REGION

THOSE WHO SOUGHT VOTES IN THE NAME OF PANTH, FAILED TO TALK ABOUT PUNJAB IN **PARLIAMENT: CM MANN**

CORPORATES & INDUSTRY

MSME INDUSTRIES WILL PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN DEVELOPED **INDIA-2047 MISSION: FINMIN NIRMALA SITHARAMAN**



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HONEY SINGH CELEBRATES RAKSHA BANDHAN IN BIRMINGHAM

Punjab Government committed to completing NHAI **projects** says Cabinet Minister Harbhajan Singh

CHANDIGARH: Cabinet Minister for Public Works and Power, Punjab, Harbhajan Singh, has stated that the Punjab Government is committed to completing the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) projects. For this, Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann has held meetings at his level also and all issues will be resolved soon. He dismissed the notion that there is a problem with land acquisition in the state. He assured that the relevant lands will be acquired and handed over to NHAI soon.

Today, he made a surprise visit to Government Senior Secondary Smart School Janer, Government Primary School Patti Roopa and Government Primary School Moga-1. He had a Mid Day Meal with

Centre launches online

National Medical

Register to boost

quality healthcare



school students. On this occa- been built in Moga city alone. sion, MLA Dr. Amandeep Kaur Arora, MLA Amritpal Singh Sukhanand, MLA Manjeet Singh Bilaspur, MLA Davinderjit Singh Laddi Dhos, Deputy Commissioner Vishesh Sarangal, and others were present.

While talking to journalists,

Harbhajan Singh said that the Puntop priority is to bring reforms in the education sector. Emphasis is being laid on strengthening the basic infrastructure of education for the better future of the state. He said that three

new schools have These schools were in a very poor condition earlier. But due to the farsighted thinking of Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, an effort is being made to revamp every school. He said that the Punjab Government wants the teachers of the state's schools

the children, which is why the principals of government schools are being sent for training in other countries. If the school heads are good, then the school results will also be good. He said that education is being made employment-oriented. Children are being encouraged towards technical education. That's why Schools of Eminence are being opened in the state. In these schools, the interests of bright children are being explored and they are being provided with suitable education so that they can choose their field/profession according to their interest. He said that the purpose of his visit is to know the needs of the school and to make efforts to fulfill them. He expressed satisfaction with the performance of the schools.

ICRA Predicts Slower GDP Growth for India factors, including a



NEW DELHI: India's economic growth is expected to decelerate to a six-quarter low in the first quarter of fiscal year 2025, according to a recent report by rating agency ICRA. The agency forecasts year

on-year GDP expansion to fall to 6.0 per cent in Q1 FY2025, down from 7.8 per cent in the previous quarter.

This projection stands in contrast to the Reserve Bank of India>s more optimistic forecast of 7.1 per cent growth for the same period.

ICRA attributes the slow-

a decline in urban consumer confidence. Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist

and Head of Research & Outreach, ICRA, noted, «Lower volume growth combined with diminishing gains from commodity prices weighed upon the profitability of some of the industrial sectors.» The report highlights temporary lulls in certain sectors due to the Parliamentary elections and sluggish government capital expenditure at both central and state levels.

Additionally, urban consumer confidence showed an unexpected downturn in May and July

2024, according to the RBIss Consumer Confidence Survey.

ICRA also points to the lingering effects of last years unfavourable monsoon and an uneven start to the 2024 monsoon as factors preventing broader improvement in rural sentiment.

The agency projects gross value added (GVA) growth to ease to 5.7 per cent in Q1 FY2025 from 6.3% in the previ-

This decline is expected to be driven by the industrial sector, with a mild easing in services expansion and a slight uptick in agricultural GVA growth.

The gap between GDP and GVA growth is anticipated to narrow to 30 basis points in Q1 FY2025, compared to 148 basis points in the previous quarter.

This reduction is attributed to an expected lower expansion in net indirect taxes due to changes in government subsidy outgo.

CBI submits status report in SC in Kolkata doctor rape-murder case



Thursday, submitted its status report to the Supreme Court on the progress of the investigation into the rape and murder of a woman doctor in state-run R.G Kar Medical College & Hospital in Kolkata, and as per sources the agency has found several missing links.

The apex court's division bench headed by the Chief Justice of India (CJI) D.Y. Chandrachud is hearing the matter. This is the second hearing at the CJI's division bench in the matter and all eyes now are on the proceedings at the division bench.

Sources said the first missng link is the substantial gap between the time of the discovery of the body at the seminar hall of the hospital building on the morning of August 9 and that of intimation to the local police station about the

tragedy. Sources said that the investigating Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officials are trying to figure out why the hospital authorities, especially, the former and controversial R.G. Principal Sandip Ghosh took so much time to inform the police after the discovery of the body. The CBI has been interrogating Dr Ghosh to join the dots since last Friday. The questioning has been going on

On Thursday also, Dr Ghosh appeared for interrogation at the CBI's Salt Lake office in the northern outskirts of Kolkata. This was the seventh consecutive day of his

The second missing lin the exact person who first spotted the body of the victim at the seminar hall on the morning of August 9.

interrogating several medical and non-medical staff of R.G. Kar Medical College & Damp; Hospital, the investigating officials are yet to identify the individual who first spotted the body. Contradictory statements have been given

Sources said that the investigating official believed that once the individual, who spotted the body first is zeroed in, answers for many unanswered queries in the matter will be

tor was found in mysterious circumstances on the hospital premises on August 9.

Keeping holy scriptures of Guru Granth Sahib confiscated, big disrespect by Doha Police: Dhami



NEW DELHI: In a bid to strengthen the digital healthcare ecosystem, the government on Friday launched National Medical Register (NMR) portal that will be a comprehensive and dynamic database for all allopathic (MBBS) registered doctors in the country.

Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, J.P. Nadda, inaugurated the NMR Portal of the National Medical Commission (NMC), in presence of Union Ministers of State (MoS) Anupriya Patel and Prataprao Jadhav (in virtual mode), in the national capital. Prime Minister Naren sion is to make India digitally sound and that can happen if the health ecosystem is also "digitally sturdy". The NMR is linked with the Aadhaar ID of the doctors which ensures the individual's authenticity. "The National Health Register is a much-awaited step in this direction that will strengthen the digital healthcare ecosystem and will ensure quality healthcare to the people," the minister said. The online register will be upgraded and augmented with continuous improvements in the registration process on the portal. Highlighting the role of the state medical councils (SMCs), Minister Nadda stated that SMCs are major stakeholders in the development and maintaining of National Medical Register and facilitating the registration process.

great disrespect to the Sikh AMRITSAR: The Shiromani In the light of the order by

Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President Advocate Harjinder Singh Dhami, taking strong notice of the confiscation of two holy scriptures of Guru Granth Sahib by the local police in Doha, Qatar, requested the External Affairs Minister (EAM) of India and the Indian Ambassador to Qatar to immediately intervene in this matter. Expressing strong objection, the SGPC President said that respect for Sri Guru Granth Sahib is above all for the Sikh community and keeping the holy scriptures

Congress and National Confer-

ence on Thursday announced

their decision to form a pre-poll

alliance in Jammu and Kashmir.

The announcement followed

after senior Congress leaders

Mallikarjun Kharge and Ra-

hul Gandhi met with National

Conference (NC) president Dr.

Farooq Abdullah and vice-presi-

dent Omar Abdullah in Srinagar.

the alliance, which also includes

CPI(M) leader MY Tarigami,

has finalized its seat-sharing

arrangement for all 90 seats

in the Jammu and Kashmir

Assembly. He emphasized the

need to restore full statehood to

Jammu and Kashmir, a priority

will work successfully. The

people of J&K have suffered

"The alliance is on track and

for the coalition.



cated at the police station is a big disrespect, which cannot be tolerated. This matter was recently brought to the attention of the Jathedar Sri Akal Takht Sahib by United Kingdom based Sikh organization Bhai Kanhaiya Humanitarian of Guru Granth Sahib confis- Aid, who directed SGPC to administration which is a

Congress and National Conference forge Pre-Poll

government for years. We are

committed to restoring state-

hood with all powers," Dr.

Abdullah said after the meeting.

party workers in Srinagar, reiter-

ated the Congress party's com-

mitment to restoring statehood

to Jammu and Kashmir. He

highlighted the importance of

the upcoming election, the first

since the abrogation of Article

Rahul Gandhi, speaking to

Alliance for Jammu and Kashmir Assembly polls

the Jathedar of Sri Akal Takht Sahib, the SGPC has also written letters to the External Affairs Minister of India and the Indian Ambassador in Doha, Qatar. Advocate Dhami said that regarding this matter, it was brought to the notice of Bhai Kanhaiya Humanitarian Aid that a Sikh was arrested by Doha Police in Qatar in December 2023, who was later released, but two holy scriptures of Guru Granth Sahib taken from him are still kept in Al Wakara police station by Doha Police

Guru (master). He said that the Sikh who was arrested and later released in Doha, used to practice the Sikh faith privately along with local community members in the Gurdwara Sahib established in his private property at Birkat Al-Awamer without any public display, due to strict restrictions of Qatar Government on the non-Islamic faiths public worship, etc. Meanwhile, the holy scriptures of Guru Granth Sahib which were taken from his property and kept at Al Wakara Police Station in Doha, are still present there.

Doctor's Gang-Rape & **Murder: Striking Doc**tors Steer Stir to Public Domain in next phase

JAGMOHAN SINGH

Striking Doctors decided to steer their ongoing stir into public domain, in next phase with <Lok-Raj> and <Global Healers> Organisations (NGOs) calling for public protests by hoisting «blackflags» at all health hospitals, by holding joint «doctors-public protests» at all health institutions, to take their struggle for «security and justice» to logical conclusion.

Dr. Manjit Singh Randhawa,

Amritsar

President of <> Global Healers> and <Lok-Raj> organisation, while addressing the protesting doctors at Guru Nanak Hospital here today, assured to «fight to finish» in public domain to establish <Rule of Law> based on «Truth and Justice.»

Anti-Sikh film Emergency should be banned immediately: Jathedar Akal Takht

FIR should be registered against Kangana Ranaut -Dhami

JAGMOHAN SINGH

Akal Takht the highest Sikh temporal seat Jathedar Gyani Raghbir Singh and the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) President Harjinder Singh Dhami have demanded an immediate ban on the film 'Emergency', which portrays the character of Sikhs in a wrong way. They said that this film has been made by actress Kangana Ranaut, who remains in controversy due to her anti-Sikh and anti-Punjab expressions, with the intention of deliberately character assassinating Sikhs, which the Sikh community cannot tolerate.

Jathedar Akal Takht and of June 1984, this is a despicable act of disrespecting the community. They said that the community can never forget the anti-Sikh brutality of June 1984 and Sant Jarnail Singh Khalsa Bhindranwale has been declared a Qaumi Shaheed (community's martyr) by Sri Akal Takht Sahib, while Kangana Ranaut's film is trying to character assassinate him. He said that Kangana Ranaut has often deliberately made expressions that provoke the sentiments of Sikhs, but instead of taking action against her, the government is protecting her. He said that the government should file a case against Kangana Ranaut for inciting religious sentiments of Sikhs for her act through the film Emergency.



they said that it is clear from the released excerpts of the Emergency film that it has deliberately misrepresented the character of Sikhs as separatists, which is part of a deep conspiracy. They said that on the one

hand, the release of the film 'Punjab '95', made on the life SGPC president Dhmai said of human rights Sikh activist was not approved even after 85 cuts, while this Emergency film presenting false facts about Sikh community has been given clearance immediately. He said these double standards are not in the interest of the country, so the government needs to seriously discuss this issue.

Dhami said that there have been many such cases related to films in the past when Sikh sentiments have been hurt due to misrepresentation of Sikh characters and religious concerns of Sikhs. He demanded an immediate ban on the Emergency film of Kangana Ranaut from Union Minister of Information and Broadcasting Shri Ashwini Vaishnav, and said that it should be ensured from now on that no film with anti-Sikh sentiments is released.

for marathon 12 to 14 hours almost every day. that by creating an anti-Sikh Bhai Jaswant Singh Khalra, interrogation on Thursday.

appearance. The CBI has also summoned Ghosh's driver for

Sources said that even after

by those being interrogated.

The body of a woman doc-

CBDT Chairman Announces Comprehensive Review of Income Tax Act, 1961

Dr. Abdullah confirmed that immensely without an elected

NEW DELHI: In a significant development for India's taxation landscape, Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) Chairman Ravi Agrawal has unveiled plans for a comprehensive review of the Income Tax Act, 1961.

during an event marking 165 years of income tax in India, aims to simplify the law, improve compliance, and expedite the appeals process. At the heart of this reform

This initiative, announced

is the formation of an internal committee comprised of income tax officials from across the country. This panel has been tasked with the crucial role of identifying areas for improvement in the existing law, ensuring that the review process is thorough and inclusive

A key focus of the committee will be to study and potentially adopt international taxation practices. This move towards incorporating global best prac-



dia's tax framework, bringing it in line with world standards and potentially making it more

competitive on the global stage. The review process will also target the elimination of redundancies within the current Act. Outdated clauses and those that have reached their sunset will be removed, streamlining the law and making it more relevant to current economic realities. This pruning of obsolete elements is expected to significantly simplify

Simplification for taxpayers is a central goal of this review. By making the law more concise and easier to understand, the CBDT hopes to reduce disputes and litigation, compliance and a smoother tax collection process.

potentially leading to greater In a move to address immediate concerns, Agrawal has

promised to deploy additional

officers within the next 10-15

days to clear the substantial

backlog of pending appeals at the department level. This step aims to expedite the appeals process, providing quicker resolution to taxpayers' issues.

370, in giving the people of Jam-

mu and Kashmir and Ladakh

Congress President Mal-

their democratic rights back.

likariun Kharge expressed

confidence in the alliance's

prospects, expecting the Con-

gress to secure 40 to 45 seats in

the elections. He assured the

people of Jammu and Kashmir

that the Congress would work

to protect their land, forests.

and other rights.

This comprehensive review aligns with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's announcement in the Budget 2024-25, where she called for an overhaul of the Income Tax Act. The minister has set an am-

bitious six-month deadline for this task, emphasising the need for clarity and simplicity in tax communications to encourage compliance. The Income Tax Act, which

has been in effect since 1961 and contains 298 sections across 23 chapters, has long been criticized for its complexity. This review represents

a significant step towards modernising India's direct tax framework and potentially easing the burden on taxpayers.

PM greets nation on 1st National Space Day, lauds India's space scientists

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday greeted the nation on the maiden National Space Day to celebrate the achievements of Chandrayaan 3, which scripted history in 2023 by becoming the first to land on the South Pole of the Moon.

"Greetings to everyone on the first National Space Day," PM Modi said in a post on X.com.

The Prime Minister also lauded the efforts of the nation's space scientists. "We recall with great pride

our nation's achievements in the space sector. It is also a day to laud the contributions of our space scientists," he said. PM Modi also said the gov-

ernment has taken several measures to boost the space "Our Government has taken

a series of futuristic decisions

will do even more in the times to come, "he said. Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft

consisted of a propulsion module (weighing 2, 148 kg), a lander named Vikram (1, 723.89 kg), and a rover named Pragyan (26 kg).

It landed near the South Pole of the Moon on August 23 after travelling about 3.84



cess, India also became the

fourth nation after the erst-

while USSR (now Russia), the

landing on the Moon.

ing Lives while Touching the Moon: India's Space Saga. On the occasion, ISRO Chairman Dr S. Somnath said that besides commemorating

The theme for the first Na-

tional Space Day is: "Touch-

the day would also "outline future space initiatives during the Amritkal era". Meanwhile, India is expected to send an Indian to Space by the second half of

the success of Chandrayaan-3,

2025 and also land the first Indian on the Moon by 2040 Gaganyaan -- India's first human spaceflight mission

US, and China to make a soft which got delayed due to Covid, is also expected to take National Space Day is being flight next year. In addition, celebrated nationwide, involv-India is also aiming to send ing departments, ministries, "robot flights, where a female educational institutions, scirobot, Vayumitra, will be sent ence organisations, NGOs, and to space in 2025".

Those who sought votes in the name of Panth, failed to talk about Punjab in Parliament : CM Mann

BJP should introspect its governance in UP and Haryana rathar than teaching us on law and order

JAGMOHAN SINGH

Baba Bakala (Amritsar)

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann on Monday lashed out at the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) for not addressing Punjab-specific issues in Parliament ever despite seeking votes in the name of Panth always.

Presiding over a state-level function to mark the Rakhar Puniya Festival, he pointed out that the SAD party, claiming to be panthic and pro-Punjab. had never raised issues related to Punjab in Parliament. Citing an instance from December 26, 2018, when he, as a Lok Sabha member from Sangrur, had appealed to the then Lok Sabha Speaker Sumitra Mahajan to pay homage to the younger sons of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji on their martyrdom day. Bhagwant Singh Mann said that Lok Sabha Speaker had agreed, and for the first time in the history of the Parliament, rich tributes were paid to the

Sahibzadas on their martyr-

Bharat Bandh against

SC's reservation ruling

fails to evoke response



these leaders had gone to po-

litical oblivion. He remarked

that the people of Punjab had

taught a lesson to these leaders,

emphasizing that there was no

place for nepotism in politics,

and only politicians who raise

the voice of the common people

Furthermore, Mann prom-

ised further improvements

in the education and health

sectors, aiming to provide

state-of-the-art infrastructure

in government schools and

The Chief Minister said that

842 Aam Aadmi Clinics have

already been established by the

government which have treat-

ed more than 2 crore people

and 95-percent of them are

now healthy. He said that as

could come to power.

The Chief Minister bemoaned that the SAD had never made any efforts to pay respects to the Sahibzadas in Parliament despite claiming to be panthic and pro-Punjab.

Mann criticized the BJP, advising the party to introspect its own governance in states like Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, where curfews were imposed during religious festivals, highlighting the deteriorating law and order situation. He also mentioned about the recent curfew in Nuh district of Haryana.

Taking a dig at the opposition leaders like Senior Congress leader Partap Singh Bajwa and BJP state Chief Sunil Jakhar, the Chief Minister said that following the massive defeat in are being set up with which people will get better health facilities near their homes. On the occasion of the Rakhi

festival, the Chief Minister congratulated women and stated that the government is taking multiple initiatives to empower women. He mentioned that the state government has worked to implement the principle of equality by appointing women officers as senior superintendents of police (SSPs) in six districts and women deputy commissioners in eight districts. Additionally, he announced that girls will be recruited as firefighters for the first time, making Punjab the first state to take this step.

The Chief Minister expressed objection to the funds being withheld by the Centre, stating that Punjab does not beg from the Centre but demands are its rights. He emphasized that Punjab collects and deposits the GST with the Centre and expects its share, and that the Centre does not do any favor to the state.

On the occasion of Rakhar Punya, Mann paid obeisance at the historical Gurdwara Nauvi many as 30 more such clinics prosperity of all.

Will never compromise the interests of Khalsa Panth: Sukhbir Badal

I will always strive for development of Punjab says Badal

JAGMOHANSINGH Baba Bakala (Amritsar)

ment of Punjab.

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Singh Badal today announced that he would never compromise with the principles of the Khalsa Panth and would always strive for the develop-

Addressing a gathering at the historic Rakhar Punia Mela here, the SAD president appealed to the Panth (Sikh community) to recognize the betrayers in their midst, saying "these people are in league with agencies who want to weaken the SAD as well as Sikh institutions"

Asking the community to

recognize the threat from both within and outside, Sukhbir Badal said the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) was broken and a separate Gurdwara Committee was formed for Haryana under a well-planned design. "Now we have also witnessed how the RSS and the BJP have taken over the Sri Hazur Sahib Committee

listan Liberation Force.

The DGP added that the

efforts of the police led to the

issuance of the Look Out Cir-

cular and Red Corner Notice

The extradition process was

started in 2018 under a Mutual

Legal Assistance Treaty with

the Hong Kong government.

presentation of evidence to

Hong Kong's Department

of Justice and courts led to

Kong for his involvement in a

Rs 30-crore robbery in Febru-

Romy was arrested in Hong

Romy's extradition.

Yadav said that the robust

Management Committee. If we do not stop this attack on our institutions we will have only ourselves to blame".

The SAD president also spoke eloquently on how seventeen instances of sacrilege had occurred during Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) tenure in Punjab but chief minister Bhagwant Mann had never spoken out against them and the government had even failed to nab the culprits behind these heinous acts. He also detailed how the chief minister had himself violated the sanctity of a shrine in Sultanpur Lodhi by ordering the police to take control of it.

Badal also spoke on how Punjab had gone down in all spheres during the last seven and a half years of Congress and AAP rule. "Both the added.

promises but failed to waive debts of farmers or free the State of drugs". He said no development had occurred in the last more than seven years. "All development you see happened during the SAD tenure of Parkash Singh Badal be it creation of expressways, thermal plants which made the State power surplus, airports or novel social welfare schemes like atta – daal, shagun and SC scholarships.

He said the SC Scholarship scheme had led to provision of free education to 3.5 lakh

rent legislators.

Dalit students annually during SAD tenure. "Repeated scams and mismanagement has made this figure come down to less than one lakh

Haryana Assembly Elections: Over 30 Sitting MLAs Face **Uncertainty as Anti-Incum**bency Looms Large

TARUN BHAJNI Chandigarh



Assembly elections, a wave of uncertainty grips the political landscape as more than 30 sitting MLAs find themselves at risk of losing their party tickets. This unsettling development emerges from internal surveys conducted by both the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress, revealing significant anti-incumbency sentiments against many cur-

Among those facing the possibility of losing their tickets, over 20 MLAs are from the BJP, and more than 12 are from the Congress. The surveys have highlighted growing dissatisfaction among voters in several constituencies, prompting both parties to consider fresh faces who may stand a better chance of securing victory in the upcomng elections.

The findings from these surveys have been dispatched to the high command of both parties, who are now tasked with making critical decisions on candidate selection. The BJP has been particularly resolute, making it clear that MLAs who have underperformed or are battling strong anti-incumbency sentiments will be replaced with new, more promising candidates. This move is part of a broader strategy to revitalize the party's image and boost its chances in key constituencies.

Similarly, the Congress is facing a dilemma with around 10 of its MLAs, many of whom are senior leaders with multiple terms in office. These legislators have been criticized for their lack of activity in their constituencies over the past five years, raising questions about their effectiveness in representing their constituents. The Congress is reportedly preparing to introduce younger, more dynamic candidates in these areas, aiming to rejuvenate its appeal among

The ticket distribution process is being meticulously planned, with party leaderships relying not only on the performance of MLAs during the recent Lok Sabha elections. A report card is being prepared based on the votes received in these elections, serving as a key metric in determining the fate of sitting MLAs. In constituencies where the party performed well in the Lok Šabha elections, the incumbent MLA's ticket is likely secure. However, in areas where the party's performance was lackluster. there is increased scrutiny, and changes are expected.

Adding to the pressure, the BJP has introduced a new rule mandating that any office-bearer applying for an assembly ticket must first resign from their current

Mastermind of 2016 Nabha jailbreak



CHANDIGARH: The pan-India shutdown on Wednesday to oppose the Supreme Court ruling on the sub-classification of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) failed to evoke a response across Punjab and Haryana as life was not disrupted, except a few places in Punjab. Likewise, the situation was almost normal

in Chandigarh. Banking services and operation of educational institutions and business establishments were normal, although heavy security personnel were deployed in Punjab's SCdominated Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur districts that were

Traffic across Punjab and want Singh Mann on Tuesday Haryana was plying normally and there was no report of activists of political parties squatting on national high-

ways and rail tracks. There was no report of any untoward incident from anywhere in these two states. Emergency medical services were exempted from the blockade.

In Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur districts of AAP-ruled Punjab, the activists were seen asking traders to keep their shops and business establishments closed in support of the protest. Reports of partial shutdown of shops and other establishments were received from Hoshiarpur, Jalandhar and other places.

Sufficient security arrangements were made in Punjab to prevent any untoward incident, a senior police officer

Punjab lodged in same prison **CHANDIGARH:** The fugitive Singh Mintu and Kashmir Singh Galwaddi of the Kha-

of the 2016 Nabha jailbreak in Punjab, Ramanjit Singh, also known as Romy, was sent to a 14-day judicial custody by a local court on Friday. He was lodged in the same highsecurity jail that he was blamed as being the mastermind of the attack by armed men in which six wanted criminals, including two terrorists, escaped.

Romy was extradited by authorities on Thursday from Hong Kong in an operation coordinated by the CBI and Punjab Police's Anti-Gangster Task Force (AGTF).

In the early hours of Friday he was produced in the court

paid homage at Takhat Sri

Huzoor Sahib, Nanded and

prayed for the progress and

development of the state and

The Chief Minister pointed

out that the Holy Takhat Sri

Huzoor Sahib was one of the

five highest seats of religious

authority in Sikh religion from

where the community gets its

spiritual, temporal and moral

strength, the other four being

Sri Akal Takhat Sahib(Am-

ritsar), Takhat Sri Keshgarh

Sahib (Sri Ananadpur Sahib),

Takhat Sri Damdama Sahib

(Talwandi Sabo) and Takhat

Sri Patna Sahib in Bihar. He

said that Dashmesh Pitaah

Guru Gobind Singh Ji, who

had made unparalleled con-

age-old traditions of secular-

prosperity of its people.

dicial custody for 14 days, said officials. He was also taken to the Civil Hospital in Nabha in Patiala district for exami-

Sahib prayed for development & prosperity

sacrificing everything includ-

ing even his own family, had

spent a long time of his life on

this sacred land. Bhagwant

Singh Mann said that he was

blessed to have got the op-

portunity to pay reverence at

this holy land blessed by the

blessings of almighty to give

serving the people of state with

The Chief Minister sought

Thursday said after continuous efforts by the police, Romy was brought back to India to face trial.

Punjab Director General of the ISI and other escaped pris-Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav on oners, including Harminder

Romy was in contact with

commitment of his government

to serve the people of the state

regardless of caste, colour, creed

and religion to create a harmo-

nious society. Bhagwant Singh

Mann thanked the Almighty

for bestowing upon him the

responsibility to serve the people

of Punjab with sincerity, dedica-

tion and commitment to fulfill

Meanwhile, the Chief Minis-

ter said that he will be meeting

eminent industrialists and bol-

lywood stars during his Mumbai

their aspirations.

Bhagwant Mann pays obeisance at Sri Huzoor Strict action will be taken as per rules against those who violate the Model



GULSHAN KUMAR Yamunanagar

Deputy Commissioner and District Election Officer Captain Manoj Kumar said that the Election Commission has announced the Assembly General Elections-2024 in Haryana. With the announcement of the election, the Model Code of Conduct came into force in the district. In such a situation, an appeal is made to the representatives of all political parties to follow the Model Code of Conduct to conduct the elections in all the four assembly constituencies in the district in a peaceful and fair manner. No person should violate the Model Code of Conduct. Strict action will be taken as per rules against those who violate the code of conduct. Apart from this, the Deputy Commissioner has also instructed the officers and employees not to be negligent at any level in their duty.

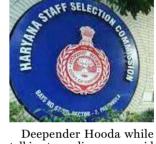
Regarding the schedule released by the Election Commission, District Election Officer Captain Manoj Kumar said that voting for all 90 assembly constituencies in Harvana will be held on October 1 and counting of votes will be done on October 4. He said that notification related to the election will be issued on Thursday, September 5 and nominations will be done till September 12. He said that scrutiny and sorting of nomination papers will be done on September 13, while candidates will be able to withdraw their nominations on Monday, September 16.

44 fake HSSC sites with logo operating illegally allegedly by Youtubers **SATISH HANDA**

Chandigarh

On the complaint of Chairman Haryana Staff Selection Commission (HSSC) Himmat Singh to the Director General Police (DGP) Haryana as regard nearly 44 fake sites operating on social media along with logo illegally by the Youtubers offering government jobs and cheating large number of youths, DGP Harvana has directed SPs and Cyber Crime Cells of all districts in the state to take stern action against the cheaters spreading wrong information on internet using HSSC logo illegally as regard recruitments in government offices in the state.

Calling it one of the biggest recruitment scam in the country, Rohtak MP Deepender Hooda has given the government a 15-day ultimatum for ordering a courtployed youths in their fraud net. According to the HSSC chairman, preliminary investigation reveals that some of operated by the employees as well as their relatives. Crime department of police has already started action in this regard and has already identified a fake youtuber in Hisar operating a fake chanjobs using the HSSC fake logo and cheating unemployed youths. Meanwhile, Hooda said if the state government does not announce a CBI inquiry and if it fails to reveal names of the culprits, a mass Yuva Aakrosh Rally' would be organised in the state.



talking to media persons said the youth of Haryana are facing the highest unemployment rate in the country at present, and according to the reports of CMIE every month and NITI Aayog of the Government of India every year, it is clear that Haryana has the highest unemployment in India. He said, there are frequent paper leak scams reported in the state in the past few years when BJP government ruling.

"The government, which claims to be honest, has been monitored CBI probe in the exposed by bundles of notes scam which has trapped and blank answer sheets. In the matter of employment both the Haryana Public Service Commission and the Haryana Staff Selection Commission have the same these fake channels are being formula," he alleged that the rates for each paper were fixed Rs 35 to 40 lakh for dental surgeons, Rs 20 lakh for staff nurses and Rs 10 lakh for ANMs. Deepender said till 2014. Harvana was at the forefront of per capita nel on the internet offering income and per capita investment, but today our unemployment rate is four times the average unemployment of the country. He said, the youth who are facing the highest unemployment in the country are being hit by the biggest recruitment

Bhupinder Hooda should know that Punjabis were not displaced, they moved from India to India: Vij

It was because of the mindset of people like Hooda that Punjabis were hurt and they made their own countrymen refugees and should be prosecuted and punished for using word displaced says Anil Vij

PARVESH HANDA Ambala

Former Home Minister of Haryana, Anil Vij hit back at opposition leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda and said that «Bhupinder Singh Hooda should know that Punjabis were not displaced, they moved from India to India.» He said that Punjabis were hurt because of the mindset of people like Hooda, who made their own countrymen refugees. Advising Hooda, Vij said, he needs to change your mindset, even after 70 years, still calling these people displaced because he does not want to accept them, he added. Vij was responding to a question asked by media persons re-



garding Hooda>s statement about establishing a Punjabi Displaced Welfare Board if his government came into power.

Expressing his anger towards Hooda, Vij raised a question: «You want to label those (Punjabis) whose generations were born on this land as second-class (do darze) citizens by calling them displaced.» He further stated that Hooda should be prosecuted and punished for using this term displaced.

On Hooda>s remarks about corruption and hooliganism in the BJP government, Vij retorted: «Hooda is absolutely right that the Congress ran the state on the track of corrup-

tion for 10 years, but we have derailed the state from that track.» He mentioned that during the Congress tenure, jobs were sold through bids and transfer markets flourished. «The railway line of corruption built by them (Congress) has been dismantled by s,» he said.

On a statement by Randeep Surjewala regarding defeating Vinesh Phogat, Vij questioned Surjewala, «Tell us, where has the BJP engaged in hooliganism? Where and when has a case been registered against a BJP leader? And if I start listing the cases registered against Congress leaders, it will take all the time.» He sarcastically remarked that «Goons are nurtured within Congress and Congress provides them protection. No goons are nurtured within the BJP, they are kicked out in a minute.» He added, «Goons exist in Congress, there are no goons in the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Administrative reshuffle in Haryana: Congress accuses BJP govt for violating poll code Ashok Mehta a former state

tributions for upholding the enormous strength to him for

ism besides safeguarding the all humility and dedication. He

human rights and ensuring re- offered prayers at Gurdwara

ligious independence thereby sahib and reiterated the firm

PARVESH HANDA

In a complaint to the principal secretary Election Commission, Congress alleged the state government issued a large number of transfer orders on August 16 evening after the announcement for election schedule in the state. The Haryana Congress accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government of violating the model code of conduct by issuing transfer orders of 21 IAS, 12 IPS, 65 HCS and three HPS officers when the poll code came into effect.

In a complaint to principal secretary, Election Commission, party's chairman of legal department, KC Bhatia said the state government issued these transfer orders on



announcement for election schedule after the poll code fair play. came into effect, thus the orders are liable to be cancelled demanding effective steps and

cancel all the transfer orders

so that the sanctity of model

in the interest of justice and Large number of media

persons present at the occasion of the function organized by Punjabi Mahasabha led by its National President

information commissioner in which former CM Bhupinder Singh Hooda was present when raised a question about selection of contestants in assembly polls in Congress divided in groups, Hooda said there is no group in the party and when the names of the contestant to fight coming assembly polls will be released every Congress leader as well as worker will unite to push ruling BJP government out from the state. He said, it is natural, since everyone wants to contest and win polls when Congress wave is going on in Haryana. Hooda said, party>s high command has strictly decided to give tickets only to the winning candidates in present Vidhan Sabha polls in the state.

Amid uproar over RG Kar horror, Mamata writes SC sets aside Calcutta HC order advising adolescent girls to 'control sexual urges' to PM Modi seeking stringent anti-rape law

wide uproar over the ghastly rape and murder of a junior doctor at the R.G. Kar Medical College in Kolkata, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking exemplary punishment against those involved in such dastardly crimes

Confirming the development, Chief Advisor to Mamata Banerjee, Alapan Bandopadhyay, read out contents of the letter before mediapersons, which said the Chief Minister has suggested the setting up of special fasttrack courts for speedy trials in such cases.

"I wish to bring to your kind attention the regular and increasing occurrence of rape cases throughout the country and in many cases, rapes with murder are committed.

"According to the available data, it is horrifying to see that almost 90 cases of rapes occurring daily throughout

the country. This shakes the confidence and conscience of against the persons involved in such dastardly crimes. Setting the society and the nation. It is bounden duty for all of us to up of fast-track special courts for speedy trial in such cases put an end to it so that women feel safe and secure, "read the should also be considered in letter which was also uploaded the proposed legislation. To on the official X handle of the ensure quick justice, trial in Chief Minister. such cases should preferably be completed within 15 days,

"Such a serious and sensitive issue needs to be addressed in a comprehensive manner through stringent bruised body of the 31-year-old central legislation prescrib-

Medical College on the morning of August 9. The state authorities have drawn flak for the subsequent handling of the case, triggering massive protests and strikes by doctors and citizens across the country.

The Supreme Court, which took suo moto cognisance of the case, has set up a National Task Force to recommend steps to improve the working conditions for healthcare professional for ensuring their safety.

Earlier on Thursday, Trinamool Congress General Secretary and Mamata Banerjee's nephew Abhishek Banerjee gave a call to all the state governments to put pressure on the Centre to formulate a comprehensive anti-rape law to ensure speedy trial and justice.

He also claimed that the country needs stricter laws that mandate completion of trial and conviction within 50 days. followed by severe punishment

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Tuesday set aside a Calcutta High Court ruling, wherein adolescent girls were advised to "learn how to control their sexual urges'

A bench, headed by Justice Abhay S. Oka, pronounced its verdict in a suo moto proceedings initiated in the wake of "sweeping observations" made in the high court order, including on the appeal filed by the West Bengal government.

In December last year, the top court had exercised suo moto cognisance due to "highly objectionable and completely unwarranted" findings recorded by the Calcutta High Court suggesting "every female adolescent control sexual urge/urges as in the eyes of the society she is the loser when she gives in to enjoy the sexual pleasure of hardly

The observations were made by a division bench of the Calcutta High Court as it dealt with an appeal against conviction under Sections 363 and 366 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC),



Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) Act.

The bench of Justices Chitta Ranjan Das and Partha Sarathi Sen overturned an earlier order by a lower court sentencing a teenager to 20 years imprisonment for having sex with his romantic partner, who is also a minor. It acquitted the teenage boy after the minor girl, also a teenager, admitted that the physical relations were consensual since both had decided to marry each other at a later stage. She also admitted that neither she nor her romantic partner, both hailing from remote ru-

was the official age of sexual relationship as per Indian law.

"In the appeal against conviction, the High Court was called upon to adjudicate only on the merits of the appeal and nothing else. But we find that the High Court has discussed so many issues which were irrelevant. Prima facie, we are of the view that while writing a judgment in such an appeal, the Hon'ble Judges are not expected to express their personal views. They are not expected to preach, the Supreme Court had said. as it took suo moto cognisance

PM Modi's vision in spotlight as India marks **National Space Day**



memorates National Space Day this Friday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for space development and reforms takes centre stage, highlighting their pivotal role in the success of last year's Chandrayaan-3 mission. Leading scientists across the nation lauded the Prime Minister following the mission's achievement, and their interactions with PM Modi were both inspiring and indicative of deep contemplation in this direction.

The National Space Day commemorates India's landmark achievement as on August 23 last year, India became the fourth country in the world to land on the moon and the first to reach its southern polar region.

The theme for this year's National Space Day is "Touching Lives while Touching the Moon: India's Space Saga". ISRO Chairman S. Somanath in a video message said that the Prime Minister has strengthened the space ecosystem in the country through policy intervention. As a prime minister, he has undertaken many initiatives to reform the space sector. The National Space Policy was announced in which the roles and responsibilities of the Department of Space have been clearly delineated. Similarly, under the new foreign direct investment policy for the space sector, private and foreign investments are now allowed with certain controls and regulations which was not possible earlier, Somanath said.

First Phase of ₹10 Crore **Rehabilitation Project**

Wayanad Landslides:

JIH Kerala Announces

New Delhi:

Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH) Kerala, under the leadership of President P. Mujeeburahman, has launched the first phase of a comprehensive Rs 10 crore Rehabilitation Project aimed at the victims of the catastrophic Wayanad landslides. This initiative, part of JIH>s ongoing commitment to relief efforts, is grounded in a professional survey report and addresses the urgent ds of the affected commun During a press conference held at Hira Centre, the State Headquarters of the organization, Mujeeburahman announced that temporary shelters would be provided for dialysis patients, bedridden individuals, senior citizens, and other vulnerable groups until permanent residential facilities are arranged by the government. In addition to housing, the project includes provisions for

Massive paramilitary forces deployed in Kashmir Valley for upcoming VS polls



The Central government has significantly ramped up security measures throughout the Kashmir valley in view of the upcoming Assembly Elections in 2024. Nearly 300 paramilitary companies, including units from the CRPF, BSF, SSB, and ITBP, have been deployed to ensure a peaceful and orderly election process, given the region's history of political instability.

A senior police official noted that these forces have been strategically placed across various locations in the valley, from the bustling streets of Srinagar to the remote areas of Kupwara. Key districts such as Handwara, Ganderbal, Budgam, Baramulla, Bandipora, Anantnag, Shopian, Pulwama, Awantipora, and Kulgam are

The highest concentration of forces is in Srinagar, where 55 companies have been stationed. Anantnag follows with 50 companies, and Kulgam has 31 companies. Other districts, including Budgam, Pulwama, and Awantipora, have received 24 companies each, while Shopian, Kupwara, Baramulla, Handwara, Bandipora, and Ganderbal have been allocated varying numbers of companies to ensure balanced security coverage.

Fight to save Constitution still on: Kharge **KAVITA SHARMA**

jya Sabha.

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge today said that the fight to save the Constitution was still on and it was important that INDIA bloc wins maximum states to get adequate numbers in the Ra-

Addressing the Sadbhavna Sammelan to commemorate century the eightieth birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi here today, Kharge said, even after getting 415 seats, Rajiv Gandhi showed no arrogance.

He said, Gandhi transformed India and put it on the progressive path of development for the twenty-first erhouse.

Baneriee wrote.

The letter came days after the

Congress president pointed out the growth rate was over ten percent during Gandhi's time which was a record in itself. He said, the computerisation programme launched by Gandhi had borne the fruits and that is the reason India had become the software pow-

Similarly, he referred to Gandhi's revolutionary decision to bring down the voting age from 21 to 18 years.

He said, Gandhi had launched the universal vaccination programme among children way back in 1985 to ensure health for all.

Kharge said, Gandhi had brought the anti-defection law

to protect the elected governments. In stark contrast, he said, Modi was uprooting the elected governments. He pointed out how elected governments were stolen in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and other states.

Appealing people to vote for the Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi in the Assembly elections ahead, he said, the fight to save the constitution was not finished as yet.

He said, it was very important for the INDIA bloc to win the state elections as from there members to Rajya Sabha get elected. He said, once INDIA bloc has sufficient members in the RS Modi cannot change the constitution.

Kolkata doctor had

KOLKATA: The post-mortem report of the woman doctor of state-run R.G. Kar Medical College & Hospital in Kolkata, who was raped and murdered on August 9, has suggested that the body had 14 injuries. Sources said the report mentioned that all the injuries were antemortem. As per that multiple injuries were traced in different parts of the body including the head, cheeks, lips, nose, right jaw, chin, neck, left arm, left shoulder, left knee, ankle and inside genitalia. Haemorrhage was noted in the lungs, with blood clots in other parts of the body as well as a white thick viscid liquid present inside the genitalia. The findings of the report suggest that the death of the victim was due to the effect of manual strangulation associated with smothering with the

NEW DELHI: Prime Minis-

ter Narendra Modi on Monday celebrated the festival of Raksha Bandhan with many schoolchildren, who tied rakhis on his wrist and also shared a memorable and gratifying moment with him.

The school children not only tied rakhis to PM Modi but also engaged in a brief banter where some sought his suggestions on contributing in nation-building while others recited small poems and bhajan. PM Modi had a light-hearted conversation with many children, as the latter posed a series of questions ranging from his favourite colour to suggestions on staying fit.

In a video released by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), many school children could be Lok Kalyan Marg, with their eyes beaming and faces brimming

Many young girls from various schools arrived at PM's residence on Monday and tied the sacred thread on his wrist. A specially designed rakhi captured the attention of all, as it featured PM Modi and his mother Heeraben's picture, highlighting the theme of 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam'.

"You made a very beautiful rakhi," an elated PM Modi said while the girl tied rakhi on his

Many students, who brought

Children share heart-warming moment with

PM Modi during Raksha Bandhan celebrations

flowers, sweets and even a handmade portrait of PM Modi, also shared their excitement and joy of meeting the Prime Minister for the first time and celebrate the special occasion with him. "I am feeling overjoyed as I

will meet him for the first time, " said a girl student while another said, "He looked like a friend to me, I felt very good." A girl student enquired from

the Prime Minister on how they can contribute to his Viksit Bharat vision, to which he replied, "keep yourself and society fit and healthy." "Whatever we do, there should

a feeling of greater well-being for the society," he further advised.
PM Modi also gave an auto-

graph to a girl child and shared a hearty laugh when she sought one more' for her sister. Earlier in the day, Prime Minister extended his heartfelt wishes to the nation on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan. "Best wishes to all countrymen on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, a festival symbolizing the immense love between brother and sister. May this holy festival bring new sweetness in your relationships and happiness, prosperity, and good fortune in life," he wrote on X.

KAVITA SHARMA

ensuring education continuity from the primary to higher secondary levels, in collaboration with Wadi

Amarnath Yatra concludes, nearly 5 lakh pilgrims pay obeisance

The annual Amarnath Yatra will conclude in Jammu and Kashmir on August 21, after 52 days, with nearly five lakh pilgrims visiting the cave shrine in the Himalayas. 'Chhari Mubarak', carried

by Mahant Swami Deependra i started the last leg of its journey from Panchtarni to the holy cave this morning.

The yatra started on June 29 and will end today after 52 days amid high-security cover.

It will conclude on the occasion of 'Shravan Purnima' coinciding with the Raksha Bandhan festival.

Amid traditional 'puja' and rituals, daylong prayers will be offered for world peace and prosperity of mankind after which the Chhari Mubarak will return to Panchtarni.



Chhari Mubarak left its seat at Dashnami Akhara temple in Srinagar on August 14. After paying obeisance at various temples en route, it stayed at Pahalgam for two nights before starting its onward journey to the cave shrine on August 16.

Swami Deependra Giri, the custodial of Chhari Mubarak, expressed satisfaction over the

improved arrangements made by the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB) headed by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and the union territory administration for the pilgrims.

Swami Giri said with the increased facilities, including the widening of the track to the cave shrine the influx of pilgrims has

multiple injuries, all inflicted before death

manner of death being homicidal,

Former Jharkhand CM Champai Soren set to join BJP: A New Twist in Jharkhand Politics

MANPREET SINGH

Jamshedpur

The possible entry of former Chief Minister Champai Soren into the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) could mark a significant shift in Jharkhand's political landscape. If this move materializes, it could strengthen BJP's tribal vote bank, boosting their prospects in the upcoming assembly elections.

Change in BJP's Strategy As the assembly elections approach in Jharkhand, the BJP's central leadership has intensified its strategic efforts. The party's think tank is closely analyzing Jharkhand's political equations. Amid this, former Chief Minister Champai Soren, who is reportedly discontent with the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), is emerging as a potential tribal face for the BJP.

Champai Soren has recently expressed his dissatisfaction with remaining in the JMM. According to sources, the BJP

Chief Minister of Jharkhand. Soren has allegedly met with several BJP leaders in Delhi, although he has not officially confirmed these meetings.

Grand Event Planned

It is speculated that the BJP is planning to hold a grand event in Ranchi, where Champai Soren will formally join the party. The BJP aims to contest the Jharkhand assembly elections under his leadership, positioning him as a chief ministerial candidate.

BJP's Search for a Tribal Leader

The BJP's central leadership



with leaders like Babulal Marandi and Arjun Munda as tribal faces in Jharkhand, but the expected results were not achieved. Therefore, the party is now considering Champai Soren as a new option, given his strong recognition within the tribal community.

Champai Soren's Emotional Letter Recently, Champai Soren

shared an emotional letter detailing his political journey and experiences within the JMM. In the letter, he expressed how he faced humiliation within the party and how he decided to explore new options to protect his self-respect.

Rahul Gandhi pays tribute to Rajiv Gandhi on his birth anniversary Rahul says 'Your dreams "

for India are my own'

NEW DELHI: The Congress party on Tuesday paid tributes to former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on his 80th birth anniversary, celebrating his contribution to India's political and technological landscape.

Party chief Mallikarjun Kharge, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, and Rajva Sabha MP Jairam Ramesh were present on the

Rahul Gandhi shared on X a photo from Veer Bhumi, paying floral tribute to his father, and said: "A compassionate personality, an epitome of camaraderie and goodwill... Papa, your teachings are my inspiration, and your dreams for India are my own - I will fulfill them, taking your memories with me.

Mallikarjun Kharge posted a video of Rajiv Gandhi and said: "Today, India is celebrating Sadbhavana Diwas. Former Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, was a great son of India. He ignited a ray of hope in crores of Indians and with his unprecedented contribution, he brought India

into the 21st century.

"His many notable initiatives like lowering of voting age to 18 years, strengthening of Panchayati Raj, telecom and IT revolution, computerisation programmes, continuing peace accords, women empowerment, universal immunisation programme and new education policy with emphasis on inclusive education brought about transformational changes in the country. We pay heartfelt tribute to Bharat Ratna, Rajiv Gandhi ji on his birth an-

niversary, "he added. Jairam Ramesh also cel-

ebrated Rajiv Gandhi's con-

tribution to India's political

and technological landscape.

dhi@80. His was a short but

very consequential political

life. The March 1985 Budget

in which he played a key role

heralded a new approach to

economic policy. The mani-

festo for the 1991 Lok Sabha

elections, on which he spent

long hours a few weeks before his tragic assassination,

provided the foundations for

the Rao-Manmohan Singh

reforms of June-July 1991,

he wrote in a post on X. "Peace accords in troubled

"Today is Rajiv Gan-

Gandhi@80. His was a short but very consequential political life. The March 1985 Budget in which he played a key role heralded a new approach to economic policy"

Today is Rajiv

regions of the country like Assam, Punjab, Mizoram, and Tripura were made possible by his statesmanship that put national interest over the immediate interests of his party. He had a vision for societal applications of science and technology that were reflected in the impactful technology missions in drinking water supply, immunisation, literacy, oilseeds production, and telecom and dairy development, "he added.

"In 1985, 165, 000 villages had been identified as not having easy access to any potable water source. By 1989, 162, 000 villages of these villages had been provided with at least one safe source

of drinking water. Institutions that are now doing the country proud, like C-DAC, were established in the late 1980s. Financial institutions like the National Housing Bank and the Small Industries Development Bank of India came into being, " he wrote in his post. "The New Education Policy

of 1986, anchored in progres-

sive values, bore his personal

imprint. Today's Navodaya Vidyalayas emerged from this initiative. The voting age was reduced to 18 years and Swami Vivekananda's birthday was declared as National Youth Day. Article 243 of our Constitution is a tribute to his fierce commitment to empowering elected panchayats and nagarpalikas. Today, we have over 3 million elected representatives in these institutions of self-government, of whom over 40 per cent are women. We recall not just a Prime Minister today but also a very fine and caring human being who bore no malice, showed no vindictiveness, sought no revenge, indulged in no bombast and self-glory, and exhibited no qualities of self-delusion, "

Hints of Champai Soren Joining BJP

Jairam Ramesh concluded.



Hydropower at the cost of sustainability?

s Kerala's Wayanad district

slowly recovers from the devas-

tation of last month's landslide, another landslide in Sikkim on ▲August 20, 2024, has caused significant damage to six houses and a building of the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation at the Teesta-5 hydropower station in Gangtok. While the absence of casualties in Sikkim offers some relief, the event raises alarms for a different reason: this is the second time in less than a year that a natural disaster has targeted a hydropower project along the Teesta River. The previous incident occurred last October, when a deluge from the South Lhonak glacier destroyed the Chungthang dam, crippling the Teesta-3 power station, once the largest hydroelectric project in Sikkim. The project, which originally supplied 1,200 MW, is now operating at a fraction of its capacity. The Teesta-5 project, producing 510 MW, has also been rendered non-functional since the glacial lake outburst. These events highlight the vulnerabilities of hydropower projects in the region. The allure of harnessing the Teesta River for energy has been strong, with plans dating back nearly three decades for 47 power projects across Sikkim and West Bengal. However, only five projects have materialized, and several others remain in limbo. The Teesta, a tributary of the Brahmaputra, flows through challenging terrain that poses significant risks to any infrastructure built along its course. Yet, the quest for profit has often overshadowed the need for robust environmental assessments and disaster-proof construction. In the case of Teesta-3, reports suggest that cost-cutting measures led to the construction of a concrete-faced rock fill dam instead of a more durable concrete gravity dam, contributing to its destruction. This underscores the urgent need for comprehensive environmental impact assessments that accurately account for the risks and costs associated with such projects. By doing so can we ensure that these projects are not only economically viable but also environmentally sustainable and resilient to the challenges posed by nature.

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There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.

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ANISH GAWANDE ON HOW MANIFESTOS BRING HOPE, BUT BUDGET ALLOCATIONS DASH IT

The budgetary disappointment

llowing a "manifesto moment' in the lead-up to the 2024 general election where several major political parties pledged support for the LGBTQ+ community, the 2024 Union Budget has dashed the hopes of queer Indians yearning for recognition in national politics.

A transformative overhaul of the government's approach towards LGBTQ+ rights was never expected — especially given the Solicitor General's vehement opposition to marriage equality before the Supreme Court of India last year. Yet, the mention of transgender rights in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s own manifesto had sparked a glimmer of hope for progress under a Modi 3.0 government.

Instead, the LGBTQ+ community found itself reduced to a mere footnote in the Budget: the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment's allocation for "Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons" under the Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (SMILE) programme. This programme promises to fund Garima Grahas (shelter homes), scholarships, and the National Council for Transgender Persons.

Meagre funding

On paper, the budgetary outlay for transgender welfare increased from Rs 52.91 crore in FY24 to Rs 68.46 crore in FY25. But a closer look reveals a harsh reality: actual expenditure was a meagre Rs 22.82 crore in FY24. Nowhere is the impact of this discrepancy more starkly reflected than in the fact that most Garima Grahas have shut down over the past two years due to lack of

funding, and the NCTP is barely functional. With just a meagre increase for this financial year, who will fulfil the guarantee



to build Garima Grahas, promised in the 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas' section of the BJP's 2024 Sankalp Patra?

SMILE is not the only victim of the government's apathy. Even more troubling is the reduction in funding for the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) from Rs 3,079.97 crore in FY24 to Rs 2,892.00 crore in FY25.

NACO, tasked with both combating HIV AIDS and preventing Sexually transmitted infections, plays a crucial role in public health. Despite decades of progress, India still faces one of the largest HIV epidemics in the world, with LGBTQ+ Indians at a higher risk of contracting the virus and facing distinct psychosocial challenges.

Today, over 2.4 million people in India live with HIV. Of those, almost 900,000 are not linked to treatment—and more than half a million are unaware they are even infected.

The last credible study by NACO in 2003 estimated that 6% of India's adult population was infected with STIs. The more recent National Family Health Survey (2019–21) highlighted that 23.3% of sexually active

unmarried men between 15 and 29 had more than one sexual partner, with risky sex practices and lack of condom use prevalent in both urban and rural areas. What prompted the government to slash funding not only for HIV prevention but also the fight against STIs when we are staring at a potential public health

A denial of rights

The lack of budgetary allocation is not just about misplaced priorities or ideological differences. It is a systematic denial of the rights of millions of LGBTQ+ Indians, blocking their access to an equal share over the country's

The numbers lay bare the reality. The 2011 Census counted 4.9 lakh transgender Indians. Even if we accept this disproportionately low figure, the 2024 Budget allocated a meagre Rs 1,400 for the welfare of each transgender citizen. More realistic estimates suggest that the transgender population in India is around 1.22 crore, making this average allocation a pitiful Rs 56 a person.

Young Indians, emboldened by recent court victories affirming that the Constitution of India protects every single Indian citizen regardless of gender or sexuality, need a government that creates safe spaces to ensure that they are not harassed or bullied in schools — one that provides inclusive mental health care to prevent rising suicide rates among young LGBTQ+ youth, and one that guarantees equal access to education and employment.

Political support helps

I hope that Members of Parliament from the Opposition parties, including my own party the Nationalist Congress Party), which raised the demands of the LGBTQ+ community in their election manifestos, stand up for the rights of LGBTQ+ Indians in Parliament. I also hope — perhaps naively — that those in the government who got transgender rights included in the BJP's manifesto in the first place realise their missteps and work towards a shared vision of an inclusive future.

For too long, queer Indians have relied upon courts as guarantors of rights. As we navigate new political paradigms, it is important for the queer movement to build upon an impressive history of active political engagement - one that saw the Namdeo Dhasal march, in 1988, with trans women and sex workers from Kamathipura to the then Chief Minister Sharad Pawar's residence to demand protection from moneylenders and Shabnam Mausi being elected elected as India's first transgender MLA from Sohagpur in Madhya Pradesh in 1998.

Recent successes, such as the establishment of the transgender welfare board in Maharashtra in 2020 and the drafting of Tamil Nadu's LGBTQ+ policy in 2024, indicate that judicial progress results in executive action only when sustained by civil society pressure. We must take this lesson to heart, working not only with the Centre but also States and local bodies to ensure that rights recognised on paper are effectively implemented in practice.

Anish Gawande is National Spokesperson, Nationalist Congress Party (Sharadchandra Pawar) and Founder, Pink List India. Views are personal.

PRABHASH RANJAN EXPLAINS HOW JOINT INTERPRETATIVE NOTES DILUTE INVESTMENT PROTECTION



Protecting Indian capital in Bangladesh



ne dramatic developments in Bangladesh that led to the resignation and fleeing of its former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina have created a political vacuum and, thus, uncertainty in India's eastern neighbour. Besides the political and diplomatic fallout of this crisis for India, another significant aspect is how this will impact Indian companies operating in Bangladesh. Indian companies have invested in Bangladesh in sectors such as edible oil, power, infrastructure, fast-moving consumer goods, automobiles, and pharmaceuticals. Despite political opposition, the Sheikh Hasina government rolled out the red carpet for Indian investors and adopted several measures to invite them, such as starting designated special economic zones. Unhappy with India's alleged support of Ms. Hasina's regime, her opponents launched an "India out" Since Ms. Hasina is no longer in power, the interim or the new government may adopt a hostile attitude towards Indian companies. It might change the existing laws or adopt new regulatory measures that may adversely impact Indian capital. What options do Indian businesses have in such an eventuality?

Legal protection for Indian investors

As Jeswald Salacuse argues, three basic legal frameworks broadly apply to foreign investment. First, the domestic laws of the country where the investment is made. Second, contracts may have been signed between the foreign investor and the government of the host state, or among foreign investors and companies of the host state. Third, the international law contained in applicable treaties, customs,



attained the status of international law. The Indian companies that have invested in Bangladesh can use the first two legal from regulatory risks. For instance, Indian companies can rely on Bangladesh's Foreign Private Investment (Promotion and Protection) Act. However, there are limitations to relying on the domestic law of the host state because it can be changed unilaterally by the state to the investor's detriment at any time. Likewise, contracts may be of limited value when it comes to challenging the sovereign actions of the state that adversely affect foreign investment. Therefore, the third legal framework, international law, assumes importance.

The India-Bangladesh BIT

International law cannot be changed unilaterally and can be used to hold states accountable for their sovereign actions. When protecting foreign investment, the most crucial instrument in international

law is a bilateral investment treaty (BIT). A BIT is a treaty between two countries aimed at protecting investments made by investors of both countries. BITs protect investments by imposing conditions on the regulatory behaviour of the host state, thus preventing undue interference with the foreign investor's rights. These conditions include restricting host states from unlawfully expropriating investments, imposing obligations on host states to accord fair and equitable treatment (FET) to foreign investment and not to discriminate against foreign investment. BITs also empower foreign investors to directly sue the host state before an international tribunal if the investor believes that the host state has breached its treaty obligations. This is known as investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS). According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development NCTAD), by the end of 20: number of known ISDS claims that have been brought stands at 1,332.

In case of adverse sovereign regulation, Indian companies can rely on the India-Bangladesh BIT signed in 2009. While India has unilaterally terminated almost all its BITs, the one with Bangladesh continues to exist. The India-Bangladesh BIT contains broad substantive investment protection features, such as an unqualified FET provision that can come in handy for Indian companies challenging Bangladeshi sovereign regulatory conduct.

However, the twist in the tale is the Joint Interpretative Notes (JIN) that India and Bangladesh adopted in 2017 to clarify the meaning of various terms in the 2009 treaty. This JIN, now a part of the BIT, was adopted at India's insistence. As part of overhauling its investment

tory power, India proposed such JINs to several countries. This was done without considering whether India has an offensive or defensive interest vis-à-vis a specific country. This JIN has diluted the investment protection features of the BIT. For instance, taxation measures are excluded from the ambit of the BIT. Likewise, the FET provision is linked to

treaty practice to safeguard its regula-

customary international law that would equire a higher threshold to show a violation of the treaty. The JIN has been designed from the perspective of the capital-importing country to safeguard its regulatory conduct from ISDS claims. Between India and Bangladesh, New Delhi is the capital exporter, and Dhaka is the importer. Ironically, the JIN that India developed might work to the advantage of Bangladesh, and not the Indian capital

The larger question

While Bangladesh provides the immediate reference point, the issue is not restricted to India's eastern neighbour. India's outbound investments have grown manifold. According to UNCTAD, outward foreign direct investment from India in 2023 stood at about \$13.5 billion. India is among the top 20 capital-exporting countries. Thus, the issue of legal protection for Indian companies abroad assumes salience. India should, therefore, evolve its investment treaty practice, keeping both its host and home status in mind and not just the former.

Prabhash Ranjan is a Professor at the Jindal Global Law School, O.P. Jimdal Global University. Views are personal



BOOKS: REVIEW

New book reveals untold stories of Naipaul family

The Naipauls of Nepaul Street by Savi Naipaul Akal is an intimate and poignant family memoir that delves deep into the lives, struggles, and triumphs of one of the most celebrated literary families of the 20th century. While the spotlight inevitably falls on V.S. 'Vidia' Naipaul, the Nobel Prize-winning author, this memoir provides a broader view of the Naipaul family, capturing the dynamics, aspirations, and complexities that shaped not only Vidia but all seven children of Seepersad and Droapatie Naipaul.

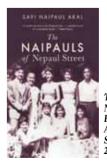
The book's title is both literal and symbolic, referencing the family's home at 26 Nepaul Street in Trinidad, which served as the anchor for the Naipauls' lives. This home, like the family itself, was marked by ambition, struggle and resilience. Seepersad Naipaul, the patriarch, was the first in his family to change the surname from 'Nyepal' to 'Naipaul,' signaling a departure from the past and a determination to forge a new identity. His influence looms large in the memoir, as he instilled in his children the importance of education and the pursuit of one's true self. The emphasis on academic achievement was a cornerstone of the Naipaul household, with examinations carrying an almost sacred significance, as Savi Naipaul Akal recalls.

Vidia Naipaul's early departure to Oxford University on an "island scholarship" in 1950 marked the beginning of a literary career that would catapult him to global recognition. However, the memoir is careful not to solely focus on Vidia's achievements. Savi's narrative sheds light on the collective efforts of the Naipaul siblings to support one another, financially and emotionally, as they pursued their education and careers. Kamla, the eldest sister,

was the first to leave for higher education, securing a scholarship to study at Banaras Hindu University in India. Savi herself would also venture abroad for studies, eventually becoming a

The memoir's strength lies in its balanced portrayal of the Naipaul family. While Vidia and his younger brother Shiva, who also became a writer of note, are central figures, Savi ensures that the lesser-known members of the family are not overshadowed. The relationships among the siblings are portrayed with honesty, highlighting both the supportive and strained dynamics. Shiva, who was deeply cherished by his sisters, had a complicated relationship with Vidia, a tension that is explored with sensitivity and nuance.

At the heart of The Naipauls of Nepaul Street is Droapatie Naipaul, the matriarch, whose



The Naipauls of Nepaul Street By Savi Naipaul Speaking Tiger;

life unfolded in tandem with her marriage to Seepersad and the subsequent achievements of her children. Savi's depiction of her mother is one of quiet strength and adaptability. As her children flourished, Droapatie began to carve out her own space in the world, traveling and developing her own routines. The memoir vividly brings to life her personality and the central role she played in the family's cohesion.

Savi Naipaul Akal's writing is marked by warmth, wisdom, and candor. She navigates the delicate task of chronicling her family's history with a steady hand, acknowledging the political attitudes, small joys, and hurtful slights that shaped their lives. Importantly, Savi does

the more controversial aspects of Vidia's life, including the revelations in Patrick French's biography. Her ability to convey these complexities without privileging any one perspective is a testament to her skills as a writer and chronicler. The memoir is not just a re-

not shy away from addressing

counting of the Naipaul family's past; it is also a social history that reflects the broader context of colonial Trinidad, the challenges of migration, and the pursuit of education as a means of upward mobility. Savi's late emergence as a writer in a family of renowned authors adds another layer to the narrative, as she brings her own voice and perspective to the Naipaul legacy. In The Naipauls of Nepaul

Street, Savi Naipaul Akal has crafted a memoir that is both a tribute to her family and a reflection on the forces that shaped their lives. It is a deeply moving account that resonates with warmth, honesty, and an open heart, offering readers a fuller understanding of the Naipaul family and the remarkable, if complicated, life of V.S. Naipaul.

MSME industries will play a vital role in Developed India-2047 mission: FinMin Nirmala Sitharaman

ter Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday said that the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) industries will play a vital role in fulfilling the resolution of Developed India-2047, adding these industries have been given special priority in the Budget.

The Finance Minister said this while addressing a discussion programme with MSME marble cluster units at 'Marble Bhawan' in Sukher Industrial Area of Udaipur on Thursday

The programme was chaired by Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi. Finance Secretary M. Nagaraju, SIDBI Chairman Manoj Mittal and Udaipur MP Manna Lal Rawat among

Addressing the programme, Finance Minister Sitharaman said that the contribution of Mewar to India's culture and prosperity just cannot be expressed in words.

EV Testing Facility in

on Thursday.

at the National Test House

(NTH) RRSL Camp, marks a

crucial step in expanding testing

EV sector in southern India.

The new laboratory, equipped

with cutting-edge technology,

will conduct comprehensive

tests on EV batteries and char-

gers. These tests will cover a

wide range of parameters in-

cluding electrical safety, elec-

tromagnetic compatibility,

functional safety, durability,

and environmental resistance.

This facility is expected to play

a pivotal role in ensuring that

EVs meet stringent quality and

safety standards before enter-

ing the market. "This initiative

aligns with India's commitment

to sustainable and green energy

solutions," said a senior official

from the Department of Con-

sumer Affairs. "It will provide

vital support to EV manufactur-

ers in southern India, fostering

automotive technology sector."

The National Test House, op-

erating under the Department

of Consumer Affairs, has been

ance across various industries.



"Dialogue with stakeholders is necessary in implementing the Budget announcements. The Budget is for the public... after the Budget is presented to the public, we make amendments based on the feedback. The participation of MSMEs is important in realising the vision of Developed India-2047. Therefore, it has been given special priority in the Budget,

In this series, dialogue pro-

Meanwhile, MSME Minister

Jitan Ram Manjhi said that India will soon become the third largest economy in the world.

Speaking at the programme, he said that efforts are being made to eliminate unemployment through such dialogue programmes across the country.

"MSME sector has a big contribution in eliminating unemployment. Micro and small industries are the backbone of India's economy, which contributes 30 per cent to the country's economy and provides employment to 20 crore people of the country. It is a matter of pride for us that today, the country is the fifth largest economy of the world under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Soon, the country is going to become the third-largest economy of the world.

"While the rate of global economic progress is 3.2 per cent, India is growing at the rate of 7 per cent in terms of economic progress, "the Minister said.

India Unveils Post-PLI Strategy to Boost Medical Devices Sector



NEW DELHI: In a signifi- recent industry event. cant development for India's healthcare industry, the government has announced plans to introduce a comprehensive scheme aimed at bolstering the medical devices sector beyond the current Production Linked Incentive (PLI) framework.

This news comes on the heels of the successful implementation of PLI schemes approval of the Medical Devices policy.

Dr. Arunish Chawla, Sec-Pharmaceuticals under the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, revealed the govern-

"The PLI schemes for the medical devices sector have succeeded, and we are now looking at the post-PLI framework," Dr. Chawla stated. He emphasised that this new initiative is designed to support the industry and reduce India's import dependence in the coming years.

The proposed scheme, according to Dr. Chawla, will in the sector and the recent be built upon five key components. First, it will focus on establishing Common Facilities for medical devices retary of the Department of clusters, providing shared infrastructure and resources to boost manufacturing ca-

Second, the scheme will

prioritise Capacity Building and Skill Development, ensuring a well-trained workforce to support the industry's

Third, a Marginal Investment Scheme will be implemented to reduce import ependence, encouraging domestic production of criti-

cal components and devices. Fourth, there will be a dedicated focus on clinical trial support, recognising the crucial role of research and development in the medical devices sector.

Lastly, a comprehensive medical device promotion scheme will be launched to enhance the visibility and competitiveness of Indianmade medical devices in global markets.

Dr. Chawla underscored the importance of aligning these efforts with India's broader national goals. "We need to bring the policy stack together in a manner that enables India to achieve the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047," he said, referring to the country's ambitious de-

Indian Phosphate Limited coming out with Rs 67 crore IPO



DOMINICK RODRIGUES Udaipur

Indian Phosphate Limited is coming out with its Initial public Offering (IPO) priced at Rs. 94 to Rs. 99 per share equity share and opening on August 26 and closing on August 29, 2024.

Of the fresh issue worth Rs. 67.30 crores, Rs. 33.18 crores will be used for setting up a new facility at SIPCOT INDUS-TRIAL PARK, Tamil Nadu for manufacturing LABSA 90 %, Sulphuric Acid and Magnesium Sulphate, while Rs. 24. 90 crores will be used to meet working capital requirements and for general corporate purposes.

Indian Phosphate Limited was incorporated in 1998 and has presently acquired 1,00,000 Sq. mts. Land on lease from MIDC Dhule, Maharashtra to manufacture Single Super Phosphate Fertilizer, Di-Calcium Phosphate, Surphuric Acid, Oleum 65% and Organic Fer-

The Company has employed state-of-the-art manufacturing process and control technology in their Chemical and Fertilizer plant. Current production capacity of LABSA 90% (Linear Alkylbenzene Sulphonic Acid) stands at B350 MT day and that of SSP - 400 MT/day.

The Company supplies ABSA 90% directly to their B2B customers at their various production sites.

Revenue from operations for FY24 stood at Rs. 704.17 crores, FY23 Rs. 768.69 crores and FY22 Rs. 557.15 crores, while Profit After Tax in FY24 was Rs. 13.47 crores, FY23 Rs. 16.59 crore and FY22 Rs 16.16 crore

opment Bank (SIDBI) is now providing loans directly to micro industries, which is a matter of great relief. Now, convenient **Volkswagen and Mercedes-Benz**

Eye Local EV Manufacturing in

Bengaluru to Boost India's Green Mobility Sector **India under New Policy** BENGALURU: In a significant NEW DELHI: Volkswagen move to bolster India's electric and Mercedes-Benz, two vehicle (EV) industry, Union Minister Pralhad Venkatesh prominent German automakers, have expressed interest Joshi is set to lay the foundation stone for a state-of-the-art EV in local electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing in India, ac-Testing Facility in Bengaluru cording to a senior govern-The facility, to be established ment official.

This move appears to be in response to the country's new EV policy, which offers capabilities for the burgeoning reduced import tariffs for companies committing to significant local investment and production, reported Moneycontrol.

The policy, announced on March 15, provides import duty concessions to firms that invest a minimum of USD 500 million and establish manufacturing facilities within three years, with at least 25 per cent local component sourcing.

Qualifying companies can import up to 8,000 EVs annually at a reduced 15 per cent duty for vehicles priced at USD 35,000 and above, a the standard 70-100 per cent a dedicated portal.

and Mercedes-Benz have domestic EV manufacturing India, neither has officially ance on imported vehicles. confirmed their plans regarding the new policy.

A Škoda Auto Volkswa-



with 250 MSME clusters across

the country, which has started

from Thursday from the Marble

She said that it is necessary

to hold discussions with stake-

holders to understand the needs

of the MSME industry of the

Mewar region. Sitharaman said

that Small Industries Devel-

Cluster in Udaipur.

had no comment at this time, while a Mercedes-Benz India spokesperson declined to address what they termed 'speculations.'

Mercedes-Benz has already invested over Rs 3,000 crore in Pune, where it operates an EV assembly line. Volkswagen is reportedly considering assembling its ID.4 electric car at its Aurangabad plant for a potential 2024

The Indian government is expected to release draft guidelines for the revised EV policy soon.

These guidelines will likely include details about a Project Management Agency (PMA) to provide managerial and implementation support, significant reduction from as well as information about

This development comes

The government's initiative aims to attract foreign investment and technology at the forefront of quality assurgen India Private Limited transfer in the rapidly growrepresentative stated they ing electric vehicle sector.

Committed to advancing India's EV ecosystem, fostering local manufacturing: Union Minister

NEW DELHI: The govern ment is committed to advancing India's electric vehicle (EV) ecosystem, fostering local manufacturing and promoting sustainable growth, Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel, H.D. Kumaraswamy, has said.

During a post-budget webinar in the national capital, Kumaraswamy said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision for 'Viksit Bharat 2047' and achieving net zero by 2070 guides our mission at the Ministry.

"We are committed to advancing India's EV ecosystem, fostering local manufacturing, and promoting sustainable growth through key initiatives such as



PLI, FAME, EMPS, and advanced capital goods schemes. These efforts will accelerate India's journey towards greater self-reliance and enhanced Aatmanirbharta," the minister emphasised. Minister of State Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma

Shriram Properties Unveils New Brand Identity

as Part of Ambitious Growth Strategy

said that India is on track to become a \$5 trillion economy, with the automotive sector playing a pivotal role.

The Ministry of Heavy Industries is driving innovation and self-reliance through initia-

nents. Together, we can create a sustainable and prosperous future for India, "Varma added. The Union Budget 2024-25 focused on expanding and

strengthening the electric vehicle

ecosystem, including manufac-

GWh to enhance India's ACC

Automobiles and Auto Compo-

turing and charging infrastructure. Among the key initiatives of the ministry are the PLI-Auto scheme with an approved outlay of Rs 25, 938 crore to boost domestic manufacturing and promote localisation, and the PLI Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) scheme with an approved outlay of Rs 18, 100 crore for 50

Orient Technologies coming out with Rs 120-crore IPO

ARUN KUMAR RAO

Bengaluru

Shriram Properties Limited (SPL), one of South India's premier real estate developers, has announced a significant brand transformation While both Volkswagen as India seeks to boost its as it steps into its 25th year of operations. This milestone marks not just a celebration of past achiev ments but the beginning of a bold new chapter in the company's growth trajectory.

A New Identity for a New Era-



-To commemorate this silver ju- SPL's commitment to evolving brand among the next generation Shareholders. bilee, SPL has launched a new with the times while maintaining of homebuyers.

the core values and customercentric approach that have been the bedrock of its success.

Addressing Media Mr. Murali Malayappan, Chairman and Managing Director of Shriram Properties, expressed the siging its position as a mature and that reflects our evolution as a visionary player in the real estate company. This will allow us to sector. This transformation is not create a distinct presence and merely cosmetic; it represents re-position the trusted Shriram

DOMINICK RODRIGUES Mumbai

Orient Technologies Limited, a Mumbai-based IT solutions provider, has come out with its IPO having price band of nificance of this rebranding: Rs 195 to Rs 206, which will "As we enter our 25th year, we open on August 21 and close on The IPO consists of fresh issue of upto Rs 120 crore ucts and solutions for specialised and an offer for sale (OFS) of upto 4,6000,000 equity

shares by Promoter Selling The proceeds from the fresh

crore will be used for acquisition of office premise at Navi Mumbai, and Rs 79.65 crore for funding its Capital Expenditure requirements and general cor-

issuance to the extent of Rs 10.35

Orient Technologies was incorporated in 1997 and has built disciplines across its business verticals such as IT Infrastructure Products and solutions, IT enabled services (IteS), Cloud and Data Management services.

REPORTING ON SCOPE 3 EMISSIONS

Learning from Global Pharmaceutical MNCs





DUMRA

harmaceutical sector, with its substantial environmental footprint, finds itself at a pivotal moment in addressing sustainability challenges. Multiple ESG frameworks have been devised by various institutions and organizations to help investors, stakeholders, and companies understand and manage the risks and opportunities related to environmental, social, and governance aspects. Global Reporting Initiative (1997), Carbon Disclosure Project (2000), are the indirect emissions, e.g., Equator Principles (2003), Principles for Responsible Investment (2006), ISO 26000 (2010), Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (2011), complex and far-reaching and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDG) (2015), and Business Reporting and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR) (2021) are prominent among these frameworks.

Emissions, in the context of Environmental Science, refer to the release of pollutants into the air. Scope 1 emissions are the which come from sources which 3 categories, emissions occur have demonstrated compre-

2. Capital goods 3. Fuel- and energy-related activities (not included in Scope 1 or Scope 2) 3.a. Upstream 4. Upstream transportation and distribution Scope 3 Emissions 5. Waste generated in operations 6. Business travel 7. Employee commuting 8. Upstream leased assets 9. Downstream transportation and distribution 10. Processing of sold products 11. Use of sold products 3.b. Downstream 12. End-of-life treatment of sold products Scope 3 Emissions 13. Downstream leased assets 14. Franchises 15. Investments Source: Based on GRI 305: Emissions 2016 issued by the Global Sustainability Standards Board (2024)

1. Purchased goods and services

are directly owned or controlled by an organization, e.g., natural gas used in the manufacturing process. Scope 2 emissions emissions from the generation of purchased electricity, steam, heating, and cooling consumed. Scope 3 emissions are the most are the result of activities of assets not owned or controlled by the reporting organization, and includes everything from the emissions produced by suppliers and product transportation to the emissions generated when customers use the orga-

nization's products. From Table 1, one can unmost direct form of emissions derstand that for some Scope

simultaneously with the activity, e.g., from combustion of energy, so emissions occur in the same year as the company's activities. For some other categories, e.g., Capital goods, emissions may have occurred in previous years whereas for other Scope 3 categories, e.g., processing of sold products, emissions are expected to occur in future years. Table 2 gives an overview of the Time Boundary for Scope 3 Emission categories Top 20 global pharma-

ceutical MNCs namely J&J, Scope 3 Emission Factors as-AstraZeneca, GSK, Eli Lilly, Novo Nordisk, Amgen, Gilead Sciences, Bayer, Merck KGaA, and Teva Pharmaceuticals

Table 2: Time Boundary for Scope 3 Emissions Categories			
Scope 3 Category	Past	Reporting	Future
	Years	Year	Years
Purchased goods and services	✓	✓	
Capital goods	✓	✓	
Fuel- and energy-related activities	✓	✓	
Upstream transportation and distribution	✓	✓	
Waste generated in operations		✓	✓
Business travel		✓	
Employee commuting		✓	
Upstream leased assets		✓	
Downstream transportation and distribution		✓	✓
Processing of sold products		✓	✓
Use of sold products		✓	✓
End-of-life treatment of sold products		✓	✓
Downstream leased assets		✓	
Franchises		✓	
Investments		✓	✓

Source: Based on The GHG Protocol Corporate Value Chain (Scope 3) Accounting and Reporting Standard issued by World Resources Institute and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development

hensive reporting practices, assessing all eight upstream emission factors. Roche, Merck, Pfizer, Sanofi, Novartis, Bristol Myers Squibb, and Takeda report on most upstream factors, with some gaps indicating areas for improvement. Boehringer Ingelheim and Viatris are reporting 4 of 8 factors only whereas AbbVie does not report on any upstream emission factors. Chart 1: Reporting on Upstream

sessed by Global Pharma MNCs On Downstream Scope 3 emissions, global MNCs such as AstraZeneca, GSK, Eli Lilly, Amgen, Gilead Sciences, Bayer, Merck KGaA, and Teva Pharmaceuticals have a broad reporting scope, assessing nearly all downstream emission factors, demonstrating a proactive approach in managing their product lifecycle emissions. J&J, Pfizer, Merck, Sanofi, Novo Nordisk and Takeda show moderate reporting practices, with some downstream factors assessed. AbbVie, Bristol Myers Squibb, Roche, Boehringer Ingelheim, and Viatris report on very few or none of the downstream factors, indicating limited engagement with the full lifecycle impacts of their products. exhibit less comprehensive re-



pharmaceutical MNCs, the hensive disclosure across the industry. Upstream emission factors are more frequently reported than downstream factors. It is expected that these companies should give equal importance to downstream emissions to fully capture their environmental impact.

Chart 2: Reporting on Downstream Scope 3 Emission Factors assessed by Global Pharma MNCs

In contrast to this, on Upstream Scope 3 Emissions reporting in Annual Reports for FY23, top 20 pharmaceutical companies based on TSA Moving Annual Total (MAT) February 2024 values, in India

porting practices compared to their global counterparts. The extent of reporting varies sig-nificantly, indicating a lack of of MNCs listed in India. This standardization and compre- could be attributed to strict regulatory environment and higher stakeholder expectations in developed markets. Lupin Limited stands out for its comprehensive assessment of upstream emission factors, indicating a strong commitment to environmental transparency. Companies like Sun Pharma, Dr. Reddy's Labs, and Glenmark report on several upstream factors, though not so extensively as their global counterparts do. Companies such as Zydus, Abbott India, Cipla, Mankind, Alkem, Torrent, GSK India, Pfizer India, Ipca Labs, and

Sanofi India show minimal

to no reporting on upstream

emission factors, suggesting

need for improved sustainability practices in their supply chains. On Downstream Scope 3

Emissions, most of pharmaceutical companies in India do not report on downstream factors. Four Companies namely Sun Pharma, Lupin, Dr. Reddy's Labs, and Glenmark have reported only one factor Downstream transportation and distribution, out of seven Downstream Scope 3 Emission factors. Enhanced reporting on

Scope 3 Emissions by pharmaceutical companies in India will help in aligning with global best practices. Pharmaceutical companies which excel in this area can demonstrate leadership in sustainability that in turn, can enhance their reputation, meet regulatory requirements, and address the growing demands of stakeholders for transparency and accountability in environmental practices.

Dr. Anil Kumar Angrish, Associate Professor (Finance and Accounting),

Department of Pharmaceutical Management, NIPER, SAS Nagar (Mohali), Punjab Bhavishya Dumra, MBA (Pharm.), Department of Pharmaceutical Management, NIPER S.A.S. Nagar (Mohali), **DISCLAIMER:** Views are $personal\ and\ do\ not\ represent$ the views of the Institute.

Stock markets marginally up in volatile trade ahead of US Fed chief speech

MUMBAI: Benchmark Sensex and Nifty edged up in volatile trade on Friday following buying in blue-chip stocks such as ICICI Bank and Bharti Airtel amid mixed global trends ahead of the US Fed chair's speech at Jackson Hole Symposium.

Rising for the fourth straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 33.02 points or 0.04 per cent higher at 81,086.21.

In early trade, the benchmark declined 169.93 points or 0.20 per cent to a low of 80,883.26. Later, it bounced back 178.3 points or 0.21 per cent to hit a high of 81,231.49 but gave up gains towards the end

The NSE Nifty edged up 11.65 points or 0.05 per cent to close at 24,823.15 registering gains for the seventh session in a row.

From the Sensex pack, Tata Motors, Sun Pharmaceutical,



Tech Mahindra, HCL Tech-

nologies, Asian Paints, Titan, Infosys, State Bank of India Tata Consultancy Services and HDFC Bank were the laggards.

"Ahead of the FED chair Powell's speech, the Indian indices

oscillated around the flat trajectory and mixed global market sentiments further catalysed this scenario," Vinod Nair, Head

of Research, Geojit Financial

Investors are exercising caution and awaiting Powell's signals for more insights on the interest rate path, Nair added. European markets were trad-

Services said.

ing with significant gains in the mid-session deals while Asian markets were mixed.

The US stock markets closed lower in overnight trade on

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,371.79 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. Domestic institutional investors (DIIs) again bought equities worth Rs 2,971.80 crore on

Global oil benchmark Brent crude rose 1.01 per cent to USD 78 a barrel.

On Thursday, the 30-share BSE index rose 147.89 points to close at 81,053.19, registering gains for the third day in a row. Extending gains to a sixth session in a row, the NSE Nifty went up by 41.30 points to end at a two-week high of

RBI Deputy Governor Urges Financial Institutions to be Empathetic for MSME Needs

move to bolster the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) sector, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Deputy Governor Swaminathan J has called on financial institutions to implement supportive measures for these businesses.

Speaking at the annual day of the Foreign Exchange Dealers' Association of India (FEDAI) on Thursday, Swaminathan emphasised the need for a more empathetic approach towards MSMEs, given their crucial role in the economy.

The deputy governor outlined several key initiatives that financial institutions should consider. These include restructuring options, grace periods, and tailored repayment plans. These measures are aimed at helping MSMEs recover and regain stability during challeng-

focuses on fiscal consolida-

tion, projecting a reduction

in the fiscal deficit supported

by robust revenue collection,

controlled expenditure, and a

strong economy. Merchandise

exports and imports in FY25

have surpassed the previous

year's levels, signalling a recovery in global demand. While the

merchandise trade deficit has

widened due to strong domestic

demand, services exports have

risen, increasing net services

Labour market indicators

have shown positive trends, with



portance of a nuanced approach to assessment and follow-up, taking into account the unique challenges faced by MSMEs. These challenges include low capital base, lack of scale, cash flow constraints from delayed payments, fluctuating market conditions, and external economic pressures. The RBI's stance aligns with the government's recent efforts to encourage banks to provide collateral-free loans to small businesses and offer additional financial support during periods of economic stress.

Swaminathan highlighted several issues plaguing the MSME sector, including limited access to affordable finance, delays in receiving payments, infrastructure bottlenecks, and high compliance costs. He noted that the increasing

adoption of digital payment systems, mobile banking, and online accounting tools by MSMEs could lead to better risk assessment and the development of customized financing products. The deputy governor also mentioned RBI initiatives to promote innovation in MSME financing, such as the Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) launched in 2014. While there has been an uptick in transactions, Swaminathan emphasised the need for greater participation from corporate buyers and MSME sellers to fully realize the plat-

Asset-based Lending Approach by Banks Results in Exclusion of MSMEs: RBI



NEW DELHI: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Deputy Governor Swaminathan J addressed the financial hurdles faced by micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in a recent speech, emphasising the limitations of traditional banking practices in serving these businesses

Speaking at the annual day of the Foreign Exchange Dealers Association of India on Monday, Swaminathan pointed out that many small businesses lack sufficient assets to use as collateral for loans, particularly for working capital needs.

This asset-based lending approach, commonly employed by panks, often results in the exclusion of smaller enterprises from formal banking sector funding opportunities.

The Deputy Governor's remarks, which were made available on the RBI website on Thursday, shed light on several key issues affecting MSMEs.

He noted that many of these enterprises operate in the informal sector, creating information asymmetry that makes it challenging for lenders to accurately assess their creditworthiness. Swaminathan also highlight-

ed the problem of delayed payments, which frequently extends the operating cycles of small businesses and impacts their ability to fulfil orders or secure new business.

provisions that penalise late

ernor, this hesitation stems from their weak bargaining position and fears of losing future busi ness opportunities.

These observations underscore the complex challenges faced by small businesses in accessing formal financial services and managing their cash flows

PM Modi congratulates RBI Guv for top global rating 2nd time in a row

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday congratulated RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on being rated "A+" for the second time in a row in the 'Global Finance Central Banker Report Cards 2024'.

Responding to a post on X by the Reserve Bank of India, M Modi said, "Congratulations to RBI Governor Shri @Das-Shaktikanta for this feat, and that too for the second time".

"This is a recognition of his leadership at the RBI and his work towards ensuring economic growth and stability, said the Prime Minister.

The Global Finance magazine the quarterly urban unemployment rate steady at 6.6 per cent released the names of Central Bank Governors who earned Net EPFO payroll additions the highest grades, "A+", "A" increased year-on-year in Q1 or "A-", in the 'Central Banker FY25, bolstered by growth in Report Cards 2024'.

The report, published annually since 1994, grades the central bank governors of nearly 100 key countries, territories and districts, as well as the European Union, the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, the Bank of Central African States



African States.

Grades are based on success in areas such as inflation control, economic growth goals, currency stability and interest rate management.

"Central bankers have waged war against inflation over the past few years, wielding their primary weapon: higher interest rates. Now, countries around the world are witnessing the tangible results of these efforts, as inflation has dropped significantly," said Joseph Giarraputo, Global Finance founder and editorial director.

Meanwhile, Das said on Tuesday that banks need to carefully monitor the persistent gap between credit and deposit growth because it could become a challenge, leading to liquidity issues.

This issue is compounded by the reluctance of MSMEs to invoke existing statutory

According to the Deputy Gov-

National Stock Exchange Tightens Listing Norms for SMEs

NEW DELHI: The National Stock Exchange (NSE) is set to implement stricter regulations for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) seeking to list on stock exchanges. effective September 2024. This move comes in response to the recent surge in initial public offerings (IPOs) within the SME segment. Under the new guidelines, companies will be required to demonstrate positive Free Cash Flow to Equity (FCFE) for at least two out of three financial years preceding their application. FCFE is a metric that represents the amount of cash available for distribution to shareholders. The exchange clarified in a circular that these additional criteria will apply to all Draft Red Herring Prospectuses (DRHPs) filed on or after September 1, 2024, while other existing criteria remain

GST Collections Surge, Manufacturing and Services Sectors Thrive in Q1 FY25 **NEW DELHI:** The Indian economy has maintained its growth

trajectory in the first quarter (April-July) of FY25, according to the latest monthly economic review from the Department of Economic Affairs.

Key indicators point to a strong economic recovery across various sectors.

GST collections saw a significant rise in the first four months of FY25, attributed to a broader tax base and increased economic activity. This increase was supported by a double-digit rise in e-way bill generation.

Both manufacturing and services sectors demonstrated strong performance, driven by high demand and greater capacity utilisation. The manufacturing growth was characterised by expanding demand conditions, increased new export orders, and rising output prices. The RBI's Order Books, Inventories, and Capacity Utilisation Survey

(OBICUS) indicates an expansion in manufacturing

capacity utilisation. The services sector has also flourished, notably benefiting from tourism and hospitality industries. **Employment conditions show** mixed signals, with the RBI Services and Infrastructure Outlook Survey revealing optimism about the overall business situation, turnover, and employment conditions in Q1 of FY25.

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have been net buyers since June 2024, reversing previous trends. Net foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows

have increased in the first three months of FY25, leading to foreign exchange reserves reaching USD 675 billion by August 2 2024, sufficient to cover 11.6 months of imports. Retail inflation fell to a near five-year low of 3.5 per cent in July 2024, primarily due to moderated food inflation. The progress of the southwest monsoon has positively impacted kharif sowing, and increased reservoir levels are expected to benefit crop production.

The Union Budget FY25

PMI employment sub-indices in July. The Naukri Jobspeak index also improved. These economic indicators paint a picture of resilience and

receipts.

in Q1 FY25.

growth across various sectors. setting a positive tone for the

Finance Ministry sees food inflation easing further on back of better monsoon

pressures in the Indian economy tion is expected to come down further with this year's better monsoon leading to higher agricultural production, according to the Finance Ministry's monthly review released on

Retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index eased from 5.1 per cent in June 2024 to 3.5 per cent in July 2024, the

This was mainly due to a significant fall in food inflation. It declined to 5.4 per cent in July

inflation from 29.3 per cent in June 2024 to 6.8 per cent in July 2024 and mild deflation in 'oils

tion (which excludes food and fuel) was at a moderate level of ported agricultural activity. The



3.3 per cent in July 2024.

Overall, the retail inflation rate moderated to 4.6 per cent in the first four months of FY25 as compared to 5.3 per cent in FY24 (April-July), according to the review. With moderate core inflation and positive progress in the monsoon, the headline inflation outlook is positive. Assuming a normal monsoon, CPI inflation for FY25 is projected at 4.5 per cent by the RBI, with Q2 inflation at 4.4 per cent.

A steady progress in the southwest monsoon has sup-

cumulative southwest monsoon rainfall was 3 per cent higher than the long-period average up to August 19, 2024. Further, the spatial distribution has improved, with 84 per cent of subdivisions receiving normal or excess rainfall. This has enabled healthy Kharif sowing. As of August 16, the actual sowing area under total foodgrains was 4.8 per cent higher than the corresponding period of the previous year, while progress in cereals and pulses was 4.6 per cent and 5.7 per cent higher

than the previous year.

Rural India Faces Higher Inflation Rates than Urban Counterparts

NEW DELHI: Recent economic data reveals that rural areas in India have been experiencing higher inflation rates compared to urban regions for over a year.

This trend is particularly pronounced in predominantly rural states such as Bihar and Odisha, where inflation rates have consistently surpassed the national average, as reported by businessline.

According to official figures, rural inflation reached 7.6 per cent in July 2023, exceeding the urban rate of 7.2 per cent.

Although both rates have since decreased, the disparity persists. As of July 2024, rural inflation stood at 4.1 per cent, while urban areas reported a rate of 3 per cent. Experts attribute this divergence to several factors. Madan Sabnavis, Chief to differences in energy costs



Economist, Bank of Baroda, highlights the significant impact of food prices on rural inflation.

"Food products carry substantial weight in the overall inflation calculation, especially in rural areas," Sabnavis stated. Ramendra Verma, Partner, Grant Thornton Bharat, points

and housing as contributing factors. "Rural areas rely more on traditional fuels like firewood and charcoal, which have seen price increases," Verma noted.

He also mentions that urban areas benefit from lower housing inflation, a component not included in rural Consumer Price Index (CPI) calculations.

of Rs.1.52 lakh crore has been made in the budget for agriculture and allied sector, out of which Rs.60,000 crore has been allocated for the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman easily buy seeds, fertilizers, Nidhi. Along with this, the government has indirectly

agriculture sec-

tor, a provision

government schemes.

made many provisions, which ment and non-agricultural will brace the rural India. The announcement of 2004. Due to the great sucbringing 6 crore farmers cess of this scheme, KCC will and their land under the be issued in 5 more states on purview of land registry has extensive basis, where it is been made in the budget. By still not distributed among the help of this, GIS mapping, eligible farmers, so that farmdigitization, ownership rights, registration of farmers and take advantage of this. Digital Public Infrastructhe identification of the land

will be done. This will make ture (DPI) will be implementthe process easier for farmers ed in the agriculture sector to to get the benefits of various make farmers and their land a part of the digital network Bio research has many ben- within 3 years. DPI creates efits, such as, it will reduce the a physical network, which is use of pesticides, reduce soil necessary for people to conerosion, animal waste can be nect with each other and acused in the fields as manure, cess various types of goods etc. Therefore, it has been and services. The central govresearch centres in the budget. this concept as a pilot project In the next 2 years, 1 crore in collaboration with the state farmers will start doing natu- government, but there is a proposal to implement this

ral farming, which will also be branded and certified. Giving concept on the ground. concrete shape to this initiative will help people stay Policy will increase opporhealthy, since people fall sick tunities for banks to enter more often due to the use of into loan agreements with harmful chemicals in fertil- co-operative societies. In this izers. Synthetic chemicals are case, banks can increase the At the same time, the crops of not used in natural farming, portfolio of Agri loans by endue to which there is more tering into agreements with nutrition in food, which helps Farmer Producer Organisain keeping the body healthy. tions (FPOs), co-operative To strengthen the supply societies and Agri startups. chain, large clusters will be By entering into agreements developed near the consumpor partnerships with them, tion centres, which will stop banks will be able to underthe wastage of vegetables in stand the cash flow of farmers. villages, and they can be used This will encourage farmers to produce horticulture and optimally. KCC was introduced in other cash crops, because even

farmers based on their land farming in a traditional way. holdings, so that farmers can



crore has been made in the pesticides etc. Further, in budget for the Mahatma Ganloan requirements, investdhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGN-REGA), under which adult activities were linked to it in members of each family willing to work will be provided employment for 100 days. During the Corona period, employment was provided to rural youth under MGNers deprived of this facility can REGA, due to which they were successful in supporting themselves and their families.

The National Health Mission was launched in April 2005, which aims to ensure the availability of quality health facilities for children, women and underprivileged sections living in rural areas, since only a healthy person can improve productivity and upsurge economic activities. proposed to set up 10,000 bio ernment is currently running. The government has made a provision of Rs.28,000/crore for this initiative, which will improve the health of the villagers, enabling them to bring happiness & prosperity

National Co-operation at home & society. In India, farming is still dependent on monsoon. Equal irrigation facilities are not available across the country. farmers are sometimes ruined by floods and sometimes by drought. In such a situation, the importance of crop insurance raises. Insurance works as a lifesaver for the farmer in difficult times. The bank gets the farmer's crops insured, who have taken Kisan Credit Card (KCC) from the bank, but those who have not taken loan from the bank have to 1998 to provide credit to now Indian farmers are doing get their crops insured themselves. To ensure that farmers

insurance scheme.

implemented all over India on provision of Rs.19,000/- crore 23 September 2018. People belonging to Scheduled Caste. Scheduled Tribe category or a family in which there is no earning member above the and artisans of the unorgaage of 16 years or whose annual income is less than Rs.2.5 lakh per annum or listed in the PMJAY beneficiary list can take advantage of this scheme. This is dedicated to improving the health of the deprived or weaker sections of the society. Therefore, to ensure that maximum number of people can avail the benefits of this scheme, the government has made a provision of Rs.7,300/- crore in the budget.

The Pradhan Mantri Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) scheme is being implemented through the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC). which acts as the nodal agency at the national level. PMEGP was started in 2008 by combining the Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana and Rural Employment Generation Programme. It is a loan linked subsidy scheme, which is monitored by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME). The objective of this scheme is to create new employment opportunities in rural and urban areas by promoting new selfemployment related ventures, small enterprises and projects and to stop the migration of rural youth by making people economically self-reliant. A provision of Rs.2,300/- crore has been made in the budget to support this scheme.

In the year 2000, Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had launched the A provision of Rs.86,000/- do not face financial problems Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak

in times of crisis, the govern- Yojana, under which the unment has made a provision of paved roads of villages were Rs.14,600/- crore in the crop connected to the paved roads of cities. Now under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak na or Pradhan Mantri Jan Yojana, there is a plan to con-Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) is nect small and big villages to a health scheme of the Gov- the paved roads of cities and ernment of India, which was to give it a concrete shape, a

> has been made in the budget. Under the Pradhan Mantri Vishwakarma Yojana, banks are financing the craftsmen nized sector to make them economically self-reliant, so that they can be brought into the mainstream. The government has made a provision of Rs.4,800/- crore for consolidation of this scheme.

> Farmers use fertilizers to increase the productivity of crops, in which a large part of the farmers' income is spent. Therefore, to provide financial relief to the farmers, the government has proposed to give a subsidy of Rs.1.19 lakh crore in the purchase of urea, a kind of fertilizers, which is being used by the farmers on large scale in India for increasing productivity of their crops.

> A large part of the population in our country is unable to get meal a day. To ensure that no person in the country remains hungry, a provision of Rs.2.05 lakh crore has been made in the budget for the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY). Under this scheme, 81.35 crore beneficiaries will be provided 35 Kilogram and 5 Kilogram food grains as per their eligibility free of cost from January 1, 2024, for the next 5 years.

To continue the continuity of development in the rural area, it is necessary to ensure the availability of basic facilities in rural India. It seems that budgetary provisions will help in ensuring sustainable development in rural India. Source-Budget Documents

Satish Singh, Ahmedabad based Senior Columnist. Views are Personal

Blueprint for Sustained Growth in Rural India

Thursday.

lowest since September 2019.

2024 from 9.4 per cent in June 2024, the review states. The substantial fall witnessed in food inflation was helped majorly by a decline in vegetable

and fats' and spices. On the other hand, core infla-

Kamala Harris remembers her mother Defence Minister Rajnath Singh hails growing India-US ties Shyamala in acceptance speech

WASHINGTON: Kamala Harris while accepting the Democratic nomination for US president during the party's convention in Chicago on Friday spoke about her life and her Indian mother.

Harris said her Jamaican father, Donald Jasper Harris, always taught her to be "fearless", and her mother, Shyamala Gopalan, was "tough and courageous".

"My mother taught Maya (her sister) and me to never complain about injustice, but do something about it, "she said.

"My mother Shyamala Harris had one of her own. I miss her every day, especially now. And I know she's looking down tonight, and smiling," she said.

Harris said her mother was just 19 and travelled alone to the US to pursue a dream of being a scientist. "So my mother was 19 when she crossed the world



alone, travelling from India to California with an unshakable dream to be the scientist who would cure breast cancer. When she finished school, she was supposed to return home to a traditional arranged marriage. but as fate would have it, she met my father, Donald Harris, a student from Jamaica. They fell in love and got married, and that act of self-determination made my sister Maya and I grow up,

we moved a lot, "said Harris. Speaking of her father, Harris said, "From my earliest years, he taught me to be fearless, but the harmony between my parents

did not last. When I was in el-

ementary school, they split up.." "... it was mostly my mother who raised us before she could finally afford to buy a home. She rented a small apartment in the East Bay, in the bay, in the bay, you either live in the hills

or the flatlands. We lived in the flats, a beautiful working-class neighbourhood of firefighters, nurses and construction workers, all of who tended their lawns with pride, my mother worked long hours, and like many working parents, she leaned on a trusted circle to help raise us, Harris said

"I grew up immersed in the ideals of the civil rights movement. My parents had met at a civil rights gathering, and they made sure that we learned about civil rights leaders, including lawyers like Thurgood Marshall and Constance Baker Motley, those who battled in the courtroom to make real the promise of America. So at a young age, I decided I wanted to do that work. I wanted to be a lawyer. And when it came time to choose the type of law I would pursue, I reflected on a pivotal

moment in my life.

NEW DELHI: Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh praised the growing strength of India-US relations while addressing the Indian diaspora in Washington DC during his four-day visit to the United States at the invitation of US Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin. He said that both countries are long-standing allies capable of working together to promote global peace

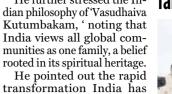
Rajnath Singh emphasised the importance of maintaining cultural values and loyalty

to both India and the United States and also hailed the country's message of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (The entire world is a family).

In his address on Thursday (US time), the Union Minister urged Indians working in the US to remain dedicated to their work and uphold their commitment to both nations. "You should always be

dedicated to India, but your commitment to America should also not be doubted, he stated, highlighting the integrity and honesty inherent

More than a dozen aid trucks cross into famine-hit Sudan: UN He further stressed the In-



He pointed out the rapid transformation India has undergone over the past decade, which has significantly enhanced its global stature. Additionally, two significant

defence agreements -- the Security of Supplies Arrangement (SOSA) and a Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Assignment of Liaison Officers - were also signed between the US Department of Defense and the Indian Ministry of Defence amid Rajnath Singh's visit. The SOSA ensures reciprocal priority support for national defence goods and services between the two nations, aimed at mitigating supply chain disruptions. Both countries also pledged to prioritise each other's critical defence procurement

UNITED NATIONS: In a breakthrough, more than a dozen aid trucks, including from two UN agencies, have

crossed into Sudan's Darfur

region from Chad, UN hu-

manitarians said. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) on Wednesday said trucks from the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) were among the dozen vehicles allowed across the key Adre crossing, reports Xinhua news

agency.
OCHA said the crossing is the most effective and direct cross-border route to deliver humanitarian assistance to Following talks with Polish Sudan at the scale and speed Prime Minister Donald Tusk, required to respond to the Modi said on Thursday that the enormous hunger crisis in the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine country. WFP reported that and West Asia are a matter of trucks could cross into Darfur via Adre and reach key distribution points the same day.

"It is critical to sustain the flow of food and nutrition assistance into and across Sudan, where more than a dozen areas are either in or at risk of famine, "the office said. "WFP is scaling up food assistance there and aims to support more than 8 million

people by the end of the year.' OCHA said WFP reported its trucks carried sorghum, pulses, oil and rice for 13, 000 people at risk of famine in Kereneik, West Darfur, and IOM reported the essential relief items it delivered to Sudan will support more than 12,000 people in need.

PM Modi highlights Gandhi's message of peace ahead of talks with Zelenskyy in Ukraine

Former US President Obama said the US is ready

Kamala Harris, says Obama

US ready for new chapter with

for a new chapter with Kamala Harris in the lead role. He said this while addressing the Democratic

National Convention in Chicago. The four-day event began on Tuesday.

"The US is ready for Harris's presidency, "said Obama, adding: "America is waiting for a new chapter, America is waiting for a better story. We are ready for president Kamala Harris, and Kamala Harris is ready for the job'

Obama said, "We have a chance to elect someone who has spent her entire life trying to give people the same chances, America gave her... It has been 16 years since I had the honour of accepting this party's nomination for President... Looking back, I can say without question that my first big decision as your nominee turned out to me as one of your best friends... History will remember Joe Biden as an outstanding president who defended democracy at a moment of great danger. I am proud to call him my president and born in a small town, served

ris' history as a prosecutor going after big banks and child sexual abusers. "After the home mortgage crisis, she pushed me and my administration too hard to make sure homeowners



got a fair settlement, "said the former president.

Obama said that Kamala Harris and Tim Walz believe in an America "where we the people includes everyone...And despite what our politics might suggest, I think most Americans understand that...That sense of mutual respect has to be part of our message."

The former US president told Democrats that "Harris will be focused on your problems" and "won't just cater to her own voters and punish those who refuse to bend the knee.

Obama said that the rest of the world is watching' what happens in the elections in November.

Praising Walz, Obama said he is "the kind of person who should be in politics - somebody who was even prouder to call him his country, taught kids, Obama highlighted Har- care of his neighbours...He knows who he is and what's

Continuing his attacks on Trump, Obama says that the Republican nominee "sees power as nothing more than a means to his ends ...

KYIV: Prime Minister Narendra Modi began a historic visit to the Ukrainian capital Kviv under the shadow of war to hold

talks with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in what is being seen as a reflection of India's concerns over the continuing conflict between Ukraine and It is the first-ever visit to

Ukraine by an Indian Prime Minister after Ukraine became independent in 1991, and his trip comes amid Kyiv's fresh military offensive in Russia's western Kursk region. On his arrival following a

nearly 10-hour train journey from Poland, Modi was accorded a warm welcome by members of the Indian community at the Hyatt Hotel.

Soon after, Modi visited the multimedia Martyrologist exposition on children at the

NEW DELHI: At the 19th

edition of the CII India-Africa

Business Conclave held in New

Delhi, prominent business lead-

ers emphasised the need for

innovative financial solutions to

bolster trade relations between

The event highlighted poten-

tial strategies to overcome exist-

CII Africa Committee and TATA

International Ltd., stressed the

importance of exploring new

economic partnerships.

financial mechanisms.

India and Africa.

National Museum of History in Kyiv.

Zelenskyy warmly hugged and shook hands with Modi at the exposition. The Prime Minister was

deeply touched by the poignant exposition set up in memory of children who have lost their lives in the conflict, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said. Modi expressed his sorrow

at the tragic loss of young lives and as a mark of respect placed a toy in their memory, it said. The Prime Minister's visit to Kyiv is expected to last for

around seven hours. Ahead of his talks with Zelenskyy, Modi also paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi at his statue located in the 'Oasis of Peace' park in Kyiv.

Modi underscored the timeless relevance of Gandhi's message of peace in building a har-

Rupee Trade & Agri-Tech Collaboration Proposed

Noel Tata, Chairman of the Rupee trade," Tata stated, point-mutual trust between our (India

ing to this as a possible solution

Tata underscored the signifi-

cance of building trust between

to current trade obstacles.

to enhance India-Africa Economic Cooperation



monious society and noted that the path shown by him offered solutions to present-day global challenges, the MEA said.

"Reached Kyiv earlier this morning. The Indian community accorded a very warm welcome," Modi said on 'X' shortly after reaching the Ukrainian capital.

Modi is holding both one-on-

one and delegation-level talks with Zelenskyy with a focus on bringing peace and stability to Ukraine and the larger region.

The prime minister's visit to Kyiv comes nearly six weeks after his high-profile trip to Moscow and it is seen as a balancing act as the prime minister's trip to Russia triggered anguish among the Western countries.

"deep concern" and that "dialogue and diplomacy" is the way forward to restore peace. "This is India's firm belief that no problem can be solved on the battlefield. In any crisis, the loss of lives of innocent people has become the biggest challenge for the whole

"We support dialogue and diplomacy for the early restoration of peace and stability. For this, India, along with its friendly countries, is ready to provide all possible support, he said in a media statement.

of humanity," he said.

Modi held talks with Zelenskyy in June on the sidelines of the G7 summit in Italy's

Bangladesh interim government revokes ousted PM Sheikh Hasina's diplomatic passport the country. Diplomatic pass-

DHAKA: Bangladesh's interim government has revoked ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina's diplomatic passport along with that of all members of the former Cabinet, over two weeks after she resigned and fled to India following a student-led Jatiya Sangsad (Parliament) and

A statement by the Security Services Division of the Home and Africa) financial institutions Affairs Ministry on Thursday said diplomatic passports reticipation, thereby facilitating ceived by the former prime minister, ex-PM's advisors, excabinet members and all members of the recently dissolved



uprising against her govern- their spouses would be revoked investigating agencies, it added. immediately, the official BSS news agency reported.

President Mohammed Shahabuddin in August dissolved the 12th Parliament after Hasina, 76, fled the country. Currently, an interim government passports are eligible for visa-free led by Nobel Peace laureate entry and a stay of up to 45 days.

ports of the officials would also be revoked immediately upon termination of their tenure or appointment, it said. The release said ordinary passports may be issued in their favour based on the reports of at least two

forced to resign in the face of a student-led mass uprising on August 5. According to the Indian visa policy, Bangladeshi citizens holding diplomatic or official Muhammad Yunus is running The Daily Star newspaper said.

HOSTAGES' RELEASE AWAITED

"To address these challenges, financial institutions in both

we are exploring the concept of regions. "Our goal is to build

The US and China Team Up for an Imminent Peace in West Asia



Asia are being cleared with the arrival of the US Secretary of State, Antony Blinken in Tel Aviv on August 19. In the next three

likely to be finalized. sage from the White House, is visiting the war zone that forces before the withdrawal Israel has to accept a ceasefire schedule agreed upon by the immediately. His visit is taking place

of the remaining hostages is

following a week-long talks at Doha among the represent the state -of-the art weapons tatives of Egypt, Qatar and the US for ending the conflict. The allowed the Taliban to butcher optimism in the US Admin- the top political, administraistration was reflected durtive and military officers of ing the ongoing presidential the pro -West regime in Afcampaign of the Democratic Party's presidential nominee Vice-President, in Pennsylvaare no time constraints for Blinken during this peace mission. He has been mandated ninth visit. The outgoing US three countries mediating for President Joe Biden doesn't want to be remembered as the US are for halting most a war-monger in American military operations in Gaza. history. It is also expected that

the proposed ceasefire in West Asia might also improve Kamala Harris's prospects in the forthcoming presidential elecan imme- tion. Her Republican Party diate cessation of rival, Donald Trump, a former conflict in West president, has been repeatedly stating that if he is back in the White House, he would be promoting peace. Before the end of his four-year tenure Trump had signed a peace -four days, a peace formula accord with the Taliban enfor ceasefire and the exchange suring a peaceful withdrawal of the Us-led NATO forces. However, in a bid to embar-Blinken, with a clear mes- rass his erstwhile predecessor, Biden withdrew the US Trump Administration, thus abandoning the pro-West government in Kabul and left worth billions of dollars. Also,

During his two-day stay in the peace, Egypt, Qatar and

Israeli government that the the current year. The Biden Administration of Hamas.

Kamala Harris, presently the Israel before flying to Egypt, Blinken met Israel's top leadnia. It is believed that there ership including President Issac Herzing, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Defense Minister Yuan Galto broker peace during this lant. They were told that the

He reportedly told the old conflict.



ongoing revenge against the Hamas attack of October 7 last year cannot be accepted. The large number of killings of the Palestinians is being

considered genocide by the enlightened American society. The ruling Democrats cannot ignore this growing disenchantment of this section of people, when the forthcoming presidential election is scheduled before the end of

cannot further support this large scale violence anymore.

During the discussions, Blinken reportedly told the Israeli government that his visit to this war-ravaged region since the terrorists' attack on Israel was the last highpowered initiative of the outgoing Biden Administration to broker peace in this 10-month

Chinese Efforts

It is true that the Biden Administration is quite keen to end the conflict, but Beijing has also been lobbying for peace in the region. It is being stated that the Chinese advice to Iran has prevented escalation of the conflict.

The US and China appear to be working on a common agenda to explore possibilities of immediate ceasefire and also get the Israeli hostages released from the captivity

There is no denying that the conflict had begun following the unprovoked attack of the Hamas terrorists on the civilian population of Israel. During their sudden attack on the civilian population of Israel, the Hamas terrorists killed a large number of civilians in Israel. They also abducted more than 250 civilians. It is believed despite a few releases during previous brief (IRGC), the killers had hit ceasefires, there are as many as 110 hostages still being kept as hostages by Hamas.

and expand private sector par-

the implementation of inno-

vative financial solutions," he

It is difficult to assess the impact of the Chinese initiative on the ongoing peace efforts. There are also reports that Beijing has also advised Hamas to sort out their internal difference,

Earlier, China had helped Iran and Saudi Arabia to renew their diplomatic ties. It has helped to prevent further complications in the Iran-Arab ties.

The Sunni -Shia differences and the inability of the Iranian leadership to modernize their governance and education have also adversely affected the prospects of a common platform against Israel.

The Chinese advice to Iran not to avenge the killing of the Hamas leader Ismail Haniveh has been quite timely. It might help in renewing peace prospects in the troubled region. It is yet to be ascertained

who killed Ismail Haniyeh on July 31, 2024, at a highly secured guest house in Tehran. He had been visiting the Iranian capital at the swearing-in ceremony of the new president, Mosoud Pezeshkian.

Nobody has so far claimed the responsibility of killing

According to the Iran's **Revolutionary Guard Corps**

the guest house with a deadly missile, where Haniyeh was

staying in Tehran. The Iranian media has blamed Israel for his assassination. Iran has promised to take revenge against the elimination of the Hamas leader.

It is widely believed that Beijing has quietly played the role of a good Samaritan in diffusing the situation in West Asia.

In recent years, China has been liberally investing in the region. It has developed huge industrial complexes near the Suez Canal. Also, it is one of leading importers of oil from the region.

The proximity between the Biden Administration and China is well-known. Biden's son, Hunter is known to have huge financial stakes in China. It appears China is keen that Democrats reoccupy White House, especially when Trump is committed to shift a large part of American investments in the US from China, thus hurting the long-term financial interests of Dragon.

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

Nearly half of New Zealanders affected by workplace incidents



WELLINGTON: Nearly half of New Zealanders are affected by a workplace incident to themselves, colleagues, family, or friends, a report said on Monday.

The cost of poor workplace health and safety performance, including the cost of lost lives and earnings, serious injury costs to the government's Accident Compensation Corporation, and health issues, rose to 4.9 billion NZ dollars (\$2.97 billion) last year, the report said. That cost was 4.4 billion NZ dollars (\$2.67 billion) in 2022, according to the report of the Business Leaders' Health and Safety Forum, which has been committed to reporting annually on the performance of New Zealand's health and safety system, Xinhua news agency reported.

New Zealand is falling behind its overseas counterparts when it comes to workplace

health and safety, it said.

The country has a 60 per cent higher fatality rate than Australia and the rate is 500 per cent higher than Britain, despite all three countries having similar legislative settings,

the report said. "A worker in New Zealand is twice as likely to die than they are in Australia, " said the forum's chief executive Francois Barton. About 50 per cent had a positive perception of New Zealand's health and safety performance and response following an incident at work, the report said.

Labour Party's workplace relations and safety spokesperson Camilla Belich called for effective investment in Work-Safe, New Zealand's primary workplace health and safety regulator, so it can undertake its important role, in investigation and investment in injury prevention.

Honey Singh celebrates Raksha Bandhan in Birmingham

MUMBAI: Singer and rapper #daughters". Yo Yo Honey Singh has celebrated the festival of Raksha Bandhan with his nieces in Birmingham, England.

Taking to Instagram, Honey, who has 14 million followers on the photo sharing application, dropped a string of photos, in which we can see him wearing a black kurta, matching leather jacket and black ripped denim jeans. He has rounded off the look

with pink tinted sunglasses and is flaunting his salt and pepper hairstyle.

The snap shows his nieces tying him a rakhi on the wrist. and offering him to eat sweets.

The post is captioned as: "Celebrating Rakhi in Birmingham with my Nieces

Raksha Bandhan will be celebrated on August 19 in India. On this day, sisters tie a rakhi around the wrists of their brothers.

Meanwhile, Honey is all geared up for the release of his homegrown international album titled 'Glory'. The electrifying album 'Glory' is set to revolutionise the music industry and set the music scene ablaze with tracks that are destined to become anthems for the youth.

Packed with 18 genrebending tracks, from heartpounding hip hop to firespitting rap, 'Glory' is set to rock international charts with its ultimate mix of sounds and multilingual vibes.





Punjab state border in Shambhu, from a railway station in Amritsar on Tuesday.

Yo Yo Honey Singh declares himself a true 'Lahori', take a look inside



MUMBAI: Rapper Yo Yo Honey Singh, who is known for 'Blue Eyes', 'Angrezi Beat', 'Brown Rang' and others, has said that he is a true Lahori when it comes to food choices

The rapper recently took to the Stories section of his Instagram, and shared a picture of his culinary indulgence, the kheer. He wrote on the picture,

"Heer nahi toh kheer sahi. I'm a true Lahori when it comes to food".

Yo Yo Honey Singh hails from Hoshiarpur in Punjab which is 150 kms away from Lahore in Pakistan. The two cities on either sides of the border share similar culinary history.

The rapper, who predominantly raps in Punjabi, started his career in 2003, and broke out on the scene 2011 with his songs like 'Angrezi Beat', 'Brown Rang', 'Dope Shope and others.

He made his foray into Bollywood in 2012 with the Deepika Padukone and Saif Ali Khan-starrer 'Cocktail' in which his track 'Angrezi Beat'

Sonakshi Sinha shares loved up glimpse of her 'heart and home'

Sonakshi Sinha has shared a sneak-peek from her holiday in New York with her husband Zaheer Khan, whom she referred to as her "heart and home."

Sonakshi took to Instagram, where she posted a handful of romantic pictures featuring her and Zaheer. The first image has her husband holding her. The second image has the two enjoying some wine at a tasting. In the third photograph, Zaheer can be seen giving a soft kiss to his wife. "Home is where the heart is..

and wherever in the world... my heart is with my home - @ iamzahero, " she wrote as the



This is not the first time the actress took to her Insta-Sonakshi has expressed love gram stories, where she shared

Sonakshi got married to her longtime beau Zaheer in a civil ceremony on June 23. They had their families and close friends

a picture of a dessert which had

'I love you more than ice cream'

The description read: "Ev-

eryone needs a cutie like you

to laugh with, cuddle upto, and

make really bad decisions with.

We're like a tiny (but mighty)

little gang. If you haven't noticed

written on it.

already, I think you're pretty cool. Honey, honestly, you complete me xo. Tagging her husband in the picture, she wrote: "Its true."

around them during their inti-

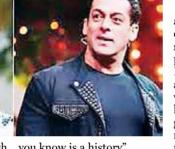
When Salman gave his co-star Bhumika Chawala valuable tips about industry

Bhumika Chawla, who was last seen in the Hindi movie 'Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan', has resurfaced in which she was seen sharing her experience of shooting with Bollywood superstar Salman Khan for 'Tere Naam'.

The archival video shared by Lehren, shows the actress talking about her trajectory, and how she had worked in Tamil and Telugu films before making her foray into the Hindi cinema.

She says, "Before 'Tere Naam', I had already done a and asked if you would like to few south projects in Tamil and Telugu. I have worked with of course, and it all just happroducer Mr. Sunil Manchan-pened so organically and rest

da long back in ad films. Satish ji (Satish Kaushik) saw my film Khushi' and my performance and they got in touch with me work in 'Tere Naam' and I said



to Zaheer. Earlier this week,

you know is a history".

'Tere Naam' is a remake of the Tamil film 'Sethu'. The film was based on a real-life incident of a guy, who fell in love, lost his mind, and ended up at a mental asylum. Salman's portrayal of Radhe Bhaiyya in the film is widely considered to be one of his best performances. The actress also spoke about her equation with her

co-star Salman with whom she has worked in his home production, 'Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan'. "Salman sir is really an amazing actor and person with so much experience..., he literally took me in as a little girl and he would always guide me how I can make my performance better... he helped with a few tips about the industry and how it functions. He is such a big star with a very giving nature and yes of course it was a great experience to work with, "she was seen saying in

Manushi Chhillar



MUMBAI: Actress Manushi Chhillar has shared her many moods and how she ended it with her "favourite food", bhel-

Manushi took to Instagram, where she shared a string of mirror selfies of herself sitting in her vanity van. She ended it with a picture having bhelpuri

and ending it with my fav food,

A former beauty queen, Manushi, who hails from Haryana was crowned with the Miss World 2017 title, 17 years after Indian actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas was feted with the honour. She made her debut in Hindi cinema in 2022 with Akshay Kumar-starrer historical drama "Samrat Prithviraj", directed by Chandraprakash Dwivedi. It told the story of the life of Prithviraj Chauĥan, a king from the Chahamana

A year later, she was seen in the comedy-drama "The Great Indian Family" starring Vicky

taking a break for two years, she was then seen as a wing commander in the Hindi-Telugu bilingual action drama movie "Operation Valentine", opposite Varun Tej.

based on the 2019 Pulwama Attack and the retaliatory Balakot Air Strikes, was directed

She was recently seen in Ali Abbas Zafar's science fiction action film "Bade Miyan Chote Miyan" starring Akshay Kumar, Tiger Shroff, Prithviraj Sukumaran, Manushi, Alaya F, and Sonakshi Sinha. The film is co-produced by Jackky Bhagnani, Vashu Bhagnani, Deepshikha Deshmukh, and Himanshu Kishan Mehra under Pooja Entertainment and AAZ Films

Star cricketer Yuvraj Singh's biopic to celebrate his career and resilience



MUMBAI: Former Indian cricketer and the hero of the ICC 2011 World Cup, Yuvraj Singh is getting a biopic. The yet-to-be-titled film promises to be a grand celebration of his journey and contributions to cricket including the unforgettable streak of 6 sixes in 2007 T20 World Cup, and his stunning performance in the 2011 World Cup owing to which India lifted the trophy after 28 years.

Since his international debut in 2000, Yuvraj Singh has left an indelible mark on cricket. He won fans over with his aggressive left-handed batting and electrifying fielding.

Talking about the film, Yuvraj said, "I am deeply honoured that my story will be showcased to millions of my fans across the globe by Bhushan ji & Damp; Ravi. Cricket has been my greatest love and source of strength through all the highs and lows. I hope this film inspires others to overcome their own challenges and pursue their dreams with unwavering passion".

The yet-to-be-titled film is bankrolled by Bhushan Ku-Zameen Par'.

The cricketer's journey extends beyond his cricketing achievements. In 2011, Yuvraj Singh was diagnosed with cancer but he continued to play for his nation in the World Cup, and was declared player of the tournament for his stellar performance. His courageous battle and subsequent return to cricket in 2012 demonstrated remarkable resilience and inspired millions globally. Bhushan Kumar said, "Yuvraj

Singh's life is a compelling narrative of resilience, triumph, and passion. His journey from a promising cricketer to a cricketing hero, and then to a hero in real life, is truly inspiring. I am thrilled to bring a story that needs to be told and heard through the big screen and to celebrate his extraordinary achievements".

This marks the second time Ravi is bringing a cricketer's story to the big screen. Reflecting on his connection with Yuvraj Singh, Ravi shared, "Yuvraj has been a dear friend for many years. I'm honoured that he trusted us to translate his incredible cricketing jourmar and Ravi Bhagchandka, ney into a cinematic experiwho is known for 'Sachin: A ence. Yuvraj is not just a world champion but a tru every sense of the word".

A complete KNOWLEDGE CAPSULE

SONAM KAPOOR flaunts her 'minimal, bold and effortlessly on point' look



tress and fashionista Sonam Kapoor brought out her Agame in fashion, where she flaunted "minimal, bold and effortlessly on point" look.

The actress took to Instagram, where she shared a string of pictures. In the pictures, she is seen wearing a powder pink shirt, paired with a blazer and long skirt. She completed her look with

"Celebrating @perniaq leason 2 podcast drop with that sleek @phoebephilo energy—minimal, bold, and effortlessly on point. Shoutout to the squad for keeping the vibe, "she wrote and also mentioned that she is styled by her sister Rhea Kapoor.

Recently, Sonam shared several glimpses from her son Vayu's vintage car themed cake as he turned two on August 20.

Sonam took to Instagram, where she shared a reel of the two-tier toddler friendly, refined sugar free chocolate cake. It featured a vintage ice blue car atop of the cake with the number 2 written on it. The actress had also

penned a heart-felt note for her son Vayu. "My baby turns two to-

day!!! Happy 2nd Birthday to our sweet, precious Vayu! W Being your mom is the greatest gift I could ever receive. You've filled our lives with so much joy, laughter, and wonder, "Sonam said.

The actress shared that with her son, everyday is an adventure filled with "your boundless curiosity, your infectious laughter, and your sweet, loving nature.'

"You've brought so much light and happiness into our world, making every moment more beautiful and every relationship stronger. You've deepened the love between your dadaa and me in ways we never imagined, and you've brought pure, unfiltered joy to everyone who loves you-your nani and nana, dadi and baba, kaaa masa, Masi and chachu, "

Doctors and medical students hold placards shout slogans as they protest against the rape and murder of a

A. R. Rahman unveils soundtrack of his musical film 'Le Musk'



doctor in West Bengal, at the Guru Nanak Dev hospital in Amritsar on Tuesday,

MUMBAI: The Oscar-winhas released the soundtrack of the movie 'Le Musk'. The soundtrack consists of 12 tracks, and features a blend of ethereal compositions. The OST Jazz, Orchestra and eclectic elements.

'Le Musk' is a virtual reality thriller film written, directed and co-produced by A. R. Rahman. It stars Nora Arnezeder, truly immersive". Guy Burnet, Munirih Grace and Mariam Zohrabyan. The film promises an innovative sensory cinematic experience as it blends music, fragrance, and

visual storytelling to immerse ning composer A. R. Rahman audiences in a new kind of film and narrative. Talking about the soundtrack, A.R. Rahman said, "Music is the heartbeat of 'Le Musk'. It carries the soul of the film, guiding the audiof the film features a fusion of ence through an emotional and sensory journey. The film is a labour of a lot of hard work and love, where we tried to push the boundaries of how we use technology to create something

He further mentioned, "I am thrilled to finally share this soundtrack with the world and offer a glimpse into the world we've created".

sented at Cannes XR, following experiences at Los Angeles and Toronto. The tracks echo the film's story of love, memory, and sensory exploration, and the album promises to be a oneof-a-kind listening experience for both long-time Rahman fans and newcomers. The 12 track album features

collaborations with artistes

PHOTO: PRABHJOT GILL

such as Nora Arnezeder, Sana Moussa, Linda Lind, Mayssa Karaa, Hiral Viradia, Simona Gilbert. The Firdaus orchestra and the Budapest Orchestra, the soundtrack of Le Musk also marks the association with the award-winning music engineer Greg penny. The film's soundtrack has been released under the label of Believe Music. Rahman recent album 'Amar Singh Chamkila' too was a huge hit in which he collaborated with Imtiaz Ali, Irshad Kamil and Mohit Chauhan, they're often referred as the dream team given their earlier successes like 'Rockstar' and 'Tamasha'.

ends her 'many moods' with her 'favourite food'



puri, a delicacy from Mumbai.

and posing for the camera.

"Fake bruise, many moods

Kaushal. It was directed by

"Operation Valentine" was by Shakti Pratap Singh Hada.

Coming up next for Manushi is set to appear in the action thriller "Tehran", directed by Arun Gopalan and produced by Dinesh Vijan. She will be seen starring opposite action star John Abraham in the geopolitical film.

