the 15-day deadline, the market regulator proceeded with the attachment of his assets.

The total dues now stand at Rs 2.1 crore, including Rs 60 lakh in interest. In its notice dated June 4, the SEBI directed all banks, depositories like

fund houses to freeze Choksi's be withdrawn, credits are still allowed. The market regulator has also instructed banks to seize any lockers in his name.

The market regulator explained that the action was necessary because there is a strong possibility that Choksi may try to move or hide his assets, which could delay or prevent the recovery process. "Whereas no amount has been paid by the defaulter and there is sufficient reason to believe that the defaulter may dispose of the amounts/proceeds in the bank accounts held with your bank and realisation of the amount due under the recovery certificate would in consequence be delayed or obstructed, "the

Focus on Enhancing Economic Growth Rate in the Monetary Review winds including persistently stance, if the inflation rate



cial year 2024-2025, India achieved Trump has particularly hama notable gross domestic pered India's export capabiliproduct (GDP) growth rate of ties. According to Moody's, 6.5%. This figure was driven these tariffs on vital sectors by quarterly performances such as diamonds, clothing, that showcased fluctuations: and medical equipment may in the first quarter, the economy expanded by 6.7%, fol- the GDP growth rate. Nevlowed by a sharper slowdown ertheless, Moody's remains to 5.4% in the second quarter. optimistic, suggesting that The third quarter saw a re- government infrastructure bound to 6.2%, culminating in a robust performance in tential reduction in policy rates, the fourth quarter, which recorded a growth rate of 7.4%. Particularly encouraging was the performance of the agriculture and allied sectors, which registered growth of 3.8%, a significant improvement over the previous year's (NPAs). 1.4% increase. Concurrently, the construction sector nomic health is the increase in thrived, posting an impressive growth rate of 8.6%, while the finance, real estate, and professional services sectors and industrial activity, along expanded by 7.3%. This cur-

In FY24, the landscape was complicated by declines in credit has faced a downturn, both private final consumption expenditure and government final consumption expenditure. However, private the same period the previous consumption still exhibited a growth of 7.3%, while governhigh lending rates. The rating ment consumption rose by agency ICRA forecasts credit 4.1%. Despite these setbacks, agriculture improvements, 12% for FY25, down from robust rural demand, govern- 16.3% in FY24. Furthermore, ment investment, and perfor- Standard & Poor's has promance in the service sectors jected that credit growth may made substantial contributions to sustaining the GDP

nomic turmoil experienced

in FY 2020, when the GDP

growth of 7.0% in FY 2022,

and an 8.2% increase in FY

Currently, India faces head-

high loan interest rates, challenges in the manufacturing and mining sectors, and global fin an - new tariff policy introduced by former US President Donald result in a 0.3% reduction in spending, coupled with a powill stimulate consumption and bolster growth in the economy. The agency also anticipates continued improvement in the banking sector's performance, particularly with a further decline in non-performing assets A strong indicator of eco-

Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections, which highlight robust consumer spending with effective tax compliance. rent growth trajectory stands In May 2025, for instance, in stark contrast to the eco- the government collected Rs 2.01 lakh crore through GST, marking a remarkable 16.4% contracted by -5.8%, followed increase compared to the previby a remarkable recovery to ous year. For context, the GST 9.7% in FY 2021, continued collection in May 2024 was Rs 1.73 lakh crore, while April 2025 saw a record high of Rs 2.37 lakh crore.

However, the growth of bank declining to 11.2% year-onyear as of April 2025, a notable decrease from 15.3% during year, primarily attributed to growth to stabilize at around range between 12% and 14% in FY25 owing to continued elevated interest rates.

At present, banks are grap-



pling with challenges related to deposits. The emergence of attractive investment alternatives in the market has led many investors to divert their funds away from traditional bank deposits. Consequently, by January 2025, the growth rate of bank deposits plummeted to only 10.3%, a slowdown compared to the previous year. This dip in deposits restricts banks' capacity to extend loans to borrowers, thus hampering broader economic activity. To alleviate this situation, a flow of cheaper capital to banks is contingent upon the Reserve Bank of India decreasing the repo rate. The repo rate, the rate at which the Reserve Bank lends to commercial banks, plays a crucial role; a reduction allows banks to secure loans at lower interest rates, thereby facilitating decreased borrowing costs for consumers and

Typically, the Reserve Bank is cautious about lowering the repo rate in the face of high it becomes essential to infuse inflation, as inflation presents a significant barrier to development. In April, however, retail inflation fell to 3.16%, marking the lowest level in 69 months, since July 2019 when it was recorded at 3.15%. Wholesale inflation also dropped to a 13-month low of 0.85%, a decrease from 2.05% in March, 2.38% in February, and 2.31% in January. This decline in both retail and wholesale inflation has been largely driven by reduced food prices, which have helped to stabilize the economic

environment.

possesses a critical instrument. for managing inflation known as the repo rate, which plays a pivotal role in influencing the country's economic climate. When inflation escalates to concerning levels, the Reserve Bank takes decisive action to curb excess liquidity in the economy by raising the repo rate. This increase signifies a higher cost for banks to borrow funds from the Reserve Bank, which in turn leads them to elevate their own lending interest rates. As borrowing becomes more expensive, consumer and business expenditure typically contracts, resulting in reduced liquidity in the marketplace. This contraction in the money supply dampens demand for goods and services, thereby

on inflationary rates. In contrast, during periods of economic stagnation characterized by sluggish growth, more money into the economy to stimulate activity and enhance growth prospects. In such scenarios, the Reserve Bank may respond by lowering the repo rate. This action diminishes the cost of borrowing, encouraging banks to pass on the benefits to consumers and businesses through lower lending rates. The aim is to invigorate spending and investment, thus driving economic economic growth.

Inflation has a profound impact on the purchasing power of individuals. For in-

stands at 7%, the effective value of Rs 100 received diminishes to just Rs 93 in inflation erodes the value of money over time. This reality underscores the importance of strategic investments that can safeguard against inflationary pressures; otherwise, the real value of savings may decline considerably during high inflation periods.

Moreover, the interplay between inflation, consumer demand, and supply dynamics is highly intricate. When consumers benefit from a higher disposable income, they typically increase their spending on goods and services. This heightened demand can lead to a scenario where supply struggles to keep pace, resulting in rising prices—a fundamental characteristic of inflation. Conversely, if there is an abundance of goods available yet consumer demand remains low, inflationary pressures tend to recede, contributing to price stabilization.

Looking ahead, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India is scheduled to unveil its monetary policy decisions on June 6. In light of several influencing factors, including the exerting downward pressure anticipated normal monsoon rains which can impact agricultural output, a projected slowdown in GDP growth, ongoing inflation levels, and the current constraints on bank capital, market analysts predict that the Reserve Bank may implement a repo rate cut ranging from 0.25% to 0.50% during this review. It's noteworthy that in its previous two monetary policy meetings, the Reserve Bank had already opted to reduce the repo rate by 0.25% each time, as part of a strategy aimed at fostering

> Satish Singh, Ahmedabad Based Senior Columnist, views are personal.

Package to Pakistan

NEW DELHI: India has expressed deep concerns over the potential misuse of the \$800 million ADB aid package to Pakistan as the country is increasing its defence expenditure,



with the army exercising de facto control over the government in Islamabad.

The army top brass now leads the Special Investment Facilitation Council, which gives it more control over the economic policy. India has warned that this entrenched military role poses serious risks of policy reversal and poor reform implementation, according to reliable sources.

Pakistan's tax-GDP ratio has been declining, with the country going through an economic crisis. The foreign exchange reserves have hit rock bottom, and inflation has soared to doubledigit figures.

India Red-Flags DBT, Jan Dhan schemes revolutionised welfare delivery in India: FM Sitharaman the nation Rs 3.48 lakh crore



breaking financial inclusion schemes by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government have revolutionised welfare delivery in India in the last 11 years, by plugging leakages and ensuring transparency, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Thursday.

Over the past decade, the NDA government has taken pathbreaking steps to uplift several people from the clutches of poverty, focussing on empowerment, infrastructure and inclusion. "Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) has revolutionised welfare delivery in India, by plugging leakages and ensuring transparency. Over 1, 200 government schemes now leverage DBT, enabling direct transfer of Rs 44 lakh crore to beneficiaries' bank accounts," FM Sitharaman said in a post on X.

This system has already saved

in leakages and inefficiencies, she informed. Also, PM MU-DRA Yojana has given wings to grassroots dreams and made entrepreneurship inclusive. "Under this scheme, over 52

crore loans worth Rs 33 lakh crore have been sanctioned, out of which 68 per cent belong to women," said the Finance Minister. PM Jan Dhan Yojana has made banking universal. Under the world's largest financial inclusion programme, 55.44 crore accounts have been opened, out of which 55.7 per cent are held by women, said the Finance Minister.

According to PM Modi, the push for DBT, digital inclusion and rural infrastructure has ensured transparency and faster delivery of benefits till the last mile. Since the money goes directly into the bank accounts of beneficiaries, the leakage has been curbed, which has resulted in a halving of subsidy allocations from 16 per cent to 9 per cent of total expenditure, government data showed in April.

India-US Trade Talks Spill Over Into Next Week

officials engaged in high-level trade negotiations here to arrive at an interim deal on tariff cuts, ahead of the July 9 deadline, have decided to extend their ongoing talks into next week, according to a senior official.

India's negotiating team, headed by Additional Secretary Rajesh Agrawal, has held talks over two days with senior officials from the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), who arrived in Delhi for weekend talks.

The two countries are actively engaged in focused discussions to facilitate greater market access, reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers, and enhance supply chain resilience and integration," an official said.

The negotiators are aiming to finalise an interim trade deal ahead of the July 9 deadline that has been fixed by US President Donald Trump for the 90-day pause on new tariffs that were to be levied on Indian products. Negotiations are expected to continue after that for a broader trade deal to be signed in September-October.

Displacement, cholera

drive up humanitarian

UNITED NATIONS: Conflict-

related displacement of people

and the spread of cholera con-

tinue to increase humanitarian

needs across Sudan, according

Nearly 9, 700 people in Khar-

toum state alone were recently

displaced due to conflict, said

Stephane Dujarric, spokesman

for UN Secretary-General Anto-

nio Guterres, citing figures from

the International Organization

for Migration (IOM). In South

Kordofan, more than 9,000

people fled Dibebat town in Al

Quoz locality last week due to

intense clashes. The situation

remains very volatile, he said,

quoting the IOM on Wednes-

day. At the same time, about

600 people were displaced from

Abu Shouk camp and El Fasher

town in North Darfur state just

On the cholera outbreak, the

spokesman said daily cases are

steadily increasing in River Nile

state in the north although they

the past two weeks alone, health

have reported more than 180

cumulative cases and four deaths.

last week, he said.

to UN spokesman.

needs in Sudan: UN



India has proposed significant tariff reductions, potentially lowering average duties from 13 per cent to 4 per cent, in exchange for exemptions from US tariff hikes imposed during the Trump administration. These concessions are on the same lines as those offered in the recent bilateral free trade agreement that India has signed with the United Kingdom.

India is seeking market access for its industrial products

such as steel, aluminium, auto components and pharmaceutical goods. Recently, the US doubled safeguard duties on steel and aluminium imports to 50 per cent, which has adversely impacted India's exports. Although India has moved the WTO on the issue, it is hoping

bilateral trade agreement. The US is also seeking broader market access for its agricultural and dairy products, but for India, the livelihood issue of the country's small farmers is paramount, and hence, this is considered a sensitive area.

to settle the issue through the

India may allow the import

of select agricultural products, such as almonds, as these are already flowing into the country. However, as a quid pro quo, India is likely to press for improved access to the US market for seafood products like shrimp and fish, as well as spices, coffee, and rubber-segments where Indian exporters are globally competi-

tive but face tariff competition

in the American market.

Trade between India and the US touched the \$129 billion mark in 2024, with New Delhi recording a trade surplus of \$45.7 billion. In February, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Trump launched 'Mission 500', an initiative aiming to double bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030. The joint decision was announced during PM Modi's visit to Washington.

US Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick also announced that a trade deal between India and the United States is likely to be finalised shortly. He stated this in his address at the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum Annual Leadership Summit in

Trump to Sell His Tesla Car As Feud with Musk Carries Risks for Both: Report



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump planned to sell the red Tesla car he said he bought in March, according to local media reports.

Trump originally purchased the car to demonstrate his support for Elon Musk amid a backlash over his role in the administration, reports Xinhua news agency, quoting The New York Times

"Administration officials said Mr Trump showed little interest in engaging with Mr Musk, even after the billionaire signalled he would be open to de-escalating the fight" they currently have,

the victims of repeated terror

Late Thursday, Musk backed off a threat to "immediately decommission SpaceX's Dragon spacecraft, which transports NASA astronauts and supplies to and from the International

Ackman, the hedge-fund billionaire, posted on social media that the two men "should make peace for the benefit of our great country," Musk responded, You're not wrong.'

A short time later, when Bill

"For Musk, a prolonged feud with Trump could be hugely expensive," noted the report. His companies, including SpaceX, and were positioned to receive billions more.

On Thursday, Trump threatened to end those contracts.

The feud is risky for Trump as well, it added. Musk, the world's richest person, who spent about 275 million US dollars to help elect Trump in 2024, had promised to give 100 million dollars to groups controlled by the president's team before the 2026 midterms.

Those funds have yet to be delivered and are now very much in doubt.

This also comes against the backdrop of Elon Musk's threat, which he later retracted, to cut off NASA's use of SpaceX's Dragon spacecraft would be a huge blow to NASA, depriving the space agency of the only American vehicle capable of transporting astronauts to the International Space Station and dramatically changing how NASA would access the \$100 billion orbiting laboratory, The Washington

Bangladesh's Yunus to Visit UK Next Week, May **Meet BNP Acting Chief**



DHAKA: Bangladesh's Chief Adviser, Professor Muhammad Yunus's 11th foreign visit in the last eleven months will be his scheduled visit to the United Lingdom from June 9-13.

Reliable sources said that Yunus, who announced on Friday that elections will be held in April 2026, is scheduled to hold a confidential political dialogue with Bangladesh Nationalist Party's (BNP) Acting Chairman Tarique Rahman. Addressing a rally virtually on

May 28, Tarique Rahman had stated that historically, caretaker governments in Bangladesh have shown that national elections can be organised and executed within three months. The precedent is clear: it can be done. "And yet, ten months into its tenure, the interim administration has still not announced an election date. The people of Bangladesh deserve better. We seek a nation free from authoritarianism, led by a government elected through a fair vote, and accountable to its citizens," he The BNP has stated unam-

biguously that it wants the national elections to be held by December this year as it perceives a clear victory" minus the Awami League. The BNP members, including Tarique Rahman, are strongly opposed to Yunus's incrementalism and his advisors, mostly from the July uprising of 2024. At home, there is hardly any political or economic value for Yunus. The BNP wants an honest assessment of what has been actually accomplished" in these months and not what was spin-doctored" as Yunus is in the habit of doing.

Similarly, the Bangladesh military wanted the national election to be held by December 2025. Gen Waker-uz-Zaman, the Chief of Army Staff, had drawn the red lines for the Yunus administration.

Bangladeshis in Britain are

mainly concentrated in Greater London boroughs such as Tower Hamlets, Newham, and Camden. Outside London, the British Bangladeshi community is heavily concentrated in major cities such as Birmingham, Manchester and other urban centres across the UK. Islam, as

Indian Delegation Meets US Officials, Discusses Pahalgam Terror Attack, Op Sindoor The Senator sympathized with

WASHINGTON: An All-Party Parliamentary Delegation from India, led by senior Congress MP Shashi Tharoor, met with key American lawmakers and officials to brief them on the recent Pahalgam terror attack and India's response through Operation Sindoor.

During the visit, the delegation held a significant meeting with US Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau. The Indian Embassy in Washington shared the update on social media platform X, stating:

The All Party Parliamentary delegation led by Dr. @ ShashiTharoor had a warm and candid conversation with US Deputy Secretary of State @DeputySecState today. The Indian Delegation briefed him on the atrocities of the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation

Sindoor," the embassy posted. The delegation also met Senator Chris Van Hollen, a member of the influential US Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In that meeting, the Indian lawmakers discussed the cross-border nature of the Pahalgam attack and reiterated India's firm stance against

"The Indian parliamen-

terrorism

tary delegation led by Dr @ ShashiTharoor had a productive meeting with Senator @Chris-VanHollen, member of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The delegation briefed him on the heinous terrorist attack in Pahalgam, discussed India's subsequent Operation Sindoor, and put forth India's firm resolve to counter crossborder terrorism in all its forms.

attacks in India, said that [the US] stands with [India] in the fight against terrorism, and expressed support for India's right to defend itself," the embassy Earlier, the Indian delegation

engaged in candid conversations with members of the US Congress, senior officials from the US government, and representatives of American think tanks and media at a reception hosted by India's Ambassador to the United States.

The visit is part of an ongoing diplomatic effort to build bipartisan support in Washington for stronger counter-terrorism cooperation and to deepen strategic ties between India and the US in the face of regional

PM Modi congratulates Lee Jae-myung on being elected as South Korea's President won 49.42 per cent of the votes,

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended his best wishes to newly-elected South Korean President Lee Jae-myung for winning the top post and expressed his eagerness to strengthen the strategic partnership between the two nations.

Democratic Party (DP) candidate Lee Jae-myung was elected ident on Wednesday after Xinhua news agency reported. In months of turmoil surrounding Korea. Look forward to workthe impeachment and ouster of his former opponent over a and strengthen the India-ROK authorities in River Nile state botched attempt to impose mar-



Taking to X, PM Modi posted, "Congratulations to Mr Lee Jae-Myung on being elected as ing together to further expand Special Strategic Partnership."

comeback after having lost to former President Yoon Suk Yeol by a razor-thin margin of less than one percentage point in the previous election in 2022.

While Yoon's attempt to impose martial law in December paved the way for Lee's rise to the presidency, it also deepened the nation's political divide and States' tariff policies to North Korea's advancing nuclear weapons programme. With all votes Lee's win was a remarkable counted, Lee of the liberal DP Peace and our Future'.

compared with 41.15 per cent for his conservative People Power Party (PPP) rival Kim Moon-soo.

Meanwhile, the bilateral relations between India and South Korea were elevated to 'Special Strategic Partnership' in 2015, when PM Narendra Modi paid a State Visit to South Korea. Additionally, by everything from the United then-South Korean President Moon Jae-in to India in July 2018, both countries issued a statement outlining a Vision for People, Prosperity,

Musk-Trump Rupture Poses Serious Threat To NASA, Pentagon Programs: Report that he should cool off



NEW YORK: Elon Musk's threat, which he later retracted, to cut off NASA's use of SpaceX's Dragon spacecraft would be a huge blow to NASA, depriving the space agency of the only American vehicle capable of transporting astronauts to the International Space Station and dramatically changing how NASA would access the \$100 billion orbiting laboratory, The Washington Post has reported.

The threat, posted on X, came during an escalating fight between the wealthiest man in the world and President Donald Trump, after Trump had threatened to cancel all of Musk's company's federal contracts. "Given SpaceX's importance to multiple federal programs, severing those relationships could leave NASA as well as Pentagon and intelligence agencies in a lurch," noted

the threat, Musk relented, saying in response to a post on X post on X.

and reconsider: "Ok, we won't decommission Dragon." Over the years,

SpaceX has become

vital contractor, launching sensitive national security payloads such as satellites that provide missile warning, battlefield commu-

nication and guide munitions to precise targets, Xinhua news agency reported.

In a statement, Bethany Stevens, NASA's press secretary, did not address how NASA would continue to fly its astronauts to the ISS without SpaceX, writing only that "NASA will continue to execute upon the President's vision for the fulfillment of space. We will continue to work with our industry partners to ensure the President's objectives in space are met.'

Earlier Elon Musk called for the impeachment of US President Donald Trump and announced the decommissioning of the vital SpaceX programme after accusing that Trump's name is in the Epstein files, according to media reports.

"In light of the President's of my government contracts, SpaceX will begin decommis-Several hours after making sioning its Dragon spacecraft immediately," Musk said in a

a religion, plays a binding factor deshis, who have questioned the secular nationalism of their parents and grandparents. Many British Bangladeshi citizens are active in British politics.

Is Chinese Strongman Xi Jinping on the Way Out?



MISRA

some American-Chinese media Xi Jinping's grip on power that the removal of the present ruler of China, President removal may be imminent, Xi Jinping, could be immieven a managed exit may be nent, but these prophesies underway". need substantial back-ups. Unfortunately, some former Indian generals, who regularly appear on social media plat-

being seen endorsing these

predictions without credible

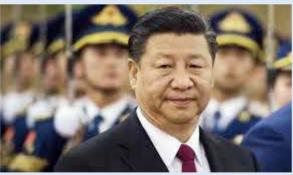
information. Further, perhaps, in a bid to undermine, Xi Jinping, a sec- Memorial Hall in northern tion of Indian media, is seen publishing unsubstantial news honouring Xi's father, Xi that the Trump Administration might soon be withdraw- lutionary, also indicate the ing the American visa to Xi decline of his political clout. Mingze, winsome daughter of China's strong man. It may be Cai Shenkun, a senior journalnoted that Xi Mingze, who has been pursuing higher studies channel, on 21 May that a secat Harvard is in the US for tion of the CCP have reached a the past 15 years, maintains collective decision that Xi will a low-profile. She, however, have to formally step down being kept under the strong protection of the US and Chinese secret police. Being the daughter of a famous Chinese both the CCP and military. folk singer, Peng Liyuan and According to him, the grow-Xi Jinping, Xi Mingze is also ing discontent among Party Xiaoping, who had introduced

day on June 25. Amidst these anti Xi me- companied by Xi's deteriorat-

dia campaigns, some commentators from China and Taiwan have recently claimed that "the signals within the Chinese Communist Party a r e (CCP), especially with the claims re-emergence of old factions in the party, indicate that is weakening and that his

According to them, the resurgence of the side-lined Communist Youth League faction, the purge of military forms, a few of them run by figures reportedly be close to former civil servants, too are Xi indicate that Xi Jinping's political clout is on decline. Further, these observers quote that the decision not to name Guanzhong Revolutionary China's Shaanxi Province, Zhongxun, a Communist revo-

Meanwhile, the comment of ist, who runs his own YouTube from the political stage. Earlier, Cai had claimed about the ongoing power shifts in being appreciated for her tal- elders could be attributed to ent and etiquette. She would the recent decline in Chinese be celebrating her 33rd. birtheconomy and the mounting CCP. He had fathered a corinternational pressure, ac-



ing health.

It is being stated, he either may be deposed or could be stripped off his executive powers at the upcoming Fourth Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee, scheduled to take place in late August of this year. It is also possible that he might be retained as a nominal head till 2027, when the Party Congress would select a new leader.

Return of Hu Jintao: The recent reappearance of Hu Jintao, 87, who had ruled China for more than decade, 2003-13, is being interpreted as one of the most visible signs of Xi's weakening influence. During his regime, he had promoted the governance should be based on the timetested principles of "scientific, democratic, and law-based decision-making." Also, he is believed to be chosen by Deng the steel framework of the porate approach to diplomacy

i.e. using various Chinese busi-

ness corporations promoting China's geo-political interests. It is being joking stated that the British had only one East India Company, but China has a number of such outfits promoting China's influence in Africa, Latin America, and other developing regions of the world.

Hu-era governance principles, such as "scientific, democratic, and law-based decision-making" published on May 19 this year, in both People's Daily and Xinhua, the Chinese news agency, appears to have further triggered the discussions regarding the political decline of Xi Jinping. It may be recalled that Hu was publicly humiliated and escorted out of the closing session of the CCP's 20th National Congress in October 2022.

Meanwhile, the reappearance of Hu Chunhua, a former a unique capitalist model on Politburo member and longtime Youth League figure, who too was side-lined at the 20th National Congress, has prompted the intense discussions regarding the removal of Xi Jinping in the independent Chinese media worldwide. He has recently been to va few African countries on a diplomatic mission.

These developments, according to a U.S.-based commentator Chen Pokong, indicate that these moves clearly signal the political comeback of the anti-Xi Jinping faction. Also, Yao Cheng, a former lieutenant colonel of the CCP's navy who fled to the United States in 2016, has recently claimed before a few USbased Chinese journalists that Xi's real power has essentially evaporated by now, leaving only a nominal title. "He will step down as general secretary of the CCP and chairman of the Central Military Com-The articles highlighting mission, retaining only the ceremonial title of China's chairman, before fully retiring at the 21st National Congress,

Yao claimed. Unfortunately, all this information available in the Indian media are just being quoted from the other or non-Indian sources need to studied. Neither Indian diplomats nor media could access first-hand information about Beijing's ongoing political developments.

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

Rights Body Condemns Balochistan Anti-Terrorism Bill, Calls It 'Deeply Troubling'

QUETTA: A Baloch human rights body has raised strong objections against the recent Anti-Terrorism (Balochistan Amendment) Bill, 2025, passed by the Balochistan Assembly in Pakistan, terming it a threat to human rights and the rule

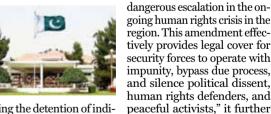
In a statement on Friday, the Baloch Voice for Justice (BVJ) condemned the passage of the Bill as a "deeply troubling development" that undermines constitutional protections and international human rights standards. "The legislation grants sweep-

ing powers to state agencies,



enabling the detention of individuals for up to three months without judicial oversight, thereby institutionalising the risk of arbitrary arrests, torture, and enforced disappearances,' read the statement issued by the BVJ.

"The use of the Balochistan Assembly to legitimise such repressive measures marks a



The BVJ emphasised that the Bill stands in clear violation of Pakistan's obligations under international human rights law, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the Convention Against

Torture (CAT).

Europeans Turn Away from US amid Growing Anti-American Sentiment

LONDON: While waiting in line outside Rome's iconic Gallery Borghese with his family, Polish tourist Antoni Furman shared why the United States is never on his holiday list. "Europe is much less crowded, and the US tariffs on the European Union affect our pockets," he said.

Furman represents a growing number of Europeans opting out of engaging with the United States. A wave of anti-American sentiment is sweeping across the continent, as US policies strain the transatlantic relationship and influence everyday decisions behavior, Xinhua news agency reported. Inbound travel to the US is projected to decline by 8.7 per cent in 2025, with the sharpest drops expected from Canada and Western Europe, according



to Oxford Economics. Data from the US National Travel and Tourism Office revealed that trips from overseas fell by 11.6 per cent in March 2025 compared to the previous year. Visits from Western Europe alone plummeted 17.2 per cent. Germany, Spain, from travel choices to consumer and Ireland each saw declines exceeding 20 per cent, while the United Kingdom and France recorded decreases of around 10 per cent.

Travel booking platform Omio reported a 16 per cent increase in

US trip cancellations in the first quarter (Q1) year-on-year, with cancellation rates from the UK, Germany, and France nearing 40 per cent. Tourism Economics, part of Oxford Economics, noted a 10 per cent decline in European trip plans to the US for the 2025 summer season. Oxford Economics pointed to several causes for the gloomy tourism outlook: trade tariffs targeting traditional allies, troubling media reports on border security, and controversial travel advisories. Adam Sacks, president of Tourism Economics, criticised the Trump administration's approach, noting that Trump's aggressive rhetoric toward the European Union (EU), Greenland, and Canada are all unforced errors, and have impacts on how people view the US.

'Shooting League of India is more than just a competition: Olympic medallist Sarabjot Singh

New Delhi

As excitement mounts for the inaugural season of the Shooting League of India (SLI), star athlete Sarabjot Singh is ready to step onto a new kind of stage — one that brings together elite global talent, electric atmospheres, and a fresh league format never before seen in Indian shooting.

"The idea of being part of the very first edition of something this big is truly special," says Sarabjot, one of India's most accomplished young shooters, with gold medals at the World Championships, Asian Games, and ISSF World Cup, along with a bronze in the 10m Air Pistol

Sonu dedicates Miss

World Humanitarian

Award to resilient

mothers, students

MUMBAI: Bollywood actor and

philanthropist Sonu Sood, who

has been feted with the Miss

World Humanitarian Award,

dedicated it to countless unsung

heroes - mothers praying for

their children, students striving

miles. Sonu took to Instagram,

where he shared a string of pic-

tures of him getting honoured

by actor Rana Daggubatti and

posing with the award. For the

caption, he wrote: This award

belongs to every mother who

prayed for a bus to take her child

home, to every student who

couldn't afford education but

never gave up dreaming, and to

every migrant who walked miles

yet never lost faith. Grateful and

humbled to receive the Miss

World Humanitarian Award.

This is for every heart that cares."

for education

despite hard-

ship who couldn't af-

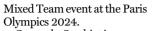
ford to study,

and resilient

migrants who

walked for

and migrants



Currently, Sarabjot is preparing to compete in the upcoming ISSF World Cup in Munich, where he will take part in the 10m Air Pistol event — the very same event in which he clinched

gold medal in Munich last

Schedule to take place in a window from 20th November to 2nd December 2025, the SLI will feature mixed team events across Pistol (10M, 25M), Rifle (10M, 50M 3P), and Shotgun (Trap & Skeet). Franchise teams will participate, divided into two pools in the league stage, followed by knockouts.

Players will be drafted into four competitive tiers — Elite Champions, World Elite, National Champions, and Junior & Youth Championships — ensuring a balanced blend of experience and emerging talent.

For Sarabjot, the format

high-level competition but also to valuable cross-cultural exchange. "It is a fantastic opportunity to learn — to see how top shooters from other countries prepare and perform. I am excited to share experiences, connect with athletes from different cultures, and grow both as a shooter and a person," he said.

The league's vibrant and fastpaced format is also expected to make shooting more accessible and engaging for audiences. "A platform like this will spark more interest among young people and bring shooting the recognition it truly deserves in India," Sarabjot notes. "I hope many new fans are drawn into the sport through this league.



Punjab Police Commandos take part in a flag march ahead of the 41st Anniversary of

A moment stamped in history: Anushka hugs hubby Virat as his RCB registers maiden IPL win

MUMBAI: A million emotions were running amuck at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad as the IPL team Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) lifted the trophy for the first time in 18 years of the tournament.

Bollywood actress Anushka Sharma embraced her husband, the senior RCB player, and modern the stands. batting legend Virat Kohli as from the pitch to the last row in as he hugged her with tears

After breaking down on jitters in the stadium stretched field, Virat ran over to his wife, streaming down his face. When it all kicked in, the emotions erupted for him akin to Italy's Mount Etna volcano

Anushka hugged and congratulated her husband. The shutters of the cameras stationed at the stadium went all gun-blazing to capture the moment be-

tween the couple, a moment that will put its signature along the dotted line of the history of India's pop-culture, in years to come.

HPPC and HPWPC Meetings Held Under the Chairmanship of Chief Minister



Contracts and Purchases worth over Rs 1640 Crore Approved

GULSHAN KUMAR Chandigarh

In the meetings of High Powered Purchase Committee (HPPC), Departmental High Powered Purchase Committee (DHPPC), and High Powered Works Purchase Committee (HPWPC) held under the chairmanship of Haryana Chief Minister Sh Nayab Singh Saini here today, contracts and purchases of goods worth over Rs 1640 crore were

approved. Notably, approxi-

mately Rs 61 crore was saved

various bidders. Cabinet Ministers Krishan Lal Panwar, Rao Narbir Singh, Dr. Arvind Sharma, Shyam Singh Rana, Ranbir Gangwa, and Shruti Chaudhary, along with Minister of State Rajesh Nagar were present at the meeting. In addition, Cabinet Minister Vipul Goyal participated via video con-

ferencing. Sanitation system to be strengthened in villages: To strengthen the sanitation system in rural areas, the state government has approved the provision of hopper tipper dumpers to Mahagrams and Gram Panchayats with a population of over 7,500. A total of 298 hopper tipper dumpers will be procured at an estimated cost of Rs 19 crore, enabling Panchayats to manage waste independently at the village level.

In addition, approval was granted for the purchase of books for libraries being established in villages. These books have been carefully selected to cater to the needs of rural youth and include publications from competitive exam preparation.

The initiative aims to create a conducive educational environment within villages. Further

and CCTV equipment for the e-libraries, as well as the procurement of 4,500 laptops for use by Gram Sachivs and CPLOs. These will cost about Rs 31.50 crore. In the meeting, approval was granted for the construction of a Government Model Senior Secondary School at Mandi Dabwali in District Sirsa, at an estimated cost of Rs 11 crore. Also, the purchase of 1,415 computers for cluster schools was approved, with a

total expenditure of Rs 6.79 crore.

approvals include the purchase

of computer systems, Wi-Fi,

through rate negotiations with Approval was also given for the construction of the Zila Parishad Vikas Bhawan in Gurugram, with a cost of Rs 61 crore. Approval granted for strengthening of roads: In the meeting, approval was granted for the strengthening of three key road projects: the 24-km Dadri-Bond road, the 18-km Dadri-Chidva road, and the 20km Assandh-Sirsal road. These projects will be undertaken at an

estimated cost of Rs 78 crore. The Chief Minister said that there should be no compromise on quality and directed that all works must be completed within the stipulated timeframe. Additionally, approval was given for the remaining construction work of the Civil Hospital building in Ambala Cantt, which involves expanding capacity from 100 beds to 200 beds.

The committee also approved the purchase of testing kits for soil testing laboratories, aimed at assessing soil health, at an estimated cost of Rs 8 crore. Additionally, special repair works were sanctioned for Shaheed Hasan Khan Mewati Governleading publishers focused on ment Medical College, Nalhar. These include road repairs,

public health improvements, electrical services, fire-fighting systems, and HVAC upgrades, with a total cost of approximately Rs 12 crore

Furthermore, the insurance agency was finalized under the Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Samuhik Pashudhan Bima Yojana. Several power infrastructure improvement projects were also approved for implementation in the districts of Yamunanagar, Ambala, and Panchkula. projects **GMDA**

approved: The meeting also approved the installation, integration, commissioning, operation, and maintenance of the Phase-2 CCTV-based Public Safety and Traffic Management System in the city. Under this phase, 2,700 cameras will be installed at an estimated cost of Rs 110 crore. Additionally, approval was granted for the construction and commissioning of a 66/6.6 kV substation at the Water Treatment Plant in Chandu Budhera, Gurugram, as well as the construction of footpaths and cycle tracks along Sector Dividing Roads 58/61 and 59/61 in Gurugram. These works will be carried out at a total cost of Rs 14.70 crore.

Furthermore, under the Faridabad Metropolitan Development Authority (FMDA), approval was given for the installation, integration, commissioning, operation, and maintenance of Phase-2 of the CCTV-based Public Safety and Traffic Management System in Faridabad, with an estimated cost of Rs 58 crore.

In the meeting, approval was granted for the construction of water supply, sewerage system, rainwater drainage, and footpaths in Transport Nagar, Sector-21. Palwal under the Mukhyamantri Shahri Awas Yojana (MMSAY). This project will be undertaken at an estimated cost of Rs 14 crore. Additionally, under the MMSAY scheme, various infrastructure works such as road construction, water supply, sewerage, and rainwater drainage systems were also approved at the Ashiana Site, Sector-18, Rewari, with an estimated cost Sara Ali Khan says she can now call herself a 'Anurag Basu heroine



come true' for actress Sara Ali Khan, who has been a fan of filmmaker Anurag Basu and the 2007 film Life In A...Metro", said she can now call herself an 'Anurag Basu heroine" after featuring in the second installment.

Sara took to Instagram, where she shared a video from the trailer launch of Metro...In Dino." It also featured some glimpses from the trailer of the upcoming film, which is slated to release on July 4.

For the caption, an ecstatic Sara wrote: "From watching and loving Metro to now featuring in it. Dreams really do come true. I've been an Anurag Basu fan- now I can say I'm an Anurag Basu heroine

The trailer of the musical film was unveiled on June 4 and showcased a riveting tale of four different aged couples. As per the trailer, the premise of the film is largely similar to its predecessor. It showcases the lives of 4 couples and how they cope with the highs and lows that come their

The film features Anuoam Kher, Pankaj Tripathi, Konkona Sen Sharma, Aditya Roy Kapur, Sara Ali Khan, Fatima Sana Shaikh, Ali Fazal, and Neena Gupta.

Earlier, the first song from the film 'Zamaana Lage' was unveiled in the city in the presence of its starcast, Anurag Basu, musical legend Pritam, producer Bhushan Kumar of T-Series, and singers like Shashwat Singh, Papon and Raghav Chaitanya.

