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## The Azerbaijan-Armenia border clashes, and the rising fear of another war

**The Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict is decades old with its repercussions potentially engulfing all of the Caucasus. But, what's the reason for the current flare-up?**



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# In US Court, Indian Pleads Guilty In First-Ever Crypto Insider Trading Case

This is the first time that a defendant has admitted his guilt in an insider trading case involving the cryptocurrency markets



(SAI Bureau) : A 26-year-old Indian citizen has pleaded guilty in the first-ever cryptocurrency insider trading case, in which he along with his brother and their Indian-American friend made ill-gotten profits totalling over a million dollars. Nikhil Wahi, a citizen of India and residing in Seattle, on Monday plead guilty to wire fraud conspiracy and wire fraud in connection with a scheme to commit insider trading in cryptocurrency assets by using confidential Coinbase information about which crypto assets were scheduled to be listed on Coinbase's exchanges. Coinbase was one of the largest cryptocurrency exchanges in the world.

This is the first time that a defendant has admitted his guilt in an insider trading case involving the cryptocurrency markets. The charge carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. He is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge Preska on December 13. In July this year, Nikhil and his elder brother Ishan, 32, along with their Indian-American friend Sameer Ramani, 33, who resided in Houston, were charged in the first ever cryptocurrency insider trading scheme. Prosecutors said the three were charged in the first-ever cryptocurrency insider trading tipping scheme, in which the defendants made illegal trades in at least 25 different crypto assets and

realised ill-gotten gains totalling approximately USD 1.5 million.

United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York Damian Williams said that Nikhil, who was arrested in July, pleaded guilty before the US District Judge Loretta A. Preska.

"Less than two months after he was charged, Nikhil Wahi admitted in court today that he traded in crypto assets based on Coinbase's confidential business information to which he was not entitled. For the first time ever, a defendant has admitted his guilt in an insider trading case involving the cryptocurrency markets," Williams said.

He added that the guilty plea should serve as a reminder to those who participate in the cryptocurrency markets that authorities will continue to steadfastly police frauds of all stripes and will adapt as technology evolves.

"Nikhil Wahi now awaits sentencing for his crime and must also forfeit his illicit profits," Williams noted.

According to the allegations in the Indictment, and statements made in public court proceedings, beginning in approximately October 2020, Ishan worked at Coinbase as a product manager assigned to a Coinbase asset listing team.

In that role, he was involved in the highly confidential process of listing crypto assets on Coinbase's exchanges and had detailed and advanced knowledge of which crypto assets Coinbase was planning to list and the timing of public announcements about those crypto asset listings. On several occasions between July 2021 and May 2022, after getting tips from Ishan as to which crypto assets Coinbase was planning to list on its exchanges, Nikhil used anonymous Ethereum blockchain wallets to acquire those crypto assets shortly before Coinbase publicly announced it was listing them on its exchanges. Following Coinbase's public listing announcements, on multiple occasions Nikhil sold the crypto assets for a handsome profit. To conceal his purchases of crypto assets in advance of Coinbase listing announcements, Nikhil used accounts at centralised exchanges held in the names of others, and transferred funds, crypto assets and proceeds of their scheme through multiple anonymous Ethereum blockchain wallets. Nikhil also created and used new Ethereum blockchain wallets without any prior transaction history in order to conceal his involvement in the scheme, it added.

## Indian-Americans Protest Against Hate Crimes, Vandalism Of Gandhi Statue

A moment of silence and prayers were held to pay tributes to the victims and to the heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice to keep them all safe



(SAI Bureau) Indian-Americans held a peaceful protest at the Time Square against the recent spurt in hate crimes and instances of vandalism of Gandhi statue in the city. The protest was organised in association with the influential Federation of Indian Americans (FIA) along with other community outfits. The participants urged the Biden administration and other state

governments to take steps against such instances. Community representatives also expressed concern over the recent and multiple brazen attacks on Mahatma Gandhi's statue in New York and other US cities. A moment of silence and prayers were held to pay tributes to the victims and to the heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice to keep them all safe. Addressing the gathering, India's Consul General in New York Randhir Jaiswal emphasized the need to renew commitment and resolve to be vigilant against hate crimes and terrorism, and to embrace peace-filled harmony and non-violence which are the preaching of father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi. Mr Jaiswal also paid his tribute to the victims of 9/11. In his remarks, FIA president Kenny Desai said those responsible, FIA said. nothing is better than a peaceful march to bring the issue to the attention of the authorities concerned. "As we remember and honour those who lost their lives on this day, we should work peacefully with a committed resolve to abolish extremism and hate-crime," he said. Asserting that there is a lot to learn from the values that Mahatma Gandhi embodies, community leader and Rajasthan Association of North America chief Prem Bhandari strongly condemned the recent incidents of vandalism where the statue of the great global leader was desecrated and destroyed. He demanded strict action by the US government to punish those responsible, FIA said. FIA chairman Ankur Vaidya and chairman of Bihar Foundation of North America Alok Kumar also spoke on the occasion.



# Air India set to boost customer service with new revamp plan

**Air India is all set to regain its lost glory with a new transformation model, boosting customer service**

(SAI Bureau) Air India has unveiled a comprehensive transformation plan, Vihaan.AI, to boost its customer service using better technology. The flag carrier airline of India aims to enhance its reliability and hospitality to re-establish itself as a world-class global airline with an Indian heart over the next five years. The plan, Vihaan.AI (in Sanskrit signifies the dawn of a new era), includes a detailed roadmap with milestones focusing on growing both its network and fleet, developing a completely revamped customer proposition, improving reliability and on-time performance, and taking a leadership position in technology, sustainability, and innovation, while aggressively investing behind the best industry talent. Air India will strive to increase its market share to at least 30% in the domestic market while increasing international routes from the present market share.

The airline's CEO, Campbell Wilson, along with senior management members,



unveiled the Vihaan.AI plan through Workplace, its virtual communication and engagement platform. Over the coming days and weeks, the management team will engage employees across regions, departments, and locations through a series of physical and hybrid sessions. Vihaan.AI has been developed after extensive feedback from Air India employees on their aspirations

and hopes for the airline's growth. Vihaan.AI focuses on five key pillars, exceptional customer experience, robust operations, industry-best talent, industry leadership, and commercial efficiency and profitability. While the immediate focus of the airline remains on fixing the basics and readying itself for growth (taxing phase), the more medium-to-long term focus will be on building for

excellence and establishing scale to become a global industry leader (take off and climb phases).

90 years ago, exactly a month from today, a young JRD Tata piloted the first flight of the airline that would become Air India. Since then, Air India and its employees have persevered through many challenges before its homecoming to the Tata group. Vihaan.AI is the roadmap to restoring Air India to the global map, making it the world-class, digital, Indian airline it is meant to be. Commenting on Vihaan.AI, Wilson, said, "This is the beginning of a historic transformation for Air India and the dawn of a new era. The transformation has already started. A slew of initiatives in areas like refurbishing cabins, serviceable seats, and in-flight entertainment systems are underway. We are also adopting proactive maintenance and refining flight schedules to enhance on-time performance. Our fleet expansion will combine narrow-bodied and wide-bodied aircraft to cater to varied network needs," said Wilson.

## Money, power being used to topple governments: NCP chief Sharad Pawar slams BJP

**Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar on Thursday attacked the BJP and said money, power and other means were being used to destabilise governments in the country**

(SAI Bureau) Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar on Thursday attacked the Bharatiya Janata Party and said money, power and other means were being deployed to destabilise governments in the country.

He said these kind of activities had never taken place at such a big level in the country before. The NCP chief added that a new term "khokha" (crore) was getting popular in the state and was being used in reference to people's elected representatives.

The Shiv Sena and the BJP have been attacking each other since the Maha Vikas Aghadi government collapsed in June and the term is being used to allege that money was exchanged to get MLAs to switch sides.

Queried on eight Congress MLAs joining the BJP in Goa and the Aam Aadmi Party accusing the saffron party of horse-trading attempts in Punjab, Pawar said such activities had led to change of government in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. "In Maharashtra, 40 to 50 MLAs defected (referring to the rebellion in the Shiv Sena) and the government changed. In MP, the Kamal Nath government fell and Shivraj Singh Chouhan returned as chief minister," he said. "They (referring to the BJP) are using money, power and other means to destabilise stable governments and form dispensations as per their wish. This is a new kind of programme that has been undertaken by the party ruling at the Centre. Such a thing was there in the country at a big level," Pawar added. The former Union minister said Central probe agencies were being misused to target opposition parties and their leaders, and went on to warn

that such moves would backfire as "the situation (being in power) would not be permanent, and not today but tomorrow there will be change". Asked about the BJP announcing that it would wrest his home turf Baramati in upcoming polls and the proposed tour of Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to the constituency, Pawar said all parties have the right to take efforts to win seats.

Queried about a joint opposition move to fight the BJP in the 2024 general elections, Pawar said there is a thought process that something should be done by coming together. "There are several people like (Bihar CM) Nitish Kumar, (West Bengal CM) Mamata Banerjee, parties in Delhi and Punjab with whom talks can take place. There is a wish that such (unity) efforts need to be taken, but it has not yet started," he added.

He also mocked the Eknath Shinde government in Maharashtra, which came to power on June 30, saying he had not see any work being done, though the CM was moving about at high speed to understand the state. Asked if the NCP would join the Congress' 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', Pawar said no thought had been given to this aspect so far. There is a lot of time for the march led by Rahul Gandhi to reach Maharashtra, Pawar said, adding that he was getting reports from colleagues about it attracting good response from people, especially the youth. Decrying the continuous mocking of Rahul Gandhi by one party, Pawar said, "You are free to criticise the policies, programme of a party but ridiculing someone at a personal level is nothing but a childish approach."

## Rift in AIADMK favouring DMK: Expelled leader VK Sasikala

**VK Sasikala said that the internal tussle within the AIADMK is helping its political rival DMK in the state**



(SAI Bureau) The internal rift in the AIADMK is favouring its political rival DMK in the state, expelled party leader and once a close aide of former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa, VK Sasikala, told India Today TV. "The people of the state are feeling bad. They are being dominated. The poor are unable to do anything," she said. J Jayalalithaa's once closest confidant, was shown the door by party colleagues EPS and OPS following the former chief minister's death. Now, years later, VK Sasikala said she has forgiven her former colleagues for ousting her. "This was the path followed by our founder, MGR. During his period, a few who were ministers then left us. He didn't have to take

them back, but he didn't want to leave anyone behind. After his death, Amma was alienated while others were together, but I was with her. Then, too, we decided to bring everyone together and accomplished it. After Amma, we are facing the same situation. So, I decided to take the same stance," she reasoned. Undeterred by the expulsion, VK Sasikala says she wants the two factions of the party to merge. "That's what I am working towards," she said, unwilling to reveal her plan of action. But does she consider herself to be the general secretary of the AIADMK? "Yes, it is our cadres' wish. My case is still going on. When it comes to AIADMK, it is always what the cadres wish for," she said.



# Cheetahs to travel empty stomach from Namibia to India, here's why

**Eight cheetahs will be brought to Jaipur in Rajasthan from Namibia in Africa on 17 September in a cargo aircraft as part of an inter-continental translocation project and flown to the Kuno-Palpur National Park in Sheopur district the same day**

(By Staff Reporter) : Cheetahs arriving from Namibia to Madhya Pradesh's Kuno-Palpur National Park later this week will have to spend their entire air transit period empty stomach, a senior forest department official said on Tuesday. Eight cheetahs will be brought to Jaipur in Rajasthan from Namibia in Africa on September 17 in a cargo aircraft as part of an inter-continental translocation project and flown to the Kuno-Palpur National Park (KPNP) in Sheopur district the same day. After taking off from Namibia, food to the felines will be given in KPNP, where they will reach after an hour-long journey in helicopter from Jaipur, some 400km from the national park, the official said. As a precaution, it is mandated that an animal should have an empty stomach at the time of commencing journey, MP Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) JS Chauhan told PTI. He said no food will be given to the cheetahs during their journey from Namibia to Jaipur and then further to the national park.

Such a precaution is needed as long journey may create nausea-like



feelings in animals leading to other complications, Chauhan said. Asked about travel time between Namibia and Jaipur, the forest officer said he has no idea in this regard, but the cargo plane bringing the big cats is scheduled to land at the airport in the Rajasthan capital between 6 am to 7 am on September 17. However, an online travel agency's website showed that one-side journey of a passenger airplane from Windhoek (Namibia's capital) to New Delhi takes 16 hours 40 minutes with a four-hour stop mid-way. Chouhan said

after shifting the cheetahs from the cargo plane to helicopter and completing other formalities, the animals will reach helipads in Kuno-Palpur after an hour-long travel. Officials of the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change were looking after arrangements related to the inter-continental cheetah translocation project and were in touch with Namibian authorities, he said. The MP's forest officer said on arrival the cheetahs will be first kept in small enclosures for a month and then in bigger ones for a

couple of months for acclimatization and familiarisation with surroundings. Later, they will be released in the wild, he said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will release three of these cheetahs into the park's quarantine enclosures on September 17, his birthday, as part of the cheetah reintroduction programme, seven decades after the animal became extinct in India.

"We have set up six small quarantine enclosures as per the legal mandate required during the shifting of animals from one continent to another," an official said earlier. He had said according to the protocol, the animals need to be quarantined for a month each before and after shifting from one continent to another. The last cheetah died in the country in 1947 in Korea district in present-day Chhattisgarh and the species was declared extinct from India in 1952. The 'African Cheetah Introduction Project in India' was conceived in 2009. A plan to introduce the big cat in the KPNP by November last year had suffered a setback due to the COVID-19 pandemic, officials said.



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# Amaravati Farmers' March: 2nd Phase of Protest Begins With Arasavalli Temple Padyatra



December 29, 2019: Appointment of a high-level committee to study the recommendations done by GN Rao Committee and Boston Consulting Group (BCG).

January 3, 2020: The BCG submitted its report by recommending three capitals in the state.

January 7, 2020: Agitated farmers lay seizure of the national highway at Chinakakani. Police confront the farmers.

January 10, 2020: The Police action on the agitated farmers and women who were on the way to pay obeisance to the presiding deity with pongal at Durga Temple in Vijayawada and the Seed Access Road at Velagapudi turned into a war zone.

January 20, 2020: Agitated Amaravati farmers called for Chalo Assembly. Police attacked the farmers with batons at the Assembly.

January 20, 2020: The State Assembly passed the bills on three capitals and the cancellation of the CRDA Act.

January 22, 2020: Demanding to send the bills to the select committee, the TDP members handed over a notice to the chairman of the State Legislative Council. A commotion took place in the house where chairman Sharif decided to send the bills to the select committee.

January 27, 2020: The Council chairman Sharif clarified that he used his powers of discretion under the prescribed rule in order to send the capital bills to the select committee.

February 10, 2020: In-charge

secretary sent back the bills to the council chairman citing the reason for not following the rules.

March 26, 2020: Amaravati farmers' movement reaches its 100th day.

June 16, 2020: The government re-introduced the two bills and the house passed the bills.

June 17, 2020: With the commotion created by the TDP members in the council no debate was done on the said bills.

July 4, 2020: The movement reached its 200th day.

July 18, 2020: State government sends the bills to the Governor.

July 31, 2020: The Governor accepted the bills.

August 8, 2020: Challenging the Acts on the cancellation of the CRDA Act and three capitals, Rajadhani Rythu Parirakshana Samithi (RRPS) filed a case in the High Court.

October 12, 2020: The movement entered the 300th day.

October 23, 2020: Agitated farmers stopped the farmers at Krishnayapalem from other places who are on the way to take part in the programme in support of the formation of the three capitals. The commotion took place between the two groups. Based on a complaint given by the ruling YSRC SC Cell president Ravibabu from Mangalagiri Mandal, the police registered a case under SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocity) Act on 11 agitated farmers and seven out of them.

October 27, 2020: The shifting of the arrested seven farmers from Narasarao pet sub-jail to Guntur district jail by putting handcuffs on them by the police received

criticism.

December 17, 2020: Amaravati Movement completes one year.

March 8, 2021: The Police rudely behaved with the women farmers who were on their way to Durga Temple marking International Women's Day where some of the women were injured.

April 30, 2021: The Amravati Movement entered its 500th day.

August 8, 2021: The Amravati Movement entered its 600th day.

November 1, 2021: The agitated farmers successfully completed their walkathon from Tullur to Tirupati with a banner titled 'Court to Temple' amid the restrictions imposed by the police.

November 11, 2021: The police used their force with batons on the agitated farmers, and their supporters at Chadalawada in Prakasam district when they took up a walkathon where some of the agitators were injured.

November 16, 2021: The Amravati Movement entered its 700th day.

November 22, 2021: The state government introduced a bill in the Legislative Assembly to withdraw the Acts related to three capitals and cancellation of the CRDA Act.

December 17, 2021: Political leaders like TDP supremo Chandra Babu, leaders from left parties Narayana, Ramakrishna, BJP leader Kanna Lakshmi Narayana and others extended their solidarity to the agitated Amaravati farmers by attending a rally at Tirupati marking the culmination of the farmers' walkathon.

(By Staff Reporter) To give more momentum to farmers' 1,000-day-long-movement on creating awareness among the people across the state on the necessity of the formation of Amaravati as a capital, agitated farmers from the area launched the second phase of the massive foot march from Venkatapalem on Monday. The march is scheduled to culminate at the Lord Surya Bhagavan temple in Arasavalli of Srikakulam District after covering 1,000 km. The farmers performed special pujas at the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam temple and conducted prayers. To seek blessing from Lord Balaji, the farmers pulled the chariot of Lord Venkateswara. Leaders and activists irrespective of their political affiliation, including former ministers Maganti Babu, Kamineni Srinivas, CPI leader K Narayana and some of the activists from the ruling YSRC, participated in pulling the chariot.

Farmers, labourers and women from as many as 29 villages under the capital limits, began the 15-km walk from Venkatapalem and will reach Mangalagiri by evening after crossing Krishnayapalem and Yerrabalem villages. The participants made their night halt at Mangalagiri with a determination to fight against the trifurcation of the state.

## Milestones of the 1000-days-long Movement

December 17, 2019: AP Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy made a statement in the Assembly with a proposal for three capitals in the state.

December 18, 2019: Opposing the statement made by the CM, farmers of the capital area launched an agitation in a big way. Protests in various forms took place in the villages under Amaravati capital limits. Agitations took place in Guntur and Vijayawada supporting the farmers.

December 20, 2019: Committee under the guidance of retired IAS officer GN Rao recommends the de-centralization of the administration.

## Probe Launched After UK Home Secretary's Father Files Complaint Over His Goa Property

(News Agency) UK Home Secretary Suella Braverman's father has complained that his two ancestral properties in North Goa have been grabbed by an unidentified person, following which the Special Investigation Team of the state police has filed a case and launched a probe, an official said. Braverman, an Indian-origin barrister, was appointed as the UK's new Home Secretary by Prime Minister Liz Truss earlier this week. Braverman's father, Christie Fernandes, has complained that his two ancestral properties collectively measuring 13,900 square metres in Assagao have been usurped, Superintendent of Police

(SIT) Nidhi Vasan told reporters on Friday. Based on the complaint, the SIT has registered the First Information Report (FIR), he said, adding that an investigation into the case has begun. Fernandes complained that some unidentified person

through power of attorney had filed inventory proceedings with respect to the properties bearing survey numbers 253/3 and 252/3



in Assagao village owned by him and his family members, police sources said. As per the complaint, the inventory proceedings were filed prior to July 27 this year and he came to know about it in August. Fernandes filed the complaint to

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant, state Director General of Police Jaspal Singh and Goa NRI Commissionerate through an e-mail. When contacted, Goa NRI commissioner Narendra Sawaikar told PTI that the e-mail was received last week by his department, which was forwarded to the state home department. "The NRI Commissionerate does not have powers to investigate such cases. Hence, we forwarded the complaint to the home department," he said. The Goa government earlier this year formed the SIT comprising officials from the police, revenue and Archives and Archaeology Department to investigate cases of land grabbing. The SIT is investigating more than 100 such cases in the state, and arrested more than 15 persons, including two officials from the Archives and Archaeology Department.



# 114 'Jihadis' Nabbed in Assam in Last 10 Years: CM Himanta



(News Agency) Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Monday said that a total of 114 "Jihadis" have been arrested from different parts of the state in the last 10 years, including 40 this year. In a written reply to a query by Congress MLA Sherman Ali Ahmed in the Assam Assembly, Sarma said that out of the 114 "Jihadis", 65 were members of banned terror outfit Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and nine were from Hizbul Mujahideen (HM). The list also includes 40 cadres of the Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT) who were arrested since March this year, the chief minister said in a separate reply to BJP legislator Terash Gowalla. "Out of the 114 cadres, the cases of 23 arrested people were transferred to the National

Investigation Agency (NIA) for probe. Of the remaining 91 nabbed people, the cases of 54 were still pending investigation, while chargesheets were filed in the cases of the remaining 37 and they were undergoing trial," he said. In a separate query by Leader of the Opposition Debabrata Saikia, Sarma said that 84 people have been arrested for alleged "Jihadi activities" since the BJP-led government came to power in the state in 2016. He said that of the people arrested in the last six years, 10 were associated with madrassas and they tried to influence people by giving lectures in mosques, madrassas and other religious congregations. "They also distributed Jihadi-related literature and used conversation apps like Omemo and Blablr to maintain contact with each other. So far, no people have been killed in such cases," Sarma said. He also said that Barpeta, Bongaigaon, Morigaon, Dhubri and Goalpara districts have been identified as hubs of "Jihadi activities" in the state. "Foreign nationals are involved in Jihadi activities. Out of such countries, Bangladesh is the most prominent one," Sarma told the House. Out of the 40 people arrested this year, two are women hailing from Morigaon and Dhubri districts, he said. Asked about the definition of a Jihadi, Sarma said, "The member of a fundamentalist group who supports terrorism by use of weapons is called a Jihadi." "Waging of war by Muslim fundamentalist organisations against opponents of Islam, citing the reason that the religion is in danger, is called Jihad. The members of such fundamentalist groups are called Jihadis," he said. Sarma, who also holds the Home portfolio, said Meghalaya's North Eastern Space Applications Centre (NESAC) has completed mapping of 'char' (vegetative islands) areas across Assam. The 'char' areas in the state are mostly inhabited by Bengali-speaking Muslims. The NESAC study was carried out to study the chars, mainly their stability during monsoon, over a 30-year period from 1988 using multi-spectral satellite data. The report also tried to identify and map the 'chars' having settlement for the year 2017-18.

## Janta ka aadmi hu: Kejriwal tells Gujarat cops on his way to dinner with auto driver

Arvind Kejriwal was allowed to go only after he signed an undertaking stating that he is responsible for his own security, the police told India Today TV



(SAI Bureau) 'Janta ka aadmi hu' is what Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal told police officers in Ahmedabad when he was stopped on his way to the home of an auto driver who had invited him to dinner on Monday.

Kejriwal was travelling in an auto rickshaw when the police stopped him, citing security reasons. In a video tweeted by the AAP, Kejriwal, flanked by two party colleagues, is seen telling the officer on duty: "This is why the people of Gujarat

are unhappy. You are stopping me from going to people, citing protocol. And leaders of the state don't go to them. Ask your leaders to break protocol and meet the people."

"We don't want your security. You can take your security away. Why are you forcing us? You have held us hostage," Kejriwal is seen telling the officer, who said that an official communication was sent to the police for Kejriwal's security. "You are arresting me," the chief

minister is heard saying. "You cannot arrest me." The rickshaw was allowed to go ahead with the AAP leader after Kejriwal signed an undertaking stating that he is responsible for his own security, joint police commissioner RV Asari told India Today TV. Kejriwal went on to have dinner at the auto driver's home and thanked him for his hospitality. Stating that the auto driver's wife is from Delhi, Kejriwal invited his host's family to Delhi.

### BJP REACTS

Immediately after AAP put out the videos, BJP's Kapil Mishra tweeted a letter sent to the police by the AAP, seeking special protection for Kejriwal during his Gujarat visit over threats of "a violent attack" on him. "Read this: In Gujarat, the Aam Aadmi Party itself wrote a letter demanding special protection for Kejriwal. It was written in the letter that there could be a violent attack on Kejriwal. Kejriwal drives 32 government vehicles in Delhi. It is shameful to do this spectacle yourself, asking for security in

Gujarat today," Mishra tweeted.

### ARVIND KEJRIWAL'S DINNER INVITE

Earlier in the day, Arvind Kejriwal addressed a gathering of auto rickshaw drivers in Ahmedabad where one of them invited him home for dinner.

"I'm your big fan. I saw a video on social media of you having dinner at the home of an auto driver in Punjab. Will you come to my home as well for dinner?" Vikram Laltani asked Kejriwal as others cheered him on.

"Zaroor ayenge (I will definitely come)," Kejriwal promised, before asking: "Will you pick me up from my hotel in your auto?"

Arvind Kejriwal is on a tour of Gujarat; his one-point agenda is to eat into the BJP fort in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state and sweep to power. In his earlier visits to the state, Kejriwal promised free electricity, up to 300 units, allowances for women and the unemployed, and quality healthcare and free education if voted to power.



# Christian hostel in Chennai, state team deny forced conversion claims made by Tamil Nadu child rights body

The CSI Monahan school management, which was accused of forcibly converting students to Christianity, has denied charges raised by the Tamil Nadu State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (TNCPCR) team against them



an investigation and to rescue students from the hostel of CSI Monahan School, alleging that students were forcibly converted to Christianity and that the school's infrastructure was in a bad state. However, S Samuel, the director of hostels, CSI Diocese, has denied these charges.

## 'ATTEMPTS TO DESTROY SOUTH INDIAN CHURCHES' REPUTATION'

"We are completely denying these allegations. These are planned to destroy the reputation of churches in South India. We don't even

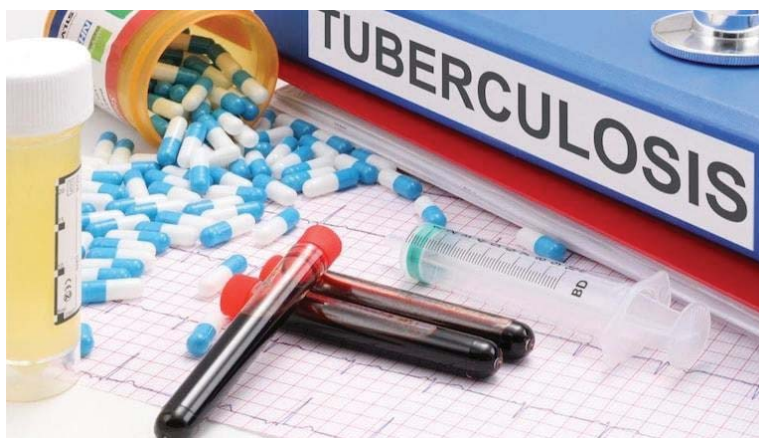
ask our students to go to Church or join us in prayers," stated Samuel, who also claimed that officially no complaints have been received from any students, parents or any commission. A team from the TN government, led by IAS officer Karthika, visited the hostel on Saturday and interacted with the students on the matter. An official from the team stated that a few lapses regarding management were observed, but nothing about forced religious conversion. "There were a few lapses like we saw water

stagnation and such. Students complained that too much homework was given and we instructed the hostel staff to see to it but nothing on religious conversion. We interacted with the students and also randomly with parents on the phone. We didn't observe anything about religious conversion. Most of these students are from villages and have come to the hostel through local church recommendations", stated the official, who also claimed that a detailed report would be handed over to the government.

(SAI Bureau) The CSI Monahan school management, which was accused of forcibly converting students to Christianity, has denied charges raised by the Tamil Nadu State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (TNCPCR) team against them. The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) had earlier written a letter to Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary, Irai Anbu, seeking

# Health ministry to launch 'Adopt a TB patient' programme on PM Modi's birthday

A nationwide blood donation camp spanning over two weeks will also be launched on September 17



for adoption. The Ni-kshay digital portal will provide a platform for community support for people with TB. Mandaviya urged all citizens, NGOs, corporate houses and elected representatives to become Ni-kshay Mitras and convene gatherings to discuss the

initiative. In 2021, India notified 21 lakh TB cases, successfully bridging the gap between the estimated number of cases and those that were recorded on the Ni-kshay portal previously. Since 2018, around 1,707 crore has been disbursed to more than 65 lakh people across the country for

TB treatment. With regard to engaging the private sector, the Patient Provider Support Agencies (PPSA) have been rolled out across 250 districts through the domestic setup and JEET initiative, leading to 32% of all TB patients being notified by the private sector.

(News Agency) The health ministry is planning to launch two health programmes—one of which is the process of adopting tuberculosis patients—on September 17 on the occasion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday, top sources in the health ministry told India Today on Monday. The other programme is a nationwide blood donation camp called "Rakhtdaan Amrit Mahotsav" that will span from September 17 to October 2. "Our aim is to eradicate TB by 2025. We are also starting the process of adopting TB patients. Every district will likely have 150-200 TB patients, who will be provided nutrition kits. We are also planning on reaching out to people to adopt TB patients," said sources in the health ministry.

## HOW CAN ONE ADOPT A TB PATIENT ?

Nikshay Mitra is a government project that enables people to adopt tuberculosis patients and take care of their nutritional and medical requirements.

The duration of the support can span from one to three years, depending on the duration of the treatment of the patient. There are three types of support that Ni-kshay Mitras can provide—nutritional, diagnostic, vocational and additional nutritional supplements. To become a Ni-kshay Mitra, one needs to visit the website [communitysupport.nikshay.in](http://communitysupport.nikshay.in) and find out the state, district, block and peripheral health institution for donation. "The main aim of Ni-kshay Mitra is to reach out to about 9 lakh TB patients and provide a nutritional diet, which includes a monthly food basket and supplements containing Vitamin B complex, Vitamin C and minerals..." said a senior official from the health ministry.

Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Union minister for health and family welfare, informed there are roughly 13.5 lakh TB patients registered on the Nikshay portal, of whom 8.9 lakh active TB patients have given their consent

# CBI to take over Sonali Phogat murder case

(News Agency) The Union government has issued a notification directing the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to take over the Sonali Phogat murder case. The probe agency will lodge an FIR in the case soon, sources said. This development comes after Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant wrote to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) seeking an investigation by the CBI. Haryana BJP leader Sonali Phogat died in



Goa on the intervening night of August 22-23, and her death is being treated as a case of murder. The autopsy of Sonali Phogat revealed multiple 'blunt injuries' on her body. The Goa Police had also said that Phogat was "forcibly drugged by her two associates". So far, five persons have been arrested in the case, including her personal assistant Sudhir Sangwan and his associate Sukhwinder Singh. Besides, Edwin Nunes, owner of the iconic Curlies where Phogat was seen partying hours before her death, as well as two others - Dattaprasad Gaonkar and Ramdas Mandrekar - have been

arrested in connection with the murder. According to sources, the CBI will now take over the First Information Report (FIR), case diary, statements and other documents related to the case of the Goa Police.

Meanwhile, a Goa court has sent accused Sudhir Sangwan and Sukhwinder Singh to 13-day judicial custody.

## STAY ON CURLIES DEMOLITION

The Goa government had begun demolishing the restaurant, where Phogat was allegedly drugged by her aides, over violations of the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) norms. However, the Supreme Court stayed the demolition but directed the owners to suspend all commercial activities till further orders from authorities. Drugs were recovered from the Curlies post Sonali Phogat's death. The owner of the restaurant, Edwin Nunes, is currently out on conditional bail. The court said Nunes cannot visit Curlies and needs to get permission before leaving Goa.



# Ajit Pawar walks off stage during party meet; not the first time NCP leader is sulking

**NCP leader Ajit Pawar refuted rumours of him being angry with the party. However, history suggests that the state's former deputy chief minister got annoyed with his party several times**

(By Staff Reporter) Former Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra Ajit Pawar on Monday tried to lay to rest rumours about his anger with his party members. The Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader clarified in a press conference that there was no reason for him to be unhappy. The rumours of a rift in the NCP gained ground after Ajit Pawar suddenly left the stage where NCP state president Jayant Patil was delivering his speech. However, Pawar returned on stage when NCP chief Sharad Pawar started his speech. "It was a national conference. The party's state president Jayant Patil spoke on the state unit's behalf. I had only gone to the washroom and it was speculated as if I was unhappy by a section of the media," said Ajit Pawar in a press conference. However, there have been several instances in the past when Ajit Pawar got

miffed at his party. When Ajit Pawar entered politics, Sharad Pawar's daughter Supriya was unwilling to join politics. It was then that Ajit was seen as Pawar's apparent heir. In 2004, when the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) led by Dr Manmohan Singh came to power at the Centre, Pawar was made the Union Agriculture Minister. Later, things in the party started taking a different shape when Pawar shifted his base to Delhi. Political circles started buzzing when Pawar decided to launch Supriya into active politics. In 2006, when Supriya Sule was elected to the Rajya Sabha unopposed, it was perceived that Ajit was being sidelined in the party. However, the family, including Ajit and Supriya, denied any rift on numerous occasions. Still, the political turnout of events in the next few years only suggested a widening of the rift in the party. In 2008, within two years of

Supriya's entry into politics, Ajit's first signs of discomfort became apparent after the terror attacks of 26/11. After the attack, when CM Vilasrao Deshmukh and Deputy CM RR Patil resigned, Congress replaced Deshmukh with Ashok Chavan, and Pawar brought back his loyalist Chhagan Bhujbal. Chhagan's appointment annoyed Ajit Pawar to the extent that he went unreachable for two days. Later, Pawar had to persuade him to come back. In September 2012, following the announcement of a white paper on irrigation projects by former CM Prithviraj Chavan, Ajit unexpectedly resigned. The move came as a surprise even for Sharad Pawar. Before the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, Ajit insisted on a ticket for his son Parth against the will of Sharad Pawar for the Maval Loksabha Seat. Eventually, Parth lost the election.



Just ahead of the 2019 assembly elections, Sharad Pawar resigned as an MLA. Even this time, Sharad Pawar was left clueless about Ajit's resignation. Finally, the Report (ECIR) for the Maharashtra state Cooperative bank case. The entire politics of the state was stirred when NCP workers across Maharashtra took to the streets after Senior Pawar announced that he would visit the ED Office. The protests turned fruitful for the party, which was marred by the mass exodus. Just as Sharad Pawar gave momentum to the party, Ajit Pawar resigned as an MLA. Even this time, Sharad Pawar was left clueless about Ajit's resignation. Finally, the Report (ECIR) for the Maharashtra state Cooperative bank case. The entire politics of the state was stirred when NCP workers across Maharashtra took to the streets after Senior Pawar announced that he would visit the ED Office. The protests turned fruitful for the party, which was marred by the mass exodus. Just as Sharad Pawar gave

## India to become 3rd largest economy in a few years: Amit Shah

**Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Monday said that India will become the third largest economy in the world very soon**

(NewsAgency) Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Monday said India will become the world's third-largest economy a few years from now and the cooperative sector will also play a crucial role in the country's economic growth. Shah, who is also the Home Minister, announced that the government will help set up 2 lakh new dairy cooperatives at the village level before the 2024 general elections. He asked the dairy industry to adopt professionalism, the latest technology, computerization, and digital payment in a big way, else it could face difficulties going forward. The minister asked the dairy industry to boost milk production for meeting rising domestic demand and also to supply to poor nations. He also exhorted the industry to become self-sufficient in the manufacturing of machinery used for milk processing. Shah was speaking at the International Dairy Federation World Dairy Summit (IDF WDS) 2022, being organised at India Expo Centre & Mart here during September 12-15. The minister said

India was the 11th largest economy in the world in 2014 and now it has become the fifth largest. "I am fully confident that in a few years from now, we will reach third position," the minister said. Shah expressed confidence that the contribution of the cooperative sector would also be discussed when the country would become the third largest economy in the world. Stating that the summit is being organised after a gap of 48 years, Shah said the country has now become self-sufficient in milk production and also an exporter. The minister sought to distinguish between dairy cooperatives and corporates involved in this sector. Shah said the dairy cooperatives have played a big role in women

empowerment and also in fighting malnutrition. "Cooperative sector and dairy cooperatives have worked a lot in rural development," he added. Shah asked the dairy industry to make natural farming its lifeline as this would improve the health of people and also strengthen the economic system. The Minister announced that three multi-cooperative societies are being set up to promote organic farming and exports. By the end of this month, Shah



said Amul will set up an export house to promote organic products. The minister also shared the success story of Amul, whose annual turnover has reached about 60,000 crore. Shah highlighted that 77 per cent of retail prices of milk are passed on to farmers, as against 40-45 per cent in the world. The minister highlighted that the cooperative model is the best for all-around development. In his address, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said there is a huge scope for growth of the cooperative sector in the state. For employment generation and rural prosperity, he emphasised that there is a need to promote cooperative and dairy sectors. The dairy sector provides livelihood for farmers as well as nutrition, Yogi Adityanath said. Union Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Parshottam Rupala urged the cooperatives to promote the use of cow dung and cow urine, which he said are sacred. The National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) has already formed a company to do research on cow dung and urine, he added.



# J&K sub-inspector recruitment scam: CBI searches 33 locations, seizes 'incriminating documents'

The premises being searched belonged to former Jammu and Kashmir Service Selection Board (JKSSB) chairman Khalid Jehangir; JKSSB Controller of Examination Ashok Kumar, apart from officials of J&K Police and a CRPF official



before commencement of the examination. In this regard, involvement of a gang domiciled in Haryana, certain teachers of J&K, some serving/retired personnel of CRPF, J&K Police and JKSSB has allegedly come to light. Investigation is continuing," the CBI said in a statement. Last month, the agency had booked three officials of JKSSB, a BSF officer, a former CRPF officer and a J&K policeman, among others, for alleged irregularities in the Sub-Inspector recruitment exam in the Union Territory. The irregularities led to an abnormally high number of candidates being selected from Jammu, Rajouri and Samba districts.

The agency had then also conducted searches at 30 locations spread across Jammu, Srinagar and

Bengaluru. In all, the agency has booked 33 people and entities, which include a coaching centre in Akhnoor and a Bengaluru-based company. The examination was held on March 27 this year and the results were declared on June 4, listing 1,200 successful candidates out of over 97,000 who had appeared in the exam. However, soon after the declaration of the result, unsuccessful candidates took to the street, alleging fraud in the recruitment process. On July 8 the J&K administration cancelled the exam with Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha announcing on Twitter ordering a CBI probe. The administration had also constituted an inquiry committee to look into the matter.

Those booked by the agency have been identified as Dr

BSF Frontier Hqrs, Paloura; Ashok Kumar, ASI, J&K Police; Ashwani Kumar, former CRPF official; Avinash Gupta, owner of EDUMAX Classes, Akhnoor; Akshay Kumar, a manager at the coaching centre; Roshan Bral, a Rehbar-e-Taleem teacher; JKAS officer Narayan Dutt, who was then a member of JKSSB; Bishan Dass, then Under Secretary, JKSSB; Anju Raina, then section officer, JKSSB; and M/s MeritTrac Services Private Limited, Bengaluru. After cancelling the exam, Sinha had tweeted: "JKP Sub-Inspector recruitment has been cancelled and a CBI probe has been recommended into the selection process. Culprits will be brought to justice soon. It's a first big step towards securing future of our youth and the govt will soon decide future course of action for fresh recruitment."

(News Agency) The CBI on Tuesday searched 33 locations across the country in connection with its probe into the J&K Sub-Inspector recruitment exam scam. In a statement, the CBI said it seized "incriminating documents and digital devices" during the operation. Sources said the searches were carried out in Jammu, Srinagar; Karnal, Mahendergarh, Rewari in Haryana; Gandhinagar in Gujarat; Delhi; Ghaziabad in

Uttar Pradesh, and Bangalore in Karnataka. The premises being searched belonged to former Jammu and Kashmir Service Selection Board (JKSSB) chairman Khalid Jehangir; JKSSB Controller of Examination Ashok Kumar, apart from officials of J&K Police and a CRPF official. "Investigation has revealed the alleged payment of Rs 20-30 lakh (approx) by willing candidates and their families to the accused for accessing the question paper

## Fitness trainer accused of rape by Telugu actor held in Mumbai

A Mumbai-based fitness trainer has been arrested after a Telugu actor registered a complaint against him alleging rape

(By Staff Reporter) The Mumbai Police on Tuesday arrested a fitness trainer after an actor, who has worked in Telugu films, filed a complaint, claiming that he had raped and assaulted her. The accused, identified as Aditya Kapoor,



allegedly promised to marry the actor and then raped her repeatedly. The case has been registered with the Cuffe Parade police station in South Mumbai. According to police, the accused refused to marry the actor, made excuses initially and later

public. He also threatened to kill her. Following the threats and assault, the woman registered a case against the accused. He has been booked under sections 376, 323, 504, 506(2) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), 67 and 67A of the Information Technology (IT) Act.

## Mumbai Anti-narcotics cell cracks down on drug trade, seizes Mephedrone worth Rs 48 lakh

Mumbai Police's Anti-Narcotics Cell (ANC) on Tuesday conducted raids and arrested three persons, including a Nigerian, for the possession of Mephedrone (MD) worth over Rs 48 lakh

(By Staff Reporter) In a massive crackdown against the sale and consumption of drugs, sleuths from Mumbai Police's Anti Narcotics Cell on Tuesday arrested three drug peddlers and seized 240 grams of Mephedrone (MD) worth Rs 48 lakh in the last 24 hours. The drugs were seized from two different locations by the Azad Maidan and Ghatkopar units of the narcotics cell. One of the accused has been identified as Rizwan Sayyed (42), who was found with 35 grams. He was arrested from

Ghatkopar. When probed further, Sayyed revealed that the second accused, Shahnawaz Ansari, had supplied the drugs to him. Ansari was found in possession of 115 grams of MD and already has two pending narcotics cases to his name in Ghatkopar and Mahim police station limits. **NIGERIA CITIZEN ARRESTED IN SECOND**

### OPERATION

The Ghatkopar unit arrested a Nigerian national from Kalina in Santacruz East after



they found him in possession of 90 grams MD. The state agency registered a chance possession case against him. The accused, Oduburu Somutochukuwo, is a repeat offender as there are previous pending cases against him. All three have been booked under relevant sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act and remanded to police custody.



# Shashi Tharoor 'loses cool' as TV anchor Tucker Carlson says Britain civilised India



(SAI Bureau) Shashi Tharoor, the leader of the Congress, was furious when Fox News host Tucker Carlson made the untrue claim that India lacked civilization and had not produced any architectural wonders prior to the start of the British colonial era. The Fox News host who is accused of promoting false information regarding the Covid-19 vaccine during the epidemic on his prime-time programme and of omitting the Capitol Hill riots remarked that the British

"didn't just take things, they added." Strong nations rule over weak ones. This pattern has not altered. At least the English were serious about their colonial duties. Instead of only taking, they also added. When we (the US) departed Afghanistan, we also took our arsenal with us. Carlson said that the British had abandoned civilization when they departed India, disregarding the country's long history of civilisation and even the fact that the first highly developed human

civilizations originated there. While ignoring the Taj Mahal, the Hawa Mahal, the Mehrangarh Fort, the Golconda Fort, and countless other numerous gorgeous, enormous structures that dot the landscape of the seventh largest country in the world, Tucker displayed a graphic

of the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus in Mumbai and claimed that India has been unable to construct such architectural wonders. In response to Tucker Carlson's tirade, Tharoor uploaded two furious face emojis and said: "I think Twitter ought to have an option

for something to press when you can't respond without losing your cool." During his Fox News primetime programme, Tucker Carlson went on the offensive and even asserted that the British did not carry out any genocide during the colonial era.

## 'Misusing children as political tools': Child rights body seeks action against Rahul Gandhi

**The child rights body has written a letter to the Election Commission seeking action against the Congress and Rahul Gandhi for involving children in the Bharat Jodo Yatra**

(By Staff Reporter) The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) on Tuesday asked the Election Commission to initiate action against the Congress and MP Rahul Gandhi for allegedly "misusing children as political tools" during the Bharat Jodo Yatra.

The apex child rights body also urged the poll body to initiate an inquiry into a complaint filed against the Congress leader. The commission said that it received a complaint which alleged that Rahul Gandhi and Jawahar Bal Manch are "targeting children with political intentions and getting them involved in political activities." "Many disturbing images and videos have been circulating on social media wherein it can be seen that children are being targeted and are made to participate in their campaign with a political agenda under the slogan Bharat Jodo, Bacche Jodo," the NCPCR said in a statement. The NCPCR added that this is a violation of Election Commission rules which

specify that only adults can be part of a political party. "There is a prima-facie violation of child rights. Further, the use of children as props to fulfil a political agenda is child abuse, which can have a severe long-term impact on their mental health and is



against Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. The commission thereby requests your good offices to look into the matter and have a thorough inquiry of the events and take necessary action against the political party and its members who have been mentioned in the complaint," it said in its letter to the EC.

## Haryana: Four arrested for cheating on pretext of inflated returns

**The accused were identified as Kapil, a resident of Ambala Cantonment, Vikas Kalra of Ambala City, Tarun Taneja and Ramesh Kumar, both residents of Kurukshetra**



(News Agency) Haryana Police said that during the investigation, properties worth about Rs 60 lakh have been seized from the accused including four vehicles, cash and gold, along with the freezing of 13 bank accounts. Ambala Sadar police station received a complaint against the accused that they had been duping in the name of investing in Crypto World Trading Company. Subsequently, a case under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) was registered and a police team was constituted including personnel from the economic, crime and cyber wings, to probe the case further.

## Hindi Diwas 2022: History, significance and all you need to know

**On 14 September, 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India accepted Hindi as the country's official language. Along with Hindi, English is also the official language of India**

(By Staff Reporter) Every year, Hindi Diwas is celebrated on 14 September in schools, colleges, and offices to mark the adoption of Hindi as the official language of India. On 14 September, 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India accepted Hindi as the country's official language. Along with Hindi, English is also an official language of India. Hindi Diwas acknowledges the importance of the Hindi language. The young generation is encouraged to speak and write this language more frequently. Various cultural festivals are held on this day to celebrate and honour Hindi literature. As of 2022, Hindi is the third most spoken language in the world with around 602.2 million speakers, according to statista.com.

**History:**

After the adoption of Hindi as the official language of India, the country's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, decided to mark 14 September as Hindi Diwas. The day also marks the birth anniversary of Beohar Rajendra Simha, who worked devotedly to make Hindi the official language of India.

**Significance:**

On Hindi Diwas, awards such as Rajbhasha Gaurav Puraskar and Rajbhasha Kirti Puraskar are given to the government ministries, departments, citizens, and nationalised banks for their contribution to the Hindi language. From 14 September to 21 September, Rajbhasha Week or Hindi Week is celebrated to promote the Hindi language. Various events and competitions are organised in schools, colleges, and offices during this week.



## Without Razing Govt's Image in Poll-bound K'taka, CM Prepares Roadmap for Demolition Drive in Bengaluru



Ashoka.

### CONSULTATION OVER CONFRONTATION

The government has decided to demolish smaller structures like compounds and gates before razing big building. It is also likely to hold discussions with big builders like Bagmane tech park and owners of Epsilon which houses the rich like Rishad Premji, Byju's co-founder Byju Raveendran and others. The administration is likely to ask them to vacate encroachments on their own and make way for drain construction. In the meantime, Bagmane tech park has reportedly approached the Lokayukta questioning the survey. The builder wants other encroachments downstream to be removed before the bulldozers entire the tech park. "Bagmane is saying clear all encroachments first after that you can demolish our structures, but that is what every encroacher will say. We can't buy that. We will demolish any structure blocking the storm water drain structure," said Mahadevapura MLA Aravind Limbavalli. Revenue department has been asked to file caveats in court wherever required to ensure courts do not stay the demolition drive.

(News Agency) The Karnataka government led by Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai has promised to remove encroachments on the stormwater drain and its buffer area in Bengaluru after the IT belt of the city was flooded during torrential rains last week. Encroachment of lakes and stormwater drains was seen as the primary reason for flooding. News18 has learnt that the state government has chalked out a road map for the demolition drive to ensure that drains are built without the encroachment removal drive damaging Government's image in an election year. Karnataka Assembly polls are due in 2023 and the BBMP elections might happen if the court refuses to stay the current delimitation and ward reservation notifications. The government has decided to go after big villas and tech parks first before demolishing small houses. BJP leaders are worried about its image being dented. With the question being raised on whether the government is going soft on big builders, especially the Bagmane tech park where Minister MTB Nagaraj is alleged to have business interests, the government fears that it might be perceived as anti-poor and favouring the mighty builders. "Earlier, governments stopped demolition once the rain stopped. But we will not stop, it is a continuous process and till full storm water drain network is established we will not stop. No question of rich and poor or sparing anyone," said Revenue Minister R

## Ganguly-Shah Case: SC Asks Amicus Curiae to Return on Wednesday with Draft on Changes to BCCI Constitution



(SAI Bureau) The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked amicus curiae and senior advocate Maninder Singh to hold a meeting with all the stakeholders and discuss the changes to be proposed in the constitution of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). A two-judge bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and Hima Kohli asked Singh to come back on Wednesday with a draft regarding the changes to the constitution, particularly with regard to the change in the cooling-off period for the office bearers. Solicitor general Tushar Mehta appearing for the cricketing body apprised the court that there is a cooling-off period provided. "If I am office bearer of a state cricket association for one term and office bearer of BCCI for one term, I'll have to go for cooling-off for one term. AGM unanimously resolved that both the bodies are different," he said. He further suggested that the cooling-off period should be removed for someone if he has served one term in a state association and then served a term at the BCCI. The bench also asked why the 70-year age limit should be done away with when it comes to representatives at the ICC. Responding to the query, the solicitor general said, "We want this 70-year age to go as far as representation to the ICC is concerned as negotiations have to be done. I'll be dealing with veterans who know each other for 30-40 years." "Let the younger people represent us at the ICC. Let people after 70 give way to the younger generations. There's enough time to do all that till 70," the bench then remarked. "We have AG.

## 14-year-old Indian girl eats rat poison mistaking it for cake, dies

(SAI Bureau) A 14-year-old girl with a movement disorder, general dystonia, died in southern Puducherry state after allegedly consuming rat poison mistaking it for a chocolate cake. The incident took place on Sunday afternoon after the girl, R Saloth Nithikshina, complained of nausea and vomiting. When her mother, Mary, enquired, Nithikshina said that she ate the "cake" kept at the window. A 'shocked' Mary told her daughter that the cake she ate was, in fact, rat poison, following which the girl was immediately rushed to a state-run hospital in Kottuchery. After administering first aid, the girl was later taken to a bigger hospital in Karaikal where she was admitted in the Intensive Care Unit. But despite their best efforts, the doctors couldn't save her. The police have registered a case under section 174 (police to enquire and report on suspicious death) of the Criminal Procedure Code and began their investigation, according to the Times of India newspaper.

The girl was staying at home after she discontinued her studies two years ago due to being diagnosed with general dystonia, police said. A similar incident had taken place in western Mumbai city last month, where a 24-year-old woman died after mistakenly eating rat poison instead of medicine for stomach ache.

## Mumbai woman arrested for vulgar posts on Facebook page of Devendra Fadnavis's wife

**The accused had created over 53 fake accounts on the social media platform and 13 accounts on Gmail from which she would make the posts, the police said**

(SAI Bureau) A 50-year-old woman was arrested today for posting abusive and vulgar comments on the official Facebook page of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis's wife Amruta Fadnavis. The accused, according to the cyber cell department of the police, has been posting such abusive content for two years. In a statement issued by the Maharashtra cyber department, officials said that the accused, identified as Smruti Panchal, had created over 53 fake accounts on the social media platform and 13 accounts on Gmail from which she would make the posts. An FIR was registered under

relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Information Technology Act, 2008. The accused was produced before the court, where she confessed. She has been remanded in police custody till September 15. The police are yet to ascertain the motive behind her actions. In the statement, the department warned users against posting vulgar content on the Internet, "Maharashtra Cyber requests citizens to be vigilant and aware not to post derogatory/offensive/abusive/vulgar content through fake accounts on social media platforms," the statement read.





# Sheikh Hasina completes her productive visit to India

By Susmita Ghosh

Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, paid a State Visit to India in September 2022, at the invitation of Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. During her visit, PM Sheikh Hasina called on the President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu and the Vice President of India, Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar.

In her tour program, Sheikh Hasina visited Ajmer Sharif Dargah where she was given a red carpet welcome. She also launched the "Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Student Scholarship" for 200 descendants of Indian Armed

Forces personnel martyred and critically injured during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971. She also addressed a business event, jointly organized by Indian and Bangladesh business

communities. Bangladesh occupies a key place in India's Neighbourhood First Policy. India's links with Bangladesh are civilizational, cultural, social and economic. Much unites the two countries- a shared history and common heritage, linguistic and cultural ties, and passion for music, literature, and the art form. Rabindranath Tagore created the National Anthems of both India and Bangladesh as well. Three edges of Bangladesh's land border are shared with India and one runs along the Bay of Bengal. India and Bangladesh share 4096.7 km. of the border, which is the longest land boundary that India shares with any of its neighbors. They established diplomatic relations with the country immediately after its independence in December 1971 as a friendly South Asian neighbor as well. Both the countries have achieved many lasting milestones of co-existing leadership of the current prime ministers in their respective nations. This visit has set the ball rolling for the next few years of cooperation primarily on economics and connectivity.

The bilateral trade has soared to \$18 billion now, doubling in the last five years. As Bangladesh moves from the category of least developed countries to developing country status in the next couple of years, both the countries talk

informally on the way forward to keep the special relationship growing. However, one of the defining aspects of bilateral relations since Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to office has been on getting the north-eastern region of India more engaged with Bangladesh. Dhaka has also reciprocated well to this matter. There are many levels of engagements that have caught a sustained pitch on this front.

Out of the 4,096 km-long border area with India, Bangladesh and northeast India share a total of 1,879 km and a significant part of that is riverine. This naturally offers the prospect for water sharing for navigational as well as economic pursuits.

**The main agenda is withdrawal of the water by India and Bangladesh from the common border river Kushiya in southern Assam. PM Modi also talked about working together on data-sharing technology to detect natural calamities and disasters especially related to river overflow in the monsoon**

The main agenda is the withdrawal of water by India and Bangladesh from the common border river Kushiya in southern Assam in a pertinent manner. PM Modi also talked about working together on data-sharing technology to detect natural calamities and disasters, especially those related to river overflow in the monsoon.

In April 2022, Bangladesh allowed India to use two of its important shipping ports, Mongla and Chittagong. Chittagong Port is well connected with Tripura through two of its cities — Comilla and Feni — whose distances are 212 km and 241 km respectively from Agartala. India has successfully tested the cargo shipment of goods from central and east India to the Northeast through the Chittagong port. Very recently, a vessel containing 25 metric tons of TMT bars was flagged off from SP Mukherjee Port in Kolkata for Silchar in Assam.

However, significant issues like river water disputes (Teesta River Water sharing), aiding illegal immigrants and drug trades between India and Bangladesh, must be addressed. Good relations are essential for the development of the Indian Northeast region, exploring the Indo-Pacific region and for greater connectivity to South Asian countries. A collaboration between the two countries on the present scale and its gradual improvement will ensure prosperity on either side of the border.

# What the FM found missing

Centre has been pushing for investments, but private sectors seems hesitant to take the plunge

A few weeks after government data showed that the Indian economy was growing at a slower pace than expected, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman exhorted the private sector to step up investments in the country. Sitharaman, who was speaking at the

Mind mine Summit, drew a direct contrast between foreign investors, who she argued were confident about investing in India, and the domestic private sector, which appears to be hesitant.

"Since 2019 when I took charge of the finance ministry, I have been hearing that the industry doesn't think the environment is conducive... I want to hear from India Inc. what's stopping you?" she said. The minister listed various steps that the government has taken over the years to encourage investment activity in the economy — from cuts in the corporate tax rate to production linked incentive schemes. Yet, despite these, there isn't concrete evidence of a broad-based pick up in investments.

Investment activity has remained muted since 2015-16, with the share of gross fixed capital formation, which connotes investments in the economy, hovering around 28 per cent of GDP. While activity did bounce back from the depths of the pandemic, at the end of 2021-22, investments were only 3.7 per cent higher than their pre-pandemic levels of 2019-20. And there aren't enough indications of a significant uptick in

investments in the near term. As per CMIE, in the first quarter of this year, investment proposals for adding new capacities in industrial, infrastructure and services, added up to Rs 3.57 lakh crore. This is only marginally higher than the average investment proposals in the preceding three quarters.

In the past, the twin balance sheet problem — an over-leveraged corporate sector and banks saddled with bad loans — was thought to have been holding back investment activity.

Since then corporate and bank balance sheets have improved, but large parts of the economy continue to struggle. As per a report in this newspaper, 16.4 per cent of the loans availed by MSME under the ECLGS facility during the pandemic have turned bad as borrowers are not able to service the loans due to financial distress. Among the informal units, with no access to formal sources of finance through which government support was made available, the stress is likely to have been even more severe. Considering that the MSMEs account for a sizeable share of employment, this impacts both employment and income prospects. The clearest sign of the persisting labour market distress comes from the continuing reliance on MGNREGA. This uncertainty over job and income prospects reflects in consumer sentiments remaining in the pessimistic zone, which in turn affects business sentiment and investment decisions.

**Since 2019 when I took charge of the finance ministry, I have been hearing that the industry doesn't think the environment is conducive... I want to hear from India Inc. what's stopping you?"**

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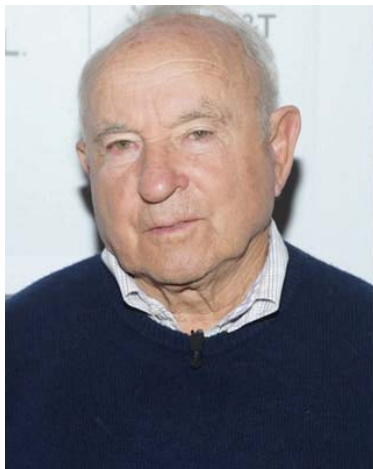
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# American Billionaire Donated His Entire Company To Combat Climate Change

The founder of outdoor retailer Patagonia announced that he has given away his company in an effort to fight climate change



Collective to be used for its work." American Billionaire Donated His Entire Company To Combat Climate Change Yvon Chouinard, the founder of outdoor retailer Patagonia. Yvon Chouinard, the founder of Patagonia, an American retailer company of outdoor clothing, is donating the entire business he started some 50 years ago in an effort to fight climate change. All corporate revenues will be donated to initiatives and groups working to combat the climate crisis, protect biodiversity, and protect wild lands. Along with Mr Chouinard, his wife and two adult children are also donating their stake in the apparel company to the noble cause. According to the New York Times, the company is valued at roughly \$3 billion. With the title "Earth is now our only shareholder," Mr Chouinard penned a letter explaining his decision. The letter was posted on the Patagonia website on Wednesday. Explaining the

severity of climate change, he wrote, "If we have any hope of a thriving planet—much less a business—it is going to take all of us doing what we can with the resources we have. This is what we can do." He said, "While we're doing our best to address the environmental crisis, it's not enough. We needed to find a way to put more money into fighting the crisis while keeping the company's values intact. One option was to sell Patagonia and donate all the money. But we couldn't be sure a new owner would maintain our values or keep our team of people around the world employed. Another path was to take the company public. What a disaster that would have been. Even public companies with good intentions are under too much pressure to create short-term gain at the expense of long-term vitality and responsibility." "Truth be told, there were no good options available. So, we created

our own," he added. The privately held company announced in a statement that a trust focused on addressing climate change and a collection of nonprofit organisations, known as the Patagonia Purpose Trust and the Holdfast Collective, will now own its stock. The company added, "Funding for the Collective will come from Patagonia: Each year, excess profits—money we make after reinvesting in the business (including money we want to save for unforeseen events, like a pandemic)—will be distributed as a dividend to the Collective to be used for its work." The firm's current turnover is \$100 million and according to NYT report, it plans to donate the entire amount every year. The business now offers new and pre-owned outdoor clothing, equipment for outdoor pursuits like camping, fishing, and climbing, as well as food and drinks derived from sustainable sources.

Yvon Chouinard, the founder of Patagonia, an American retailer company of outdoor clothing, is donating the entire business he started some 50 years ago in an effort to fight climate change. All corporate revenues will be donated to initiatives and groups working to combat the climate crisis, protect biodiversity, and protect wild lands. Along with Mr Chouinard, his wife and two adult children are also donating their stake in the apparel company to the noble cause. According to the New York Times, the company is valued at roughly \$3 billion. With the title "Earth is now our only shareholder," Mr Chouinard penned a letter explaining his decision. The letter was posted on the Patagonia website on Wednesday. Explaining the severity of climate change, he wrote, "If we have any hope of a thriving planet—much less a business—it is going to take all of us doing what we can with the resources we have. This is what we can do."

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## Hattis get tribal status, could impact results in 9 Himachal seats

The Trans-Giri Hattis have been seeking reservation since 1967, BJP first recognised the demand during the 2009 Assembly polls

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Wednesday approved a Constitution amendment Bill that seeks to grant tribal status to the Hatti community living in the Trans-Giri region of Himachal Pradesh's Sirmour district. The nod for Hattis came along with tribal status to a community in Chhattisgarh and two in Tamil Nadu. The Hattis form an electorally influential community in Himachal Pradesh, and the move might boost the ruling BJP's chances in the coming Assembly elections. The BJP had swept the 2017 Assembly elections, winning 44 of the 68 seats. The 2022 election, on the other hand, scheduled for November, is turning out to be a three-cornered fight between the BJP, Congress and new-entrant Aam Aadmi Party, which is fresh off the win in Punjab. In this backdrop, support of the three lakh members of the Hatti community can prove decisive. While they are concentrated in the four constituencies of Sirmour district (Shillai, Paonta, Renuka, and Pachhad), they play a significant role in at least nine seats in Shimla and Sirmour. Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur, who addressed the media after the Cabinet meeting, and belongs to Hiamchal, said people belonging to the community in the

state had been asking for inclusion in the ST list for more than 50 years.

Pointing out that the Hatti community in the Jaunsar region of Uttarakhand had already been given tribal status, he said: "The Trans-Giri region of Sirmour shares the border with Jaunsar, and the two have a cultural similarity. It is a historic decision. I thank PM Modi for this." The ST status will also impact 144 gram panchayats. Additionally, if the proposal for tribal status for Sirmour is cleared, it will ensure reservation benefits for communities living in the area.

Himachal had earlier submitted a proposal for notifying Trans-Giri in Sirmour district, the Dodra Kwar sub-division of Shimla, areas of Shimla and Kullu as Scheduled Areas. The ministry examined the proposal but did not consider it due to "want of criteria". A close-knit community, the Hattis are spread across the Trans-Giri (nestled between the Giri and Tons rivers) and Jaunsar Bawar regions in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, respectively. The larger area was once part of the Sirmour royal estate until the British conquered it in 1815. The Trans-Giri Hattis have been seeking reservation since 1967, when tribal status was accorded to members living in the Jaunsar Bawar area. Over the

years, the demand kept gaining strength with resolutions passed at Khumblis, which are traditional, powerful councils similar to the Khap panchayats in Haryana. They remain unchallenged by the panchayati raj system. The BJP first recognised the demand during the 2009 Assembly elections by incorporating it in its manifesto, the first party to do so. The community then put its weight behind the party, and the promise kept reappearing in subsequent BJP manifestos.

In 2014, then BJP national president Rajnath Singh promised the grant of ST status to Hattis during a rally at Nahan in Sirmour. The BJP, in the recent past, benefited from the community's support in the form of gains in parliamentary elections especially in Shimla, which was once a Congress stronghold.

The Hattis traditionally sell homegrown vegetables, crops, meat and wool in small markets called 'haats', deriving their name from the same. Trans-Giri and Jaunsar Bawar, also the names of clans within the community, have similar traditions. There is a rigid caste system within the Hattis: the Bhat and Khash constitute the upper castes, while the Badhois are below them. Inter-caste marriages among these castes are traditionally frowned upon.



# What India Can Learn From Indonesian Model to Fight China's Loan Sharks



on how all loan disbursements and repayments should be executed only between the bank accounts of the borrower and the bank accounts of the lending service providers or any third party. However, Chinese entities have been doing business with defunct NBFCs with meagre capital.

In February this year, the RBI cancelled the Certificate of Registration issued to PC Financial Services (PCFS), which earned Rs 1,320.13 crore in a year via the Cash Bean app. After the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA)'s search operations, the Serious Frauds Investigation Office (SFIO) carried out various operations. They arrested one person, the alleged mastermind of a widespread racket that involved the setting up of shell companies with Chinese links and dummy directors.

## ILLEGAL CALL CENTRES, SENSITIVE PERSONAL DETAILS & BREACH OF IT ACT

When these apps are downloaded, they mandatorily require access to contacts, videos, photo galleries and other personal information. Once access is given to these apps, it becomes mandatory for the customers to upload their

Aadhaar Card, PAN Card and a live photograph. Customers are also asked to share a One Time Password (OTP) that is generated. Such information is then uploaded to servers hosted in China and other parts of the world. These loan app operators have illegal call centres that are given unauthorised access to such personal data. They call victims (or customers) to extort money by threatening to reveal their liabilities to their friends, family and colleagues. They are also trained in morphing pictures. With the help of the customer's OTP, these apps get unauthorised access to the victim's bank account. These apps are being hosted from the AWS server and Ali Baba Servers, which do not comply with Indian rules as they are American companies. For such crimes, various criminal cases under Sections 384 (extortion), 420 (cheating), 120B (conspiracy) and 465 (forgery) of the Indian Penal Code and Sections 66, 66B, 67 and 67A of the Information Technology Act have been registered in various police stations across India.

## FDI, MONEY LAUNDERING, CRYPTO AND CHINESE

## CONNECTION

As per the report released by a working group of RBI, from 2017 to 2020 instant loan business jumped from Rs 11,617 crore to Rs 1,41,821 crore, which is 12 times higher than the initial amount. An investigation conducted by the Maharashtra Police Cyber Cell also reveals that Chinese loan apps have amassed Rs 160 crore in the past two years and a lookout notice has been issued against the Chinese kingpin.

The Delhi Police in its latest operations has identified such apps wherein money to the tune of over Rs 3,000 crore has been siphoned off, and routed to China through cryptocurrency. The Enforcement Directorate too gathered evidence showing that cryptocurrency exchanges were used by the loan apps to transfer unlawful proceeds.

The ED searched the premises of online payment gateways such as Razorpay and Paytm to probe the money laundering aspect of these loan apps. The ED claimed that these entities used forged documents of Indians and made them dummy directors in these firms, thus escaping the regulatory mechanism.

(Contd. on page 29)

Today, China is not just trying to encroach upon India's territory, but has also got deeply integrated into the latter's economy using modern technologies. It was the Fintech India Expo in 2019 when Chinese software developers successfully lured Indian investors to gain entry into Indian markets.

Indian authorities have launched a full-fledged counter attack on such apps which are offering loans to vulnerable and tech-illiterate people at exorbitant interest rates with hidden processing fees and charges. These illegal apps also use predatory loan recovery practices involving blackmail and criminal intimidation. In addition, there is the possibility of money laundering and tax evasion. Coercive recovery methods and

misuse of personal information have prompted the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and probe agencies to crack down on the loan app entities and the payment gateways.

## UNLAWFUL LENDING AND DEFUNCT NBFCs

A lending company needs to be either a bank or a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC), i.e. registered with the RBI. As per the June 2020 order issued by the RBI, complete details of such companies must be available on the websites of the banks and NBFC companies involved in such business. A written consent letter is required from the customers along with details as to the amount of interest that is to be paid by them.

On August 10, 2022, the RBI issued a fresh set of guidelines

user myself, I was intrigued by the revenue model of this industry. I found that content creators get a share of the platform's revenue. But more than 70%-80% of a creator's revenue comes from branded content. This revenue is determined by the number of followers, type of content, genre, engagement rate and demographics. A micro-influencer (one who has 10,000 to 1 lakh followers) can earn anywhere between ? 10,000 to ? 30,000 per Instagram post. This number increases to more than 4 lakh rupees for mega influencers (more than 10 lakh followers). The area becomes murky when financial influencers, daily vloggers (people who record their daily chores) and people generally not qualified to tender financial advice promote financial products without full disclosure of a brand collaboration.

Many first-time investors turn to the internet for financial advice to make easy money with a single swipe. Influencers have filled the void created

by unemployment and lack of access to credit by promoting a variety of financial products on specific trading platforms, attracting very high returns. Nearly 70% of the new acquisition on stock trading platforms is under 30 years of age. There exist significant concerns around influencer content: the fitness and qualification of the person providing advice, the veracity of the information provided, the risk of potential scams and the risk appetite of consumers of such content. In July 2022, a crypto-trading platform which was heavily promoted by influencers suspended all its operations including withdrawals and deposits, leaving 8 lakh patrons at a point of no return. In August 2022, India's top two crypto platforms had all their assets frozen by the ED due to non-compliance. These platforms had been talked up by various influencers in the garb of giving financial advice in good faith. A 2021 study from the Digital Marketing Institute reports that 70 percent of teens

trust influencers more than traditional celebrities. 40 per cent of Twitter users reported making a purchase at the recommendation of a tweet alone.

In 2021, China held a consultation laying out detailed regulatory requirements for online promotion of financial products. It included procedures to curb illegal financial product marketing, misleading advertisements and unfair competition. The norms dictate that influencers, at least, must have used the product first-hand and have documentation to prove it. The Financial Market Authority (FMA) of New Zealand issued a Guide to Talking About Money Online in January 2021. In March 2022, Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) issued an information sheet (INFO 269) for social media influencers, explaining potential violations of the law and discouraging unlicensed influencers from creating finance-focused posts.

(Contd on page 30)

# The 'Financial Wizards' Of Social Media

Parliament is not in session but there's so much to be said. So let's pull out the laptop and share a few thoughts on an issue that has always interested me: content creation. The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) Chief Commissioner recently announced that the government is set to introduce guidelines to regulate social media influencers (including penal provisions to the tune of ? 50 lakh) for non-disclosure of financial ties with brands. Content creation on social media has become a legitimate industry with a growth estimate of 25% per year and is slated to be worth ? 2,200 crore by 2025. As of January 2022, YouTube has more than 26 crore monthly active users in India; 1,200 of its creators have crossed the one million subscriber milestone. Instagram had a total of 23 crore users in India in January 2022, the largest Instagram audience in the world. Nearly two-thirds of the Indian population follow an influencer. As an avid social media



# Day after Bengal violence, Mamata targets BJP: 'Police could have fired in the air'

Abhishek Banerjee's comment that he may have shot protesters in the head had he been in the police's place, state minister Udayan Guha's talk of retaliatory violence, and Mahua Moitra's 'bulldozer' comment draw Oppn party's ire



A day after the BJP's protest march to state secretariat "Nabanna" devolved into violence, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said the police could have "fired in the air" during the protests but exercised maximum restraint.

The CM's comment came even as state minister Udayan Guha, in an apparent reference to the BJP, said if one Trinamool Congress (TMC) worker got attacked it would respond by "thrashing two of them" and MP Mahua Moitra wondered what would happen if the Bengal government "sent bulldozers to homes of BJP workers who destroyed public property yesterday".

In response, the Opposition party said TMC leaders were speaking the "language of the lumpen". Mamata Banerjee alleged that the BJP brought goons armed with bombs in trains from outside the state to foment trouble during its "Nabanna Abhiyan". Praising the police she said at an administrative meeting at Nimtouri in Purba Medinipur district, "The police officers could have fired in the air but they were very measured in their response. This cannot happen, you cannot book trains and bring people from other states to create nuisance in Bengal. Since they (BJP) don't have numbers, they resorted to bombs and goondaism to create violence. I have never stopped democratic protests, you work in a democratic way, no one will stop you. But in the name of a movement, you can't get bombs and break heads. I pray for those who

were injured, hope they get well soon." The CM said an "Assistant Commissioner was grievously injured" in the violence and "his eye was injured and hand was broken". She added, "Many police personnel were brutally attacked by the participants of that rally ... The entire city had come to a halt, the Puja market was disrupted as this is the time when people get more business." Banerjee went on to say, "We have nothing against democratic and peaceful protests. But, the BJP and its supporters resorted to violence, vandalism and arson. They torched properties and instilled fear among people. We won't allow this. Arrests are being made, and law will

take its own course." Meanwhile, Abhishek said, "I salute all the officers of the police force for the manner in which they conducted themselves, for showing sheer patience, endurance and remaining within the ambit of the Constitution. If I were there, I might have shot them (protesters) in the head." North Bengal Development Minister Guha, who is the MLA from Dinhata in Cooch Behar district, said, "We are not wearing bangles. If my boys are attacked, we will not sit idle. They should remember that if they beat up one of us, we will hit back by thrashing two of them."

Attacking the BJP, Moitra said, "Chapter 1 in BJP's New Education Policy: how to methodically torch police vehicle." Hitting out at the Trinamool Congress (TMC), the BJP said such statements were expected from leaders of the ruling party who speak the "language of the lumpen". State BJP spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya said, "The more the TMC's misdeeds are getting exposed, the more their leaders are getting desperate and making such

comments out of frustration." State BJP president Sukanta Majumdar, reacting to Abhishek's comments, said, "Today we heard terrible words coming out of Abhishek Banerjee's mouth. Today, he explained that the new grassroots he is talking about creating will shoot people in the head." Senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad alleged that Banerjee was trying to "divert attention from the rivalry within the TMC by using force against BJP members" and claimed that over 1,000 of the party's workers were injured after the police used force. "She has now left the Left behind in inflicting atrocities and brutalities on the BJP... Under Mamata Banerjee, West Bengal has become a lawless and bankrupt state... Corruption has reached epic proportions," said the former Union minister.

State BJP leader Rahul Sinha said Moitra should "explain" if the same "rules" of using bulldozers could be applied to the TMC. "Moitra should explain if the same rules can be applied for those who took part in the rampage of

Assembly properties against her party colleagues," he said, adding, "Some stray retaliations could have taken place as the peaceful protesters were facing brutal police action."

## **Violence against police**

Leaders of other parties also reacted to a video of the violence tweeted by the Indian Police Foundation, which is an independent think tank. The video showed policemen being attacked by people during the protest march. "Goons & hooligans have taken over the political discourse in some states. Promises dangerous portends for our future generations. No hope unless politicians show the sagacity to think beyond the next election & accord higher priority to national interests than party interests," the think tank tweeted. Responding to the tweet, National Conference leader Omar Abdullah tweeted, "Imagine the reaction from the BJP if the flags being used to mercilessly beat a police officer had belonged to a political party other than their own!" Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Gujarat leader Gopal Italia tweeted in response to the video, "Sir, can't you recognise these goons by their clothes?"

## Tax on the poor: On inflation

The latest retail inflation data from the National Statistical Office is a sobering reminder that accelerating price gains still remain the single biggest challenge to policymakers as they try to steer Asia's third-largest economy to a more durable recovery from the pandemic-induced slump. Inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) quickened in August to a provisional 7%, from 6.7% in July, as the pace of gains in food prices as measured by the Consumer Food Price Index accelerated by a sizeable 93 basis points to 7.62%, from July's 6.69%. And rural consumers bore a disproportionately higher burden: with month-on-month changes in both food prices and overall inflation appreciably greater at 0.88% and 0.57% respectively, compared with the 0.50% and 0.46% rates of urban inflation. Of particular concern is that inflation in the prices of cereals — staple grains in every household — surged to 9.57% from the preceding

month's 6.9% rate. Month-on-month the pace was a disconcerting 2.4%. With kharif sowing of rice this year undershooting last year's acreage and uneven distribution of rainfall further roiling the crop's production picture, the outlook for inflation in this 'heavyweight' food category remains far from reassuring, the Centre's recent imposition of tariff and other curbs on export of non-Basmati rice notwithstanding. In fact, eight of the 12 food items that combine to constitute the food and beverages category of the CPI saw sequential price upticks, with vegetables (13.2% year-on-year and 2.5% month-on-month) and dairy (6.39% and 0.9%, respectively) being two other vital foods that contributed to the faster inflation. The Finance Ministry was quick to assert that the increase in headline inflation was "moderate", even as it sought to downplay the significance of food price pressures by terming food and fuel prices as "transient components". It also pointed

to the steps by the Government to cool prices, that could help tame inflation in the 'coming weeks'. And it cited oils and fats and pulses as two items where prices had begun to ease in response to the Centre's steps. However, the prices of pulses and products quickened by 1.7% month-on-month, with the pace trailing only that of sequential inflation in spices, cereals and vegetables. Services categories including housing, health, education, recreation and personal care too witnessed sequential increases in price gains as these services saw demand gradually revive. The challenge going forward would be for providers to tread carefully so as not to yet again depress consumption by raising prices too quickly. Policymakers would do well to heed the dictum of a former RBI Governor, who never tired of reiterating that 'containing the build up of price pressures is the best anti-poverty programme' as the poor 'have no hedge against inflation'.



# International Day of Democracy 2022: Theme, history, and significance

The International Day of Democracy is celebrated on 15 September each year to promote and uphold the principles of democracy in every country



A day observed every year around the world, the International Day of Democracy is celebrated on September 15 each year to promote and uphold the principles of democracy in every country. Notably, the day was established through a resolution passed by the United Nations General Assembly (UNSC) in 2007 in a bid to encourage governments to strengthen and consolidate democracy. In addition to that, this day also provides an opportunity to review the state of

democracy in the world and further educate people on the importance of democracy and reinstall the realisation of human rights.

This year as well, the United Nations will be observing the International Day of Democracy on 15 September, Thursday, with a special theme decided every year. While this year's theme is yet to be announced by the UN, the celebrations are carried out in line with the same.

"Democracy is as much a process as a

goal, and only with the full participation of and support by the international community, national governing bodies, civil society and individuals, can the ideal of democracy be made into a reality to be enjoyed by everyone, everywhere," says the UN on its official website.

International Day of Democracy: History Speaking about the history of the International Day of Democracy, it was recognised by the UNSC in 2007 through a resolution. According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), it was in 1988 when the concept was initiated. Later in 1997, the IPU adopted a Universal Declaration on Democracy which affirmed the principles of democracy. Later in 2006, during the sixth conference of the International Conferences on the New and Restored Democracies (ICNRD-6), it was decided to reestablish the basic principles of democracy following which a resolution, titled "Support by the United Nations system of efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies" was adopted on 8 November 2007.

International Day of Democracy: Significance

Apart from focusing on the importance of the democratic process, the day also aims to encourage governments across the world to strengthen their democratic systems and further respect the rights of the citizens. In addition to this, the International Day of Democracy also plays a crucial role in highlighting the role of parliaments and electoral bodies in delivering justice, development, and human rights.

"We encourage all our Member Parliaments to mark the day with events and celebrations", reads the IPU website. International Day of Democracy: Theme

While the theme for the day is decided every year by the United Nations, it ensures to focus on a specific theme. This year's theme is yet to be revealed by the organisation. Meanwhile, past themes were focused on highlighting stronger democracies, the importance of democracy, strengthening the voices of citizens, dialogue and inclusiveness, accountability, and political tolerance.

## New research: Covid-19 increases Alzheimer's risk in older adults

The findings indicated that over the one-year period following the infection, older adults in the Covid-19 cohort faced a risk of 0.68%, nearly double that of the non-Covid-19 cohort, which faced a risk of 0.35%.

Older adults who were once infected with Covid-19 are at a much higher risk of developing Alzheimer's disease within a year, with women above the age of 85 occupying the highest risk group, a new study of more than 6 million patients has found. The researchers, who published their findings in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease on Tuesday (September 13), found that people aged 65 and above who developed Covid-19 were at a 50-80% higher risk of developing Alzheimer's, expanding upon the little we currently know about the long-term consequences of the pandemic. However, the researchers have maintained that it is unclear "whether Covid-19 might trigger new onset of Alzheimer's disease or accelerate its emergence." The research team analysed the anonymous electronic health records of 6.2 million people who were 65 and older in the US, and who had



visited healthcare organisations between February 2020 and May 2021. Those studied had not been previously diagnosed with Alzheimer's. They were then divided into two groups: one

composed of people who had contracted Covid-19 during the period of study, and another group which had no documented cases of the infectious disease. There were more than 400,000 people enrolled in the Covid-19 study group, while the non-infected group contained 5.8 million people.

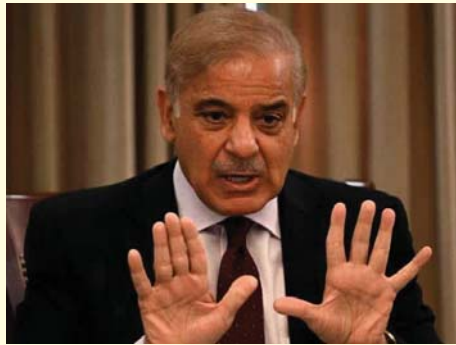
The findings indicated that over the one-year period following the infection, older adults in the Covid-19 cohort faced a risk of 0.68%, nearly double that of the non-Covid-19 cohort, which faced a risk of 0.35%. "The factors that play into the development of Alzheimer's disease have been poorly understood, but two pieces considered important are prior infections, especially viral infections, and inflammation," said Pamela Davis, Distinguished University Professor at the Case Western Reserve School of Medicine and the study's co-author.



# 13 banks accounts of Pak PM's younger son frozen over money laundering case

Thirteen bank accounts of companies related to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's younger son Suleman Shehbaz have been ordered to be frozen by a special court in Lahore. Local media reports on Sunday reported that the order was issued on September 7 by the special court of the Federal Investigation Agency. The case pertains to a multi-million dollars money laundering case, in which Prime Minister Shehbaz and his sons – Hamza Shehbaz (former Punjab chief minister) and Suleman – have been

charged by the FIA for allegedly laundering over Rs 14 billion. In the order, the presiding judge Ijaz Hassan Awan has observed that since Suleman is still at large and has not surrendered, hence, these 13 bank accounts have also been attached, apart from his moveable and immovable properties. Suleman absconded to



the UK in 2019, and Shehbaz has repeatedly stated that Suleman looks after the family business there, Dawn newspaper reported. Besides, the special court has also issued show-cause notices to the officials of different banks for not adhering to an earlier order over the attachment of the accounts owned by two other proclaimed offenders. The judge

asked bank officials to be present on September 17 when the FIA files its reply to in response to the petition filed by PM Shehbaz and his son Hamza who are seeking acquittal in the case. Earlier this week, the indictment of Shehbaz and his son Hamza was delayed after their counsel informed the court that their clients have filed a petition for their acquittal. Their counsel had also sought one-time exemption from appearance, saying he could not attend Wednesday's proceedings as he was busy in flood relief activities.

## Alabama wants nitrogen hypoxia for executions in death sentences. What is it?

**Alabama is working on finalising a protocol for using nitrogen hypoxia for executing death sentences, a deputy state attorney general told the court**

Alabama is readying a new, untried execution method to carry out its death sentences—nitrogen hypoxia, a state attorney told a federal judge on Monday. The method was approved by the state in 2018 but it has not yet been used or tested. A deputy state attorney general told a U.S. district judge that it is 'very likely' the method will be available for the execution of Alan Eugene Miller. Alan Eugene Miller, was convicted of killing three men in a workplace shooting in 1999.

Miller is attempting to block his execution, scheduled for September 22, at Holman Prison. The disclosure of the possibility of using the new method for executing death sentences came to the fore during a court hearing. Alan Eugene Miller claimed that prison staff lost his paperwork several years ago. In it, he requested nitrogen as his execution method rather than lethal injection.

He further said that he 'disliked' needles because of painful attempts at drawing blood, adding that nitrogen gas seemed better than lethal injection.

However, a final decision on whether to use this new method or not is up to Corrections

Commissioner John Hamm, James Houts, a deputy state attorney general said.

### WHAT IS NITROGEN HYPOXIA?

Nitrogen hypoxia is supposed to cause death by replacing oxygen with nitrogen. In this proposed execution method, death would be caused by forcing the inmate to breathe only nitrogen, depriving his or her body of oxygen causing asphyxiation. This method has been authorised

by Alabama, Oklahoma and Mississippi, for executions but has never been used. However, lethal injection remains the state's primary execution method.

Alabama has released little information about how it would use the proposed method, since most of the available information has come from court proceedings.

### HOW DOES THIS WORK?

In this method, the idea is to change the composition of the air to 100 per cent nitrogen. When inhaled, this would cause the inmate to pass out and then die from lack of oxygen.

More and more states have been proposing hypoxia as an alternate execution method because of difficulty obtaining lethal injection drugs.

### WHAT ARE THE CONCERNS?

Critics have likened the untested

method to human experimentation. "It is completely untested," Robert Dunham, executive director of the Death Penalty Information Center, told AP. The American Veterinary Medical Association's euthanasia guidelines say inert gas hypoxia is acceptable, under certain conditions, for the euthanasia of chickens, turkeys and pigs but is not recommended for other mammals such as rats.

## NATO versus Russia in Ukraine: How US could be aiming for Russia's breakup into smaller States

**The American goal of embroiling Russia in war is clearly designed to eliminate it as a global military power by issuing threats at the border with Ukraine**

The progress of the war in Ukraine is now making it abundantly clear: That it is the result of a US decision to declare war against Russia through NATO. Both former French president Nicolas Sarkozy and former German chancellor Angela Merkel had opposed Ukraine joining NATO at the Bucharest Summit in 2008, the supposed prospect of which has prompted Russian military action. They had argued it would be very provocative for Vladimir Putin. In fact, Angela Merkel had said in a subsequent interview that such a move would amount to a 'declaration of war' against

Russia. By 2013, Ukraine had already become a de facto member of NATO, with US conduct indicating that it anticipated the onset of war. Only Donald Trump's election and refusal to acquiesce to a military package, in August 2019 under the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative, was the impediment that needed to be addressed first by the US establishment that wanted to precipitate a denouement. This was the issue that mobilised the entire US establishment, determined to take on Russia, against Donald Trump and led to his elimination from the presidency with methods

deemed suspect by many, as originally claimed by Trump himself.

The moment Trump left the White House, the US began transferring arms to Ukraine on a prodigious scale and began a programme training its armed forces, evidently preparing it for the battles that were to begin on 24 February 2022. On that day, Russia launched a preemptive assault against the 250,000 Ukrainian troops that had been assembled along the Dnieper to attack Russian-speaking eastern Ukraine — the Donetsk and Luhansk.

(Contd. on page 30)



# Xi vows backing for Kazakhstan in first trip since pandemic

China's President Xi Jinping was in ex-Soviet Kazakhstan Wednesday on his first trip abroad since the early days of the coronavirus pandemic, ahead of a meeting with Russian leader Vladimir Putin. Their highly-anticipated meeting comes as Russia suffers serious setbacks in Ukraine, but China has stood firm in its support of Putin and their "no limits" friendship. During a meeting with President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Xi vowed full support for Kazakhstan's sovereignty at a time when the ex-Soviet Central Asian region has been spooked by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "No matter how the international situation changes, we will continue to resolutely support Kazakhstan in protecting its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity," Xi said, according to a Kazakh government statement. Beijing "firmly supports the reform measures President (Tokayev) has taken to maintain national stability and development, and firmly opposes any forces that interfere in Kazakhstan's internal affairs," Xi said. Tokayev hailed Xi's visit as a reunion of "historic importance", saying the Chinese leader's decision to visit Nur-Sultan first since the start of the pandemic was a sign of "high-level... mutual trust and cooperation". The ex-Soviet Central Asian region, which Russia sees as in its sphere of



influence, is key to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a trillion-dollar push to improve trade links across the globe by building landmark infrastructure. Tokayev said Beijing and Nur-Sultan had "set an example" for cooperation within the huge BRI initiative and praised prospects for further cooperation. Xi, during his three-day visit to Central Asia, is scheduled to attend a summit of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) leaders in Uzbekistan, where he is expected to meet with Putin. 'Mutual respect, fairness' The SCO was established in 2001 as a political, economic and security organisation to rival Western institutions and the summit will bring together Xi, Putin, Tokayev, leaders from India, Pakistan and three more ex-Soviet

Central Asian countries. Xi wrote ahead of the visit that the group had "set a fine example of a new type of international relations featuring mutual respect, fairness, justice and win-win cooperation, and proved itself an important and constructive force". Those were comments echoed by the Kremlin's foreign policy advisor Yuri Ushakov who told reporters in Moscow that the SCO members "stand for a just world order". "The SCO offers a real alternative to Western-centric organisations," he added. Ushakov said that among Putin's meeting in Samarkand this week, his talks with Xi would be "of particular importance", focusing on the conflict in Ukraine and Russia's growing economic

ties with China.

Xi, in an article for Chinese state media ahead of the trip, said Beijing was prepared to work with Kazakhstan to "deepen cooperation in law enforcement, security and defence". He said also China wanted to work with Kazakhstan on drug trafficking and transnational organised crime as well as what China calls the "three evils". China's government has previously used the term — referring to terrorism, separatism and religious extremism — to talk about its crackdown Xinjiang, which borders Kazakhstan. Beijing stands accused of detaining over one million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in Xinjiang, including some Kazakhs, under a years-long security campaign that the United States and some lawmakers in other Western countries have labelled a "genocide". China vociferously denies the allegations, saying its actions are aimed at combating terrorism. In a separate article for Uzbek media, Xi pledged to "strengthen security cooperation and resolve risks and challenges" and said Uzbekistan had a "unique role to play in resolving the Afghanistan issue", CCTV reported. "The two sides must take a clear stand against any forces undermining the regional security situation," CCTV reported Xi as writing.

## 'Such terrorist outfits can operate on Pakistan's soil': Taliban say JeM chief Masood Azhar not in Afghanistan

**'Such organisations can operate on Pakistan's soil and even under official patronage. We'll not allow anyone to use Afghanistan's soil against any other country,' Taliban said**

Islamabad: Afghanistan's Taliban government on Wednesday firmly rejected media reports about the presence of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) chief Masood Azhar in the war-torn country, saying such terrorist organisations can operate on Pakistan's soil — and even under official patronage. The Taliban's interim Afghan government spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid made the strongly-worded remarks after a section of Pakistani media reported about Azhar's alleged presence in Afghanistan. They claimed that Pakistan has also sent a letter with demand to hand him over to Islamabad.

"We have written a one-page letter to the Afghan foreign ministry, asking them to locate, report and arrest Masood Azhar, as we believe that he is hiding somewhere in (eastern Nangarhar province) Afghanistan, The News reported on Tuesday, quoting a top Pakistani foreign ministry official. Mujahid in an interview with Afghanistan's

ToloNews said that he has seen the news in the media. "But this is not true. Nobody has made such a demand from us, Mujahid said.

"Jaish-e-Mohammad chief is not in Afghanistan. Such organisations can operate on Pakistan's soil and even under official patronage," Mujahid said. "We'll not allow anyone to use Afghanistan's soil against any other country."

In a separate statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Taliban government also rejected media reports that JeM chief had sought refuge in Afghanistan.

"We reiterate that the IEA (Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan) does not allow any armed

opposition in its territory to operate against any other country," said Abdul Qahar Balkhi, the spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Taliban government.



"Also, we ask all parties to refrain from making baseless claims in such cases without documents and evidence," he said, warning that such media claims can negatively affect bilateral relations. Azhar is a fugitive released by India in exchange for

passengers of the hijacked Indian Airlines plane IC-814 in 1999. He was serving a prison term in India for kidnappings of Western tourists in the country.

After his release in 1999, Azhar formed the JeM and scripted many audacious

terror strikes in India.

Pakistan has banned the JeM which is accused by India of several terrorist attacks, including the Pulwama attack in February 2019, which brought Pakistan and India to the brink of a nuclear exchange.

In May 2019, the United Nations designated Azhar a "global terrorist" after China lifted its hold on a proposal to blacklist the Pakistan-based JeM chief, a decade after New Delhi approached the world body for the first time on the issue. The UN committee listed Azhar on May 1, 2019 as being associated with Al-Qaeda for "participating in the financing, planning, facilitating, preparing, or perpetrating of acts or activities by, in conjunction with, under the name of, on behalf of, or in support of", "supplying, selling or transferring arms and related material to", "recruiting for", "otherwise supporting acts or activities of", and "other acts or activities indicating association with" the JeM.



# Chinese-built Lotus Tower in Sri Lanka all set to open this week

The 350-metre (1,155-feet) Lotus Tower, dubbed South Asia's tallest structure, built for an estimated US\$113 million with Chinese debt is all set to commence operations on September 15 in Sri Lanka's capital Colombo city.

This huge green and purple communications tower is one of several "white elephant" projects

built with Chinese loans under Mahinda Rajapaksa, brother of ousted president Gotabaya Rajapaksa who had to flee in July following months-long protests over Sri Lanka's dire economic crisis.

Its construction began in 2012 and has been plagued by corruption claims since then.

According to reports, Mahinda wanted to copy Beijing's 405-metre Central Radio and TV tower. State-owned Colombo



Lotus Tower Management Company, which manages this tower, said they are opening its observation deck for visitors from Thursday and seek to earn from ticket sales to mitigate losses as the maintenance cost is huge.

"We can't keep this closed. The maintenance costs are huge.

We want to earn the upkeep of the building and turn this into an entertainment centre," chief executive Prasad Samarasinghe

told reporters, according to AFP news agency. This tall structure is majorly financed by Chinese loans to the tune of \$ 88.65 million, while the rest has been borne by the Sri Lankan government. According to the president's office, the loan instalments are due to be completed by 2024, and around \$66 million has been repaid. However, many broadcasters say that the communications tower is of no use as it can neither cover the island nor improve current transmissions from a mountain in the centre of Sri Lanka. On Monday, a local media outlet called it a "towering story of pride and waste".

## Peace activist among 5 killed in blast in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

**A blast in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa district killed at least five people, including a peace activist**

At least five people, including a peace committee member, were killed in a blast in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa district, officials said on Tuesday. Security officials said a roadside bomb attack targeted the vehicle of the peace committee member, Idrees Khan, who was an

culprits, police said. No terrorist outfit has claimed responsibility for the attack so far. Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province,



ex-Village Defence Council (Aman Committee) Chairman of Kabal Tehsil, in Swat district. The blast, which occurred in Bara Bandai area, resulted in the death of Khan, his security guards and two police officers, they said. A search operation has been launched to nab the

Mahmood Khan, has condemned the incident, and has sought a detailed report and said those responsible would be brought to justice. Pakistan has witnessed an uptick in targeted attacks on security forces since the Taliban takeover of Kabul last year in August after the withdrawal of US forces.

## Imran Khan meets former CIA analyst after accusing US-led conspiracy for his ouster



After blaming a US-led conspiracy for the change in regime, former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has met former Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) analyst and lobbyist Robin Raphel, according to media reports.

Local media reported that the chairman of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) wants to create inroads into the Biden administration to fix its image and relations with Washington. Following his accusations against American diplomat Donald Lu for conspiring against the then government under Khan, the former cricketer also met the Biden administration's representative Ilhan Omar. Previously, the US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Bloom met PTI's senior leader Fawad Chaudhry on September 8 in Islamabad.

Officials of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's government questioned Khan for taking every available opportunity to pacify and please Americans even though they slam them.

According to Khan, he was ousted due to his good relations and trade with Moscow during the Russia-Ukraine crisis. Amid reports that she has been caught up in an FBI-led espionage investigation, Raphel's distinguished career imploded when federal agents found classified documents from her house in Washington. As a result, she has lost her security clearance and contract although no charges were filed against the 67-year-old retired envoy. Former US President Bill Clinton had appointed Raphel as Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs in 1993.

## Amid economic crisis in Afghanistan, online shopping services to shut after Taliban takeover



Nearly all of Afghanistan's main online shopping services have closed, with the two biggest online shopping services, Click.af and Baqal, recently announcing their closure due to the country's financial turmoil. The South Asian country has been in a complete state of turmoil for over a year now, ever since the Taliban seized power. The Taliban dismantled the system to address gender-based violence, erected new obstacles to women's healthcare and education, and even attacked women's rights protesters. Click.af, a well-known online shopping app, announced its closure on Saturday (September 10). The firm posted a message on its Facebook page stating its closure due to financial issues. Baqal on Sunday (September 11), a three-year-old company, declared its collapse owing to financial difficulties.

Both companies posted their closures on their respective Facebook pages. The owner

of Click, Masih Stanekzai, said, "The precarious economic situation, the capital flight, and the stalling of the economic cycle led sales in the market to be severely affected, and Click.af is no exception," ANI reported. Baqal, on the other hand, a medium-sized investment, ultimately failed due to a decline in the purchasing power of locals and the freezing of customers' money due to the Taliban's restrictions on the banking industry. Online services in Afghanistan have facilitated and improved communications between customers and retailers. The online taxi service, Bubbar, and Hindukosh, an online shopping website, were closed a few months after the collapse of the country's administration. Afghanistan is in trouble, with nearly 59 per cent of the population currently requiring humanitarian aid—an increase of six million people since the beginning of the year 2021.



# China's Brutal 'Hunger Games': Uyghur Genocide in The Name of Zero-Covid Policy

(News Agency) Residents of a city in China's Xinjiang are experiencing hunger, forced quarantines, and dwindling supplies of medicine and food. Sources have told CNN-News18.

Uyghurs and other Muslims in the region have been suffering mass detentions in the name of religion and culture. Now, say sources, they are locked up in their homes in the name of China's Zero-Covid Policy. Uyghur groups protested in Istanbul on Monday near the

Chinese consulate in Sariyer district against Beijing's "Hunger Genocide" on the pretext of controlling the Covid-19 pandemic. Around 3,000-3,500 protesters including women and children gathered outside the Chinese consulate in Istanbul, condemning the brutal lockdown in East Turkestan. Many Uyghurs have been found dead in recent days due to hunger and disease in their homes because of the restrictions, said sources.

The residents of these areas are forcibly imprisoned, and cases of suicide have also been reported as they could no longer withstand

hunger and pain. The protesters also said that young children are starving and some have died due to hunger or high fever but did not get access to food or medicine. Uyghur groups alleged that

the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) is now using this Zero-Covid Policy to wipe them out. Indian intelligence sources said that the CCP will have its 20th national congress in October and President Xi Jinping will try to get a third term in any case. All the

Chinese aggression against Taiwan, the United States, and India is part of that strategy, they added. A new breed of statecraft has been ushered in, branded "wolf warrior diplomacy", which is very aggressive, discarding traditional diplomatic niceties, said intelligence officials.

The genocide and lockdowns are part of a strategy to rearrange personnel right from the local level that has been underway for a few years now and will yield results in the congress, they said. It will also be easy for Xi to gauge who is loyal to him, added officials, maintaining that delivery is the key.



## Rising Extremism in Pak Capital: Maulana Aziz Occupies Lal Masjid again, Security Forces Fail to Stop Him

(News Agency) After the reentry of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), Altaf Hussain Group in Karachi, and Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) in Punjab, comes the return of Mullah Aziz to the Lal Masjid of Islamabad.

About 200 people, including teenagers and minors and some gunmen, under the leadership of the former khateeb (prayer leader) of Lal Masjid Maulana Abdul Aziz, occupied the mosque in main Islamabad that is just 3 kilometres away from the Prime Minister's office, CNN-News18 has learnt. The developments come after reports were received of an armed sit-in carried out by the imam of the mosque, Maulana Abdul Aziz Ghazi, with his supporters, demanding the "implementation of Islamic law". Aziz was the chief cleric of the mosque, better known

as the Lal Masjid, until 2007 when he was arrested as he tried to escape during the military operation against the miscreants holding up in the mosque. He was jailed and later released but was not reinstated as the prayer leader of the mosque, which is owned by the government. According to top sources, Maulana Abdul Aziz along with around 200 children and gunmen as well as equipment and beds in three vehicles reached Lal Masjid on September 13 at 6am from Rojhan. On Thursday, they were on the roads under the leadership of Maulana Aziz, moving from Aabpara towards the mosque. They want to go on a long march and if they can't do it, then they will riot in Islamabad on Friday, sources said. The police cordoned off Lal Masjid with a well-equipped contingent and barbed wire while the cleric along with the gathering was inside.

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# China 'considering' sending delegation for Queen Elizabeth II's funeral



said that Beijing will release further details at an appropriate time, South China Morning Post reported. Many world leaders, including from the Commonwealth nations, have confirmed their presence at the funeral. US President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden will also make the trip. Among the few leaders who did not receive an invitation to attend the funeral are Russian President Vladimir Putin, due to the Ukrainian invasion, and leaders of Belarus and Myanmar, the Press

Association news agency reported quoting government sources. Moscow had confirmed Putin's absence at the funeral while the Myanmar government has been sanctioned by UK over last year's coup. Earlier, Chinese President Xi Jinping expressed his condolences over the Queen's death. According to state media, Xi noted that the Queen was the first British monarch to visit China and "won wide acclaim" during her reign. "Her death is a great loss to the British people," he added. The

relations between UK and China have strained lately, especially after Britain joined the US and Australia in the Aukus deal, helping Canberra to acquire nuclear-powered submarines to counter China's military presence in the Pacific, and also over growing concerns about China's actions on Taiwan Strait. The ascension of Liz Truss as the UK's new prime minister was intensely watched by China as she is known to have a hawkish stance against the Chinese leadership.

(By Staff Reporter) The Chinese foreign ministry on Wednesday said that Beijing is "actively considering" sending a high-level delegation to the funeral of UK's Queen Elizabeth II next Monday. Briefing reporters, Mao Ning, a spokeswoman for the ministry,

## Sri Lanka will not be part of any Indian Ocean turf war: President Ranil Wickremesinghe

**Sri Lanka certainly does not want the problems of the Pacific coming to the Indian Ocean, the president said**

(News Agency) Sri Lanka will not take part in any "big power rivalry" in the Indian Ocean and it is unfortunate that his country has been made the "punching bag" for Hambantota, President Ranil Wickremesinghe has said, weeks after India and China clashed over the docking of a high-tech Chinese ship at the country's southern port. Sri Lanka certainly does not want the problems of the Pacific coming to the Indian Ocean, he said while speaking on the crisis-hit country's position on the geo-political stage.

"We don't participate in a military alliance, and we certainly do not want the problems of the Pacific coming to

the Indian Ocean. We don't want this to be an area of conflict and an area of war. Sri Lanka will not take part in any big power rivalry," said Wickremesinghe on Wednesday while addressing the graduation ceremony of the National Defense College.

His remarks came weeks after the Chinese embassy and the Indian High Commission here clashed verbally over the docking of the Chinese ship 'Yuan Wang 5' at Sri Lanka's southern Hambantota port for replenishment.

Wickremesinghe said that the "geopolitics of the Indian Ocean has unfortunately made Sri Lanka the punching bag for Hambantota."

"It is not a military port. Though ours is a commercial port it shows our strategic importance that many people come to conclusions which are unwarranted," Wickremesinghe said, in his second public comment on the issue in recent weeks. On August 30, President Wickremesinghe appealed to all political parties to join an all-party government to tackle the island nation's worst-ever economic crisis and prevent "strong economies" from using it as a "tool of interference." "We can no longer be a nation dependent on loan assistance. We can also no longer be used as a tool of interference by other countries with strong economies," Wickremesinghe

said without naming any country. In his address on Wednesday, Wickremesinghe also said that Sri Lanka would stay out of any big power rivalry, adding that the country must ensure the rivalry does not lead to conflict in the Indian Ocean. "That is one thing we cannot afford," News First, an online portal, quoted Wickremesinghe as saying. Sri Lanka granted port access to the Chinese vessel from August 16 to 22. There were apprehensions in New Delhi about the possibility of the Chinese vessel's tracking systems attempting to snoop on Indian defence installations while being on their way to the Sri Lankan port.

## It's India vs China in Nepal and Sri Lanka

(News Agency) India has extended assistance of \$3.8 billion to help Sri Lanka recover from the economic collapse which saw unprecedented turmoil. Not long after, the India has put Sri Lanka in the dock at the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) for lack of "measurable progress" in resolving the Tamil minority issue. New Delhi expressed concern on the human rights situation in Sri Lanka, namely, the continued denial of justice, dignity and peace to the minority Tamils by not sticking to its commitment to implement the 13th Amendment to the constitution. Obviously, India is miffed over Colombo allowing a so-called Chinese "spy" ship to dock at Hambantota last month in spite of India's opposition to it. Such situations are unavoidable for a country that is in debt to both India and China; a carrot from one is bound to bring forth the stick from the other. In the race for regional supremacy between India and China, it is not only Sri Lanka but Nepal too that is caught in

a cleft-stick. In early September, India's Chief of Army Staff, General Manoj Pande went on a four-day visit to Nepal. For all the warmth and friendliness that marked his engagements, Nepal did not appear keen to see its citizens, especially the Gorkhas, opting for the Agnipath scheme to join the India Army. However, the government said that though its thinking on the matter was positive, a decision would be taken only after an all-party consultation. The week after General Pande's visit saw Nepal's Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Paudyal travelling to New Delhi for two days at the invitation of Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra. The two foreign secretaries reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral cooperation from the economic, commercial and development to culture and people-people relations. While they were preparing for these talks, on the eve of Paudyal's visit, China pulled off a diplomatic coup in Kathmandu: a six-point agreement between visiting Chairman of China's National People's



Congress, Li Zhanshan, and Speaker of Nepal's House of Representatives, Agni Prasad Sapkota. This is expected to provide the basis for China-Nepal cooperation in multiple sectors and moving forward on projects under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This unprecedented agreement is significant because India remains opposed to the

BRI, but that has not deterred Nepal from signing up for it. The power play of the Asian giants in the neighbourhood is in full flow. Whether smaller countries like Sri Lanka and Nepal are getting the best of both India and China or losing out on the traditional and tested advantages of being in India's "zone of influence" seems to be a moot question at this stage.



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# Biden urges Mexico to take migrants under Covid expulsion order he promised to end

The administration of US President Joe Biden is putting pressure on Mexico to accept more migrants under the Covid-19 expulsion order, which the White House has publicly sought to repeal



As border crossings have soared to record highs, US President Joe Biden's administration is quietly pressing Mexico to accept more migrants from Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela under a Covid-19 expulsion order that the White House has publicly sought to end, seven US and three Mexican officials said. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken raised concerns about an escalating number of crossings by migrants from the three countries during a visit on Monday to Mexico City, two US and two Mexican officials told Reuters, but Mexico did not promise any specific actions. One US official said trying to convince Mexico to agree is "an uphill battle."

All sources requested anonymity to discuss internal government matters.

Mexico already accepts US returns of migrants from Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. So far, this fiscal year, about 299,000 people from those nations have been expelled at the border, compared to about 9,000 returns from Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela. The US effort to pressure Mexico on these three particular nationalities illustrates the depth of concern within Biden's Democratic administration about their border crossings. Most migrants from Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela who cross into

the United States are allowed to stay to pursue asylum claims, since they are difficult to deport due to frosty diplomatic relations with their governments.

Mexico's foreign ministry declined to comment. A spokesperson for the White House National Security Council declined to discuss "diplomatic conversations" but said that nations in the region "have already begun to take collective responsibility to manage migration flows, including through repatriations."

US border agents have made a record 1.8 million migrant arrests so far in fiscal year 2022, with many attempting to cross multiple times, creating humanitarian challenges and political liabilities for Biden ahead of the November 8 midterm election.

Of those arrests at the southwest

border, nearly a quarter of the migrants were from Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela, up from 8 per cent in 2021 and 3 per cent in 2020. Most were let into the United States to pursue immigration cases.

The Biden administration has publicly sought to end the Covid health order, known as Title 42. Issued in early 2020 under former Republican President Donald Trump, it allows US border authorities to rapidly expel migrants to Mexico or other countries without the chance to seek US asylum. A federal Trump-appointed judge in Louisiana blocked the administration from ending the order earlier this year, even as US health officials said it was no longer needed to protect against Covid spread.

But behind closed doors, some Biden officials still view

## PRESSURING OTHER NATIONS

Biden officials are also exploring ways to push responsibility to other nations beyond Mexico, sources said.

For example, the White House wants Panama to accept deported Venezuelans if they passed through the Central American nation en route to the United States, two of the US officials said.

Nearly 70,000 Venezuelans entered Panama from its Colombian border this year through August, compared with 1,150 in the same period last year, according to official data. Panamanian government officials did not respond to a request for comment.

Separately, the Biden administration had been sending a small number of Venezuelans to the Dominican Republic on commercial flights, two of the US officials said, a continuation of a Trump-era practice.

But the program was halted after pushback earlier this year from the office of Senator Robert Menendez, a Democrat from New Jersey, according to one of the US officials and a person familiar with the matter. In February, Menendez called deporting migrants fleeing Venezuela's "cruel regime" to third countries "extremely disturbing."

expanding expulsions as a way to deter crossers, one of the US officials said, even if it contradicts the Democratic Party's more welcoming message toward migrants. Advocates and many Democrats fiercely oppose Title 42, saying it has exposed migrants to dangerous conditions in Mexico, including kidnapping and extortion. "I think this really betrays their commitment to refugee protection," said Robyn Barnard, associate director for refugee advocacy with the New York City-based non-profit organization Human Rights First.

## MEXICO HESITANT

Two Mexican officials told Reuters that Mexico does not want to take Cubans, Nicaraguans and Venezuelans

expelled from the United States because those countries resist accepting deportation flights from Mexico as well. Instead, Mexico aims to step up internal flights of migrants from its northern border to its southern border to relieve pressure on the shared frontier, one of the officials said. Mexico would like Washington to relax economic sanctions against Venezuela to help curb the exodus from the country and make it easier for migrants to work in the United States legally, two Mexican officials said. Meanwhile, US border officials in El Paso, Texas, say they have been forced to release hundreds of migrants on city streets near shelters and bus stations to ease overcrowding at their facilities. Many of the Venezuelans arriving have no family members or sponsors, further straining charity and government agencies that assist them, said Mario D'Agostino, El Paso's deputy city manager. The Democrat-controlled city has contracted charter buses to carry migrants north to New York City, an effort that comes after the Republican governors of Texas and Arizona drew national attention by busing thousands of migrants to Democrat-led northern cities.





# US considers China sanctions to deter Taiwan action, Taiwan presses EU

**China may face a slew of sanctions imposed by the US to deter Beijing from invading Taiwan. On the other hand, Taiwan urged the European Union to back its claim of sovereignty**

The United States is considering options for a sanctions package against China to deter it from invading Taiwan, with the European Union coming under diplomatic pressure from Taipei to do the same, according to sources familiar with the discussions.

The sources said the deliberations in Washington and Taipei's separate lobbying of EU envoys were both at an early stage -- a response to fears of a Chinese invasion which have grown as military tensions escalate in the Taiwan Strait.

In both cases, the idea is to take sanctions beyond measures already taken in the West to restrict some trade and investment with China in sensitive technologies like computer chips and telecoms equipment. The sources did not provide any details of what is being considered but the notion of sanctions on the world's second-largest economy and one of the global supply chain's biggest links raises questions of feasibility.

"The potential imposition of sanctions on China is a far more complex exercise than sanctions on Russia, given U.S. and allies' extensive entanglement with the Chinese economy," said Nazak Nikakhtar, a former senior U.S. Commerce Department official. China claims Taiwan as its own territory and last month fired missiles over the island and sailed warships across their unofficial sea frontier after U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taipei in what Beijing saw as a provocation. Chinese President Xi Jinping has vowed to bring democratically-governed Taiwan under Beijing's control and

has not ruled out the use of force. He is set to secure a third, five-year leadership term at a Communist Party congress next month. Taiwan's government strongly rejects China's sovereignty claims. In Washington, officials are considering options for a possible package of sanctions against China to deter Xi from attempting to invade Taiwan, said a U.S. official and an official from a country in close coordination with Washington.

U.S. talks over sanctions began after Russia invaded Ukraine in February, but took on fresh urgency after the Chinese reaction to Pelosi's visit, the two sources said.

The United States, backed by NATO allies, took a similar approach to Russia in January with a threat of unspecified sanctions but this failed to dissuade Russian President Vladimir Putin from launching his invasion of Ukraine.

The White House is focused on getting countries on the same page, including coordinating between Europe and Asia, and avoiding provoking Beijing, the non-U.S. official said.

Reuters was unable to learn details on what specific sanctions were under consideration, but some analysts suggested China's military could be the focus.

"Big picture, initial sanctions conversations will likely revolve around curtailing China's access to certain technologies required

to sustain a military operation against Taiwan," said Craig Singleton at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. The White House declined to comment. Taiwan's Foreign Ministry said it had



discussed China's recent war games and the "great challenges" China poses to Taiwan and the region with the United States, Europe and other like-minded partners, but could not disclose details. China's Foreign Ministry and the Chinese Embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

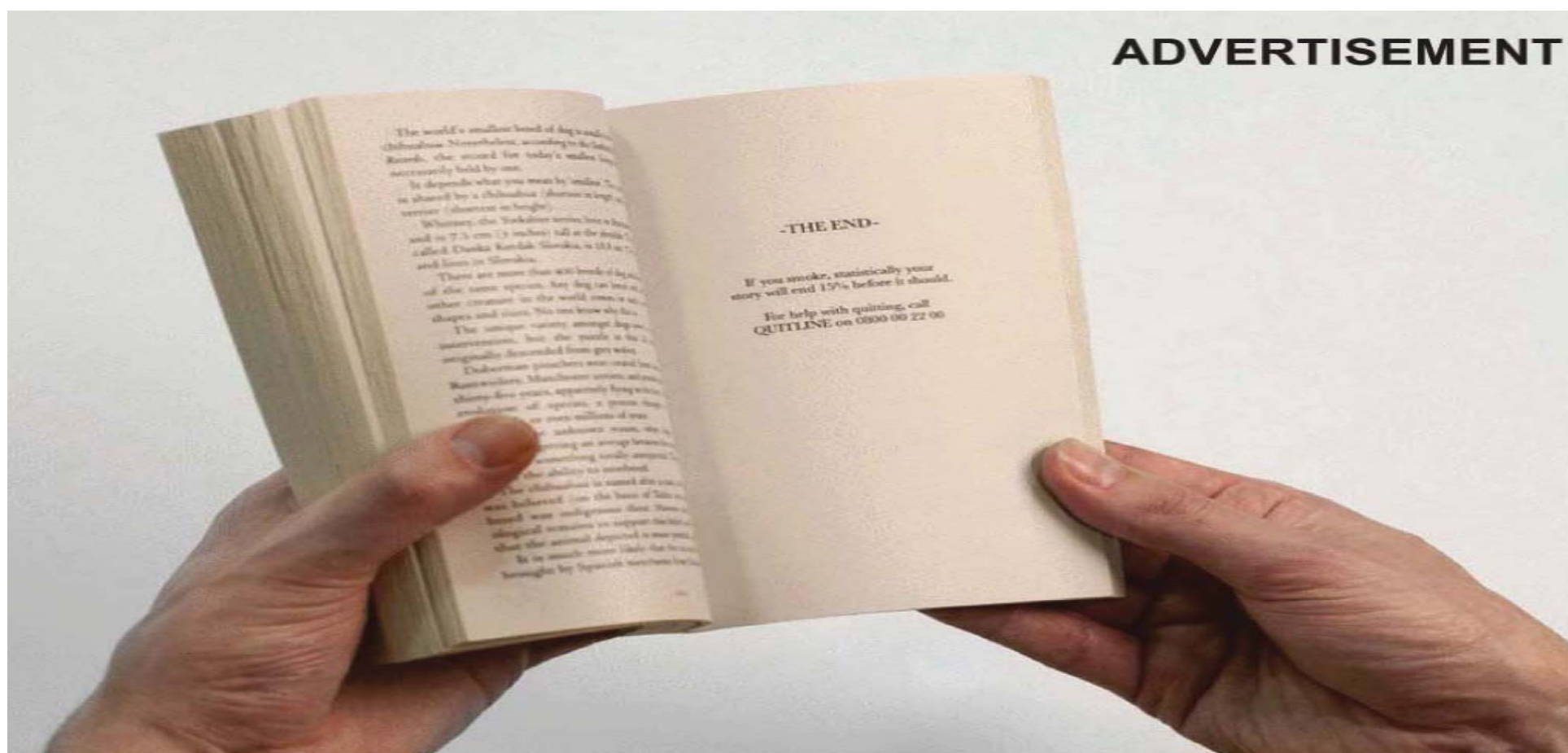
## TAIWAN'S PITCH TO EUROPE

Taiwan had already broached sanctions with European officials after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but China's recent military exercises have seen Taiwan's position harden, six sources briefed on the Taiwan-Europe discussions told Reuters. Top Taiwanese officials' calls for sanctions preparations have intensified in recent weeks. A recent Chinese white paper, which withdrew a promise not to send troops or administrators to Taiwan if Beijing takes control of the island, has prompted a redoubling of

their efforts with Europe. Taiwan has not asked for anything specific, only for Europe to plan what actions it may take if China attacked, one source briefed on discussions said, and has asked Europe to warn China privately that it would face consequences.

EU officials have so far shied away from imposing tough sanctions on China over human rights issues, as the country plays a far bigger role for the bloc's economy than Russia, said another person familiar with the matter. European sanctions would require all 27 member countries to agree, which is often elusive; consensus was tough even in isolating Russia after its invasion of Ukraine, in part because its gas was critical for Germany. All of Europe, excluding the Vatican, has formal diplomatic relations with Beijing but not Taipei, though Taiwanese and European officials have had extensive, private contacts since China's military exercises began, the sources say. Germany, the bloc's economic engine, is "wary," according to another official familiar with the discussion. "I don't think the Russia-Ukraine has fundamentally changed the way they view their relationship with China." But there is growing concern in the German government over its economic dependence on China, with the economy minister pledging a new trade policy and "no more naivety" on Tuesday. A spokesperson for German Chancellor Olaf Scholz declined to comment.

## ADVERTISEMENT





# US moves \$3.5 billion of Afghan bank's reserves to Swiss-based trust, Taliban furious

The United States said it has set up a professionally run fund in Switzerland to manage \$3.5 billion of Afghanistan's central bank's reserves that were frozen following the Taliban takeover of the country. According to reports, the new Afghan Fund was created on Wednesday, and it would have an account at the Bank for International Settlements. The primary aim of the creation of the fund is to strengthen Afghanistan's macroeconomic stability, including covering Afghanistan's arrears in international financial institutions and paying for electricity imports, but it will not handle humanitarian aid or government salaries, the TRT



World reported. Around \$7 billion of Afghanistan's central bank foreign currency assets are held by the US and other foreign banks. The decision to set up a fund comes months after intense negotiations to release the \$3.5 billion Afghan funds that were set aside for Afghanistan by US President Joe Biden. The remaining \$3.5 billion has been withheld by the US Federal Reserve (FED) and it will be disbursed as compensation to the victims

of the September 11 attacks, which led to the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the report states. A court decision on this matter is awaited and is expected in October. Meanwhile, the Taliban have lambasted the United States for moving its reserves to the Bank of International Settlements (BIS). A Taliban official with the country's central bank (DAB) told TRT World, "We don't agree with the transfer of money to the account indicated, but [we wish for it] to be transferred to Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB)." The spokesperson added that they are open to a third-party monitoring system as demanded by the US government.

## U.S. Senate Panel Advances Bill to Boost U.S. Ties with Taiwan

A U.S. Senate committee on Wednesday approved legislation that would significantly enhance U.S. military support for Taiwan, including provisions for billions of dollars in additional security assistance, as China increases military pressure on the democratically governed island. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee backed the Taiwan Policy Act of 2022 by 17-5, despite concerns about the bill in U.S. President Joe Biden's administration and anger about the measure from Beijing.

The strong bipartisan vote was a clear indication of support from both Republicans and Biden's fellow Democrats for changes in U.S. policy toward Taiwan, such as treating it as a major non-NATO ally. Sponsors said the bill would be the most comprehensive restructuring of U.S. policy toward the island since the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979 – the bedrock of U.S. engagement with the Chinese province since Washington opened up relations with Beijing that year.

"We need to be clear-eyed about what we are facing," said Senator Bob Menendez, the committee's Democratic chairman, while stressing that the United States does not seek war or heightened tensions with Beijing.

"If we want to ensure Taiwan has a fighting chance, we must act now," said Senator Jim Risch, the



committee's top Republican, arguing that any change in the status quo for Taiwan would have "disastrous effects" for the U.S. economy and national security.

The bill would allocate \$4.5 billion in security assistance for Taiwan over four years, and supports its participation in international organizations.

The act also includes extensive language on sanctions toward China in the event of hostilities across the strait separating it from the mainland.

**BEIJING'S OPPOSITION** When the bill was introduced in June, China responded by saying it would be "compelled to take resolute countermeasures" if Washington took actions that harmed China's

interests.

"We haven't discussed any specifics," Hsiao Bi-khim, Taiwan's de facto ambassador to Washington, told reporters at an event at the Capitol when asked if she has had discussions with the White House over specific sanctions. "We talked about integrated deterrence in a broader sense of the need to explore different tools to ensure that the status quo in the Taiwan Strait can be maintained," Hsiao said.

She said she had expressed "gratitude" to Congress for the legislation. "Given the complication of different views here in the United States too, we're hoping that we can reach some consensus on security, which is our top priority," she said.

The committee's approval paved the way for a vote in the full Senate, but there has been no word on when that might take place. To become law, it must also pass the House of Representatives and be signed by Biden or win enough support to override a veto.

The White House said on Tuesday it was in talks with members of Congress on how to change the act to ensure that it does not change long-standing U.S. policy toward Taiwan that it considers effective. The Taiwan bill is likely to be folded into a larger piece of legislation expected to pass late this year, such as the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), an annual bill setting policy for the Department of Defense.



# United States returns 2000-year-old coin worth \$1 million to Israel

In the wake of a joint smuggling probe, the US has given Israel a coin that was part of a nearly 2,000-year-old Jewish revolt against Roman control. The "exceedingly rare" quarter shekel was minted in AD 69, and the Manhattan District Attorney's office, which held a repatriation ceremony in New York on Monday, estimated its value at over \$1 million. The action was taken 20 years after Israeli officials first learnt through sources that the silver coin had been found in the Ella Valley, south of Jerusalem, by antiquities robbers. It is thought to be a part of a stash of coins that criminals discovered in the region, which is home to many significant archaeological sites. According to investigators, the item was purchased illegally before being trafficked through Jordan to the UK. Then, it was shipped to the US using fraudulent documentation. The coin was scheduled to be auctioned off in Denver, Colorado, but was instead taken by Homeland

Security agents in 2017. The coin has "immense cultural value," according to Manhattan District Attorney Alvin L. Bragg, Jr., who noted that despite the investigation's complexity, his team of prosecutors, analysts, and agents working with Israeli authorities was able to locate it in a couple of months. In AD 6, the Romans conquered the kingdom of Judaea, but resistance to their rule resulted in a string of uprisings known as the Jewish-Roman Wars. The currency was made during the First Jewish Revolt, also known as the Great Jewish Revolt, which started in AD 66 and lasted for four years. In some regions of their empire, including Judaea, the



Romans had permitted the creation and circulation of particular regional coinage. According to the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA), rebel commanders covered the emperor's visage on imperial coins by adding "Jewish motifs." It was "a declaration of independence by the Jews in the land of Israel, a statement against the mighty empire that stood before them," according to an IAA press release. The British Museum bought a coin in the 1930s that is the only other quarter shekel of a similar design that the IAA is aware of. It estimates that "approximately three" more are also available on the illegal market. Senior Israeli officials, including Gilad Erdan, the nation's ambassador to the UN, were present for the coin's return ceremony. The repatriation of the object, according to IAA director Eli Eskosido, "marks the beginning of a very positive and important trend for the restoration of cultural heritage items."

## Biden to Nominate Career Diplomat Tracy as U.S. Envoy to Russia



US. President Joe Biden plans to nominate career diplomat Lynne Tracy as U.S. ambassador to Russia, a source familiar with the matter said on Wednesday. Tracy currently serves as U.S. ambassador to Armenia. The U.S. ambassador role in Russia has been vacant since Sept. 4, when envoy John Sullivan concluded his tenure there amid soaring bilateral tensions due to Moscow's war in Ukraine. The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Tracy, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, served as deputy chief of mission at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow from 2014 to 2017. Before being sworn in as ambassador to Yerevan in 2019, she served as senior adviser for Russia affairs in the State Department's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs.

ਪੰਜਾਬ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਜਾਬੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾਨ

# ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਦੁਨੀਆ

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## ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਵਿਦੇਸ਼ ਉਡਾਰੀ ਮਾਰਨ ਲਈ ਖਰਚੇ 27000 ਕਰੋੜ

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## APOLLO

FARMS & RESORTS



# The Azerbaijan-Armenia border clashes, and the rising fear of another war

(From SAI Bureau)

Dozens of Armenian and Azerbaijani soldiers have reportedly been killed in renewed border clashes between Armenia and Azerbaijan, in the worst round of hostilities since 2020. After several hours of fighting, the Armenian government appealed to world leaders for help, saying that Azerbaijani forces were trying to advance into its territory. The conflict is decades old with its repercussions potentially engulfing all of the Caucasus.

## Centuries-old conflict

Christian majority Armenia and Muslim majority Azerbaijan have been in a state of near conflict for centuries, initially over religion but more recently concerning territorial disputes. The current crisis draws its roots from the early 1920s when Russia under Joseph Stalin conquered large parts of the Caucasus. At the time, Stalin placed the Armenian dominated region of Nagorno-Karabakh into Azerbaijan. As the erstwhile USSR started to collapse in the late 1980s, nationalist forces on both sides started a battle for control over the disputed region. In 1991, ethnic Armenians in the region declared independence culminating in an all-out war three years later. By 1994, Armenia managed to drive large swaths of the Azerbaijani military out of Nagorno-Karabakh. The violence left tens and thousands dead and displaced hundreds of thousands.

Later that year, a Russian imposed ceasefire took effect but failed to resolve the underlying dispute. Clashes have broken out sporadically since then, most notably in 2020.

Although the enclave is still recognised internationally as Azerbaijani territory, it is dominated by ethnic Armenians and controlled by Armenian separatists who have declared it as the "Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast". While the Armenian government does not recognise the region as independent, it does support the region politically and militarily. In 2018, Armenia went through a so-called Velvet Revolution in which its president at the time was peacefully deposed, leading to hopes that the conflict could be peacefully resolved. Although Armenia's new president Nikol Pashinyan, indicated that he was willing to settle the issue diplomatically, he later backtracked on his statements, arguing that Nagorno-Karabakh belonged to Armenia.

## The current flare-up

Although the current crisis has been simmering since 2020 after a six week long war left 6,500 people dead, relations were relatively subdued until early this year. In March, Azerbaijani forces seized territory in Farukh, an ethnic Armenian populated village. Because of its strategic location, the events in Farukh triggered concerns that Baku would make a play for the region, especially given that Russian forces were preoccupied with

Ukraine.

In April, an EU-backed mediation process established a brief period of peace, but by August, the situation escalated once again. On the third of that month, Baku launched an offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh, alleging that an Armenian soldier was killed in the Lachin region. Earlier this week, Armenia claimed that Azerbaijani forces "launched intensive shelling, with artillery and large-calibre firearms, against Armenian military positions in the direction of the cities of Goris, Sotk, and Jermuk".

Elnur Mammadov, Azerbaijan's deputy foreign minister, said: "Armenia has been shelling Azerbaijani military positions for a few weeks now. That shelling has been intensified over the last few days. Armenia has started amassing heavy weaponry and armaments along the deemed border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. What happened overnight is a large-scale provocation by the Armenian military against Azerbaijani positions as well as the shelling of employee and civilian infrastructure."

Reports indicate that at least 100 soldiers – 49 Armenian and 50 Azerbaijani – soldiers have been killed over the last one week. Russia, the US and Turkey have

all reacted to the situation with concern.

## Involvement of foreign players

The recent conflict has sparked international attention because of the involvement of regional rivals Turkey and Russia. Turkey, a NATO member state, was the first country to recognise Azerbaijan's independence in 1991 and continues to support the country unconditionally. Turkey has no official relationship with Armenia, having shut its borders with the country in 1993 in support of Azerbaijan. Ankara and Baku share close cultural ties over their shared cultural heritage. Meanwhile, Turkey and Armenia have a long history of conflict stemming from Turkey's refusal to acknowledge the 1915 Armenia genocide. According to Jeffery Mankoff, a Distinguished Research Fellow at the US National Defense University's Institute for National Strategic Studies, the conflict could be potentially a very "dangerous game." He writes that "within the South Caucasus, strong Turkish support could encourage Baku to take an uncompromising line and resist calls for a cease-fire that maintains some version of the status quo ante. Turkish involvement could also transform the conflict into an existential one in the eyes

of the Armenian public, especially in light of the World War I-era massacres of Armenians by Ottoman forces". This threat is exacerbated by the fact that Russia and Turkey are on opposite sides in the ongoing civil wars in Syria and Turkey. For its part, Russia maintains good relations with both Azerbaijan and Armenia. That being said, it has a much deeper relationship with Yerevan as it hosts a Russian military base and is part of the Moscow-led Eurasian Economic Union. Nagorno-Karabakh also plays a key role in the global energy trade, with pipelines connecting Azerbaijan and Turkey passing by the region. Hostilities would compromise the pipeline, leading to more uncertainties in global energy prices. Although the conflict is seen as a regional one, bolstered by Russia and Turkey, the international community has at times attempted to broker a cessation in tensions. Chaired by France, Russia and the United States, under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Minsk Group has sought to prevent military clashes and to implement a peace settlement. However, despite these efforts, the prospect of peace seems distant, especially given the outbreak of fighting over the last week.

## What India Can Learn From Indonesian Model to Fight China's Loan Sharks

From page 15

Many of them have converted extorted money into cryptocurrency, created fictitious bank accounts and bought multiple SIM Cards. After the ED crackdown, Income Tax, police and other authorities, syndicates have been shifting their call centres to Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh.

## RBI WARNING AND NEW GUIDELINES

In 2021, an RBI working group identified a whopping 600 illegal lending apps operating in India. On the other hand, Google India alone has claimed to have removed over 2,000 personal loan apps in 2022 from its Play Store. The RBI's August guidelines require that loan servicing amount and repayments are to be executed by the borrower directly into the RE's bank account without any pass-through account or pool account of a third party. However, it will be applicable only to existing customers availing of fresh loans.

As per the RBI clarification, in order to ensure a smooth transition, REs shall be given time till November 30, 2022. According to the RBI Deputy Governor, the theme of the regulatory guidelines rests squarely with the regulated entities and they will have to ensure that the loan service facilitator and the digital lending apps with whom they have outsourcing tie-ups function within the regulatory ecosystem not just in letter but also in spirit. As per the chairman of the Payments Council of India, the RBI decision will save millions of innocent people from falling prey to such unregistered, unregulated and illegal loan sharks as well as ensure that international fraudsters don't get access to Indian payments systems.

## HOW TO CRACK THIS MENACE?

As per Sujeet Kumar, Rajya Sabha member from the Biju Janata Dal, Odisha alone had seen 1.5 lakh downloads of these apps. He said that dubious digital loan apps with links to China and backed by Chinese entities lending unscrupulous loans are in violation of RBI guidelines. He questioned in Parliament whether the country's regulatory framework was adequate enough to tackle the threat posed by them.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman informed the Rajya Sabha last month that the government was taking action against dubious digital loan apps. Without naming China, the minister said most dubious apps were originating from one particular country. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEITY) has been asked to coordinate with the RBI and service providers such as Google Play and Apple App Store to ensure that only loan apps on the RBI whitelist are available for download.

As per RBI officials, technological innovations such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, quantum computing, big data, analytics, and 5G, have brought a whole lot of benefits. However, they also pose significant challenges for the future of finance. As per Senior Director and head of Trust & Safety for Google Asia-Pacific, "The issues with the loan apps could be easily solved in countries like Indonesia as there was a list of government-certified apps." However, as per research done by Cashless Consumer, out of 1,050 apps available in the Google Play Store, only 90 have disclosed their address. Out of 750 apps only 300 had given website links, but the same was found to be fake. The Indian government can take a leaf out of the Indonesian model to put a brake on these loan apps. Now the onus is on the government to make the enforcement agencies future-ready before it is too late.



# NATO versus Russia in Ukraine: How US could be aiming for Russia's breakup into smaller States

From page 18

Among the Ukrainian forces already engaged in military action in eastern Ukraine were the notorious far-right Azov battalion, its symbol reminiscent of the Nazi Wolfsangel and their origins with the alleged collaborators in the murder of 33,771 Jews at Babi Yar in September 1941. Putin's preemptive attack, invading Ukraine, was the opposite of Joseph Stalin's reluctance to mobilise in August 1941, in order to not provide a possible casus belli to Adolf Hitler, though the German army was already preparing to strike against the Soviet Union.

The NATO declaration of war, it now seems, was an attempt to fully capitalise on Mikhail Gorbachev's ill-considered chaotic retreat from Eastern Europe in 1991. He had shown no concern for the security implications for Russia of abandoning the historic gateway of repeated invasions of Russia over many centuries, ending in the Nazi assault of August 1941 to liquidate Russia and its people completely. Astonishingly, Gorbachev was satisfied with US verbal assurances that NATO would not expand eastwards in the aftermath of the Soviet withdrawal. Even more shockingly, he was unconcerned about foreign domination of the vast plains of Ukraine, which would lay open the way into Russian territory for an invading army. Even the inveterately peace-

loving Mahatma Gandhi would have balked at the idea of giving up all of the Punjab and modern Haryana to Pakistan, leaving wide open the doorway to Delhi and much of the rest of India as well.

In fact, NATO troops on Ukraine's eastern national border, adjacent to Russia, would have been equivalent to Chinese troops in Nepal's pro-Indian Terai region along the border of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar if Nepal had decided to form a military alliance with China. Would India's pro-NATO columnists and armchair strategists have then argued it was Nepal's sovereign prerogative to choose its alliance relationships, as most Europeans are saying to justify the mayhem on their continent?

As it turned out, NATO expanded eastwards without pause in successive waves, embracing Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo and the Baltic States bordering Russia and others, with an alarmed Russia watching but it did not react aggressively. The US airily dismissed the assurances it had given at the very outset to Gorbachev to forbear on eastward expansion, saying they had only been verbal. The CIA then proceeded to sponsor Orange Revolutions blatantly to install its preferred regimes and succeeded in the Ukraine in 2014. But Putin rose to the challenge and thwarted the CIA

conspiracy to overthrow pro-Russian governments in Georgia and Belarus. In 2008 Vladimir Putin, who had earlier, at one point, sought Russian membership of NATO, though with suitable modifications to its treaty, emphatically warned of a redline where Ukraine was concerned. He cautioned unambiguously Russia would not accept its induction into NATO. This was the rationale for the warnings issued by Nicolas Sarkozy and Angela Merkel before war was effectively declared by NATO against Russia fourteen years later. Ukrainian armies massed ready for action in the east where Russian-speakers had seceded, but Putin struck first. However, striking first is a military tactic in war and not necessarily an indication of a move to achieve political goals which had been decided before the military action. The war against Russia is being waged with plentiful advanced NATO weaponry of various description, worth an estimated \$40+ billion to date. The purpose is to slow down Russian troops by destroying advancing armour and interdicting aerial assets and thereby imposing severe costs. The sophisticated missile that sank the Russian flagship, the Moskva, in the Black Sea was likely to have been operated by experienced US personnel on the ground, as one US military expert has suggested. In any case, US intelligence organising the attack has been acknowledged and the claim it was hit by a missile manufactured by Ukraine is doubtful. It may also be surmised the war is actually being directed by NATO generals from Brussels and elsewhere on the Ukrainian border, including possibly Poland. There are highly likely to be NATO officers on the battleground too, directly supervising frontline combat. Some of the success in slowing down the Russian advance and now reversing early losses in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second city, can be attributed to the value of the joint effort of NATO officers and local Ukrainian troops on the ground. One overall factor in the progress of the war has been Russian hesitation to engage in major bombing sorties prior to the advance of ground troops. This is probably a political decision to limit Ukrainian civilian casualties in the hope of retaining the possibility of resuming amicable relations with sections of the population.

The Kharkiv setback might now prompt

a re-think and a more damaging conventional approach to the assault may be in the offing. The grave danger is a nuclear escalation since Russian strategic forces have been put on alert, signalling to the US to desist from deepening its intervention, and miscalculation by either side an ever-present danger. US political elites seem to regard such a dire risk as a small price to pay to induct Ukraine into NATO. The unbridled arrogance and ambition is hard to credit and the US ability to force all NATO members to comply, despite unfolding socio-economic disaster at home, breathtaking. In addition, the alacrity with which the entire Western media turned into crude propagandists for the war effort is impressive.

The US goal of embroiling Russia in war is clearly designed to eliminate it as a global military power by issuing threats at the border with Ukraine. One aspect of the US strategy was of course to effectively end the ability of the Russian Black Sea fleet to operate out of Sevastopol. This was a US pipedream that Putin was unlikely to countenance and he ended by forcibly taking back the ethnically-Russian Crimean Oblast. The former premier of the USSR, Nikita Khrushchev, a Ukrainian himself, had assigned it in February 1954 to the Ukrainian SSR, then part of the USSR. The US was hoping, in the first instance, to use Ukraine's membership of NATO to menace Russia at its border with Ukraine. The evident goal was to weaken Russia's nuclear retaliatory capabilities and curb its involvement in Syria in and elsewhere in the world.

A much more truly ambitious apparent long-term US ambition seems to have been to instigate the breakup of Russia into smaller manageable countries, paralleling the emergence of nations in eastern Europe after 1989. It could then deal with a reconstructed historical Russia of smaller emerging statelets run by competitive elites at odds with each other. These new polities, anxious for revenues, will then, presumably, be eager to sign lucrative commercial deals with US corporations since the entire region is extraordinarily wealthy in raw material resources. This breakup plan is not dissimilar to the one intended for India, which is at a more advanced stage of political degeneration as a united polity. Some of its crucial constituent regional states are already displaying eagerness to exercise de facto political sovereignty.

## The 'Financial Wizards' Of Social Media

From page 15

In May 2021, the Advertising Standards Council of India ("ASCI"), a self-regulatory body, released the "Guidelines for Influencer Advertising in Digital Media" to enable consumers to identify when influencers are deriving some benefit for promoting a product. The said guidelines do not have the force of law and are not binding on companies or influencers. With specific reference to advertisements of financial products and services, the ASCI Code bars advertisements for financial products from containing misleading statements about the security offered, rates of return. etc. But influencers continue to use such dynamic information to attract viewership. In February 2022, ASCI released guidelines for the promotion and advertisement of visual digital assets (VDAs) including cryptocurrencies and non-fungible tokens (NFTs). However, more than 400 advertisements pertaining to cryptocurrencies by digital influencers on different social media platforms had violated their guidelines in the first five

months of 2022. Consumers defrauded by financial products can seek recourse under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 but influencers promoting high-risk, complex financial products essentially face no consequences under the law for non-disclosure of brand collaboration. While there is a need for more transparency in the influencer-verse, this is not a call for over-regulation but for better enforcement. This space requires a deeper understanding and not a myopic one-size-fits-all penal provision. The government should be proactive in at least releasing preliminary Do's and Don'ts for promoting financial products online in consultation with SEBI to protect naive investors. There should be gradation in penal provisions in accordance with the platform reach of the influencer and the monetary value of the brand collaboration. Penalties should be imposed on both the advertising company and the influencer in question, and the amount accumulated via such penalties should go towards the creation of a social media literacy fund. I say the government, for once, should put its money where its teleprompter is!



## Queen Elizabeth II's final flight is the most tracked in history

Just over 5 million people viewed Queen Elizabeth's final flight on Tuesday, as the journey carrying the late monarch's body from Edinburgh to London became the most tracked flight in history. Flight tracking website Flightradar24 said a total of 4.79 million people watched the flight live online, with a further quarter of a million people watching on its YouTube channel.

The company said an unprecedented 6 million people tried to follow the flight within the first minute of the Boeing C17A Globemaster turning on its transponder at Edinburgh's airport, affecting the stability of the platform.

"Seventy years after her first flight as Queen aboard the BOAC Argonaut 'Atalanta,' Queen Elizabeth II's final flight is the most tracked flight in Flightradar24 history," Flightradar24 Director of Communications said in an email.

Elizabeth, Britain's longest-reigning monarch, died in Balmoral, Scotland on Sept. 8. Her funeral will take place on September 19.

Flightradar24 said the flight was more than twice the previous record of 2.2 million when US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi flew on a controversial visit to Taiwan in August.

## India to host G20 Summit in Sept 2023, hold over 200 meetings during its Presidency

India, as G20 Presidency, will be inviting Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Singapore, Spain and UAE as Guest countries, said the MEA. While India's G20 priorities are in the process of being firmed up, the MEA statement said: "Ongoing conversations...revolve around inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth; LiFE (Lifestyle For Environment); women's empowerment; digital public infrastructure and tech-enabled development in areas ranging from health, agriculture and education to commerce, skill-mapping, culture and tourism; climate financing; circular economy; global food security; energy security; green hydrogen; disaster risk reduction and resilience; developmental cooperation; fight against economic crime; and multilateral reforms."

"During our Presidency, India, Indonesia and Brazil would form the troika. This would be the first time when the troika would consist of three developing countries and emerging economies, providing them a greater voice," said the MEA in a statement. "During our Presidency, India, Indonesia and Brazil would form the troika. This would be the first time when the troika would consist of three developing countries and emerging economies, providing them a greater voice," said the MEA in a statement. Collectively, the G20 accounts for 85 per cent of global GDP, 75 per cent of international trade and two-thirds of the world population, making it the premier forum for international economic cooperation. India is currently part of the G20 Troika (current, previous

and incoming G20 Presidencies) comprising Indonesia, Italy and India.

### The G20 currently comprises:

# Finance Track, with 8 work streams (Global Macroeconomic Policies, Infrastructure Financing, International Financial Architecture, Sustainable Finance, Financial Inclusion, Health Finance, International Taxation, Financial Sector Reforms).

# Sherpa Track, with 12 work streams (Anti-corruption, Agriculture, Culture, Development, Digital Economy, Employment, Environment and Climate, Education, Energy Transition, Health, Trade and Investment, Tourism)

# 10 Engagement Groups of private sector/civil society/independent bodies (Business 20, Civil 20, Labour 20, Parliament 20, Science 20, Supreme Audit Institutions 20, Think 20, Urban 20, Women 20 and Youth 20). In addition to G20 members, there has been a tradition of the G20 Presidency inviting some guest countries and international organisations to its meetings and summit. Accordingly, in addition to regular international organisations (UN, IMF, World Bank, WHO, WTO, ILO, FSB and OECD) and chairs of regional organisations (AU, AUDA-NEPAD and ASEAN), India, as G20 Presidency, will be inviting Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, The Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Singapore, Spain, and the UAE as guest countries, as well as International Solar Alliance (ISA), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), and Asian Development Bank (ADB) as guest international organisations.

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# How US Decision on Pak F16s Defies Logic and Threatens India's Security

Both the Assistant Secretaries in charge of India in the State Department and the Pentagon present in Delhi had obviously processed this decision on F16s and the timing of the announcement could not normally have been decided without their knowledge.

India is faced with serious security threats on land and sea by two hostile powers — Pakistan and China — closely linked strategically against India, both questioning Indian sovereignty and claiming its territory, and having a robust defence relationship extending also to the nuclear domain. The US is fully cognizant of the threats that China presents to both its own security and that of its allies in the western Pacific, as well as to India's security.

Indeed, the threat to India on land far exceeds in scope China's threat to any other country. China's threat to the US is essentially maritime in scope, of limiting the exercise of US maritime power in areas adjacent to its land frontiers so that it can dominate the South China and East China Seas, change the balance of power in the region that comprises of Japan, South Korea and ASEAN, open the doors to annexation of Taiwan and the oceanic expansion of Chinese naval power. The US is physically thousands of miles away from China. The US focus is primarily on the maritime domain, which responds also to India's security interests in view of China's maritime strategies in the Indian Ocean affecting also our immediate neighbourhood. A vital part of this maritime strategy are the two land-to-ocean corridors from the Chinese mainland to the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. Pakistan is key to China's maritime strategy, represented by the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor that culminates at Gwadar, and the almost inevitability of China establishing a naval base in Pakistan, which Myanmar is unlikely to allow despite being pushed by the West into China's arms because of military rule and human rights issues. It is in the context of India and the US examining the scope of those Indian security interests that both countries should cooperate to protect within the larger framework of their respective regional interests, which include US policies towards Pakistan and the linked issue of Afghanistan, that the announcement of bolstering Pakistan air capability against India strikes a discordant note. This is so especially in the wake of US abandoning Afghanistan to the Taliban and leaving behind security issues for India to cope with. The supply of F16s to Pakistan has rattled India-US relations for decades. The US is fully aware of India's sensitivities on this score, as well as the fact that these planes have always been intended by Pakistan for use against India, proved once again by their operational deployment in 2019 when India struck Balakot. The Indian air operations were constrained at that time because of the range of the AMRAAMS the F16s carried, as admitted by our then Air Chief, a gap filled now by the acquisition of

Rafales and the advanced missiles that they are equipped with.

The argument that these planes are intended for counter-terrorism purposes begs the question how a country that is an epicentre of terrorism itself, one that sheltered Osama bin Laden, provided safe havens to the Taliban, was deeply engaged in terrorism against India as well as through the Taliban against US forces in Afghanistan, can still be relied to do so. In any case, what is the utility of AMRAAMS against terrorists?

That the upgrades intended do not change the military balance in the region, as stated in the State Department's release, suggests that the idea of "balancing" India and Pakistan has resurfaced in US diplomacy in the region. What is also being lost in this argument is what this US move adds in substance to the depth of China-Pakistan defence ties that India has to contend with, covering joint production of jets (JF17), supply of J-10 jets, submarines, frigates, air defence systems, air to ground missiles, guided bombs, artillery, drones, tanks, etc. During the period 2017 to 2021, 47 percent of all major arms exported by China went to Pakistan.

The announcement of this upgrade that includes improved air-to-ground capability and retaining interoperability with the US — as the US State Department note acknowledges — suggests that US military operations from Pakistani soil or in collaboration with Pakistan through its air space aimed at targets in Afghanistan, as in the case of the al-Zwahiri operation, will now be pursued. Those in India who reasoned that after quitting Afghanistan, the US would lose interest in Pakistan and would pursue a tougher policy towards it, would have to revise their thinking and analyse afresh what this renewed US commitment to Pakistan means geopolitically for us.

If during the Cold War, Pakistan was geopolitically important for monitoring nuclear and missile developments in Russia and China, that is no longer the case. Russia is now geographically distant and China is Pakistan's closest partner. That past utility of Pakistan in this respect no longer exists. It is not clear how the F16 upgrade serves the goal of keeping tabs on the Islamic State elements in Afghanistan. How much this decision on F16s presented as being in US' national security interest has emanated from the current Pentagon chief, who in the past headed the Central Command, can always be a matter of speculation. Some arguments being given in foreign policy circles in the US to justify the US decision are contestable. They may reflect elements of thinking in official circles also in view of the organic links between the two. Our neutrality on

the Ukraine issue is a political position that may not assist US diplomacy in isolating Russia, but it does not in any way threaten America's physical security. We pursue our national interest without endangering US national security. We are receiving arms from Russia and not supplying arms to it. These arms protect our security, including vis-à-vis China, but are not directed at the US. We are not arming any country hostile to the US. Our purchase of discounted oil from Russia meets our critical needs as the second largest oil importer in the world whose economy cannot sustain huge spikes in the price of oil. It is a defensive measure, not an offensive one against the US, especially as Europe is buying energy from Russia far exceeding anything India does. Besides, in 2021-22, the US was the fourth largest oil supplier to India, with Russia at ninth place.

All these years, despite its presence in Pakistan, the US has not been able to stop or even discourage its deepening strategic ties with China. Any argument that a renewed US engagement of Pakistan will help to wean Pakistan away from China is an illusion, as is the expectation that Pakistan will be a more reliable partner

of the US in its anti-terror operations in Afghanistan circa 2022. Imran Khan's US-baiting position and his hold on the Pakistani radicalised street should be a reminder.

Pakistan has always been an albatross around our neck, and our effort to get rid of it is not helped by this F16 decision that Pakistan will read as giving it more political space in pursuing its animus towards India. It is not as yet clear whether Pakistan will pay for the upgrade or it will be in the form of military aid. If Pakistan pays, it will be ironical that a country desperately seeking IMF debt relief has available funds to make military purchases. If it is aid, it will mean overturning Donald Trump's decision to suspend military aid on account of lack of Pakistan's cooperation on combating terrorism, and, instead, rewarding it in disregard of its known terrorist affiliations. This would have been done even while Pakistan is on the FATF grey list. In conclusion, objectionable though this F16 decision is, it has to be seen in the wider perspective of our expanding ties with the US and the need to strike a balance with all maturity in our larger national interest. We would need at the same time to keep our foreign policy options open in all directions.



## FBI TEN MOST WANTED FUGITIVE

### BHADRESHKUMAR CHETANBHAI PATEL

Unlawful Flight to Avoid Prosecution - First Degree Murder, Second Degree Murder, First Degree Assault, Second Degree Assault, Dangerous Weapon with Intent to Injure



Photograph taken April 2015

#### DESCRIPTION

Alias: Bhadreshkumar C. Patel	
Date(s) of Birth Used: May 15, 1990	Place of Birth: Kanrodi Ta Viramgam, Gujarat, India
Hair: Brown	Eyes: Brown
Height: 5'9"	Weight: 165 pounds
Sex: Male	Occupation: Employee of donut shop
Nationality: Indian	

#### REWARD

The FBI is offering a reward of up to \$100,000 for information leading to the arrest of Bhadreshkumar Chetanbhai Patel.

#### REMARKS

Patel was last known to be in the Newark, New Jersey, area.

#### CAUTION

Bhadreshkumar Chetanbhai Patel is wanted for allegedly killing his wife by striking her multiple times with an object while they were both working at a donut shop in Hanover, Maryland, on April 12, 2015. A local arrest warrant was issued in the District Court of Maryland for Anne Arundel County on April 13, 2015, and Patel was charged with first degree murder, second degree murder, first degree assault, second degree assault, and dangerous weapon with intent to injure. A federal arrest warrant was issued in the United States District Court, District of Maryland, Baltimore, Maryland, on April 20, 2015, after Patel was charged with unlawful flight to avoid prosecution.

#### SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ARMED AND EXTREMELY DANGEROUS

If you have any information concerning this person, please contact your local FBI office or the nearest American Embassy or Consulate.

Field Office: Baltimore



# Why El Salvador's Bitcoin experiment has proven to be a spectacular failure

**A year ago, El Salvador became the first country to make Bitcoin legal tender. However, today just 20 per cent of the population use it for transactions, making it a cautionary tale of what happens when a country adopts a cryptocurrency**

A year ago, El Salvador became the first country to make Bitcoin legal tender — alongside the US dollar, which the Central American country adopted in 2001 to replace its own currency, the colón.

President Nayib Bukele, a cryptocurrency enthusiast, promoted the initiative as one that would deliver multiple economic benefits.

Making Bitcoin legal tender, he said, would attract foreign investment, generate jobs and help “push humanity at least a tiny bit into the right direction”.

His ambitions extended to building an entire “Bitcoin city” — a tax-free haven funded by issuing \$1 billion in government bonds. The plan was to spend half the bond revenue on the city, and the other half on buying Bitcoin, with assumed profits then being used to repay the bondholders. Now, a year on, there's more than enough evidence to conclude that Bukele — who has also called himself “the world's coolest dictator” in response to criticisms of his creeping authoritarianism — had no idea what he was doing.

This bold financial experiment has proven to be an almost complete failure.

**Making Bitcoin legal tender**

Making Bitcoin legal tender meant much more than allowing Bitcoin to be used for transactions. That was already possible, as it is in most (but far from all) countries.

If a Salvadoran wanted to pay for something in bitcoins, and the recipient was willing to accept them, they could.

But Bukele wanted more. Making bitcoins legal tender meant a payee had to accept them. As the 2021 legislation stated, “every economic agent must accept Bitcoin as

payment when offered to him by whoever acquires a good or service”. To encourage Bitcoin uptake, the government created an app called “Chivo Wallet” (“chivo” is slang for “cool”) to trade bitcoins for dollars without transaction fees. It also came preloaded with \$30 as a bonus (the median weekly income is about \$360).

Yet despite the law and these incentives, Bitcoin has not been embraced.

**Greeted with little enthusiasm**

A nationally representative survey of 1,800 Salvadoran households in February indicated just 20 per cent of the population was using Chivo Wallet for Bitcoin transactions. More than double that number downloaded the app, but only to claim the \$30.

Among respondents who identified as business owners, just 20 per cent said they were accepting bitcoins as payment. These were typically large companies (among the top 10 per cent of companies by size)

A survey for the El Salvador Chamber of Commerce in March found only 14 per cent of businesses were transacting using Bitcoin.

**Making huge losses**

Fortunately for Salvadorans, nothing has come of the \$1 billion Bitcoin bonds scheme. But the Bukele government has still spent more than \$100 million buying bitcoins — which are now worth less than \$50 million. When Bukele announced his plans in July 2021, Bitcoin's value was about \$35,000. By the time the legislation came into effect, on 7 September 2021, it was about \$45,000. Two months later, it peaked at \$64,400.

Now it is trading at around \$20,000. Bukele has made self-congratulatory tweets about “buying the dip” but almost all the bitcoins bought by the

government have been for more than \$30,000, at an average price of more than \$40,000.

A year ago, Bukele was urging his citizens to hold their money in bitcoins. For anyone who did, the losses would be devastating.

**Flawed analyses**

Bukele's misunderstanding of Bitcoin — and economics more generally — has been demonstrated repeatedly. In June 2021 he tweeted: “Bitcoin has a market cap of \$680 billion. If 1 per cent of it is invested in El Salvador, that would increase our GDP by 25 per cent.”

This suggests he seemed to think Bitcoin was some sort of investment fund. It also showed he did not understand GDP. Foreign investment is not a component of GDP. There has been no surge in foreign investment nor GDP.

In a January 2022 tweet he argued a “gigantic price increase is just a matter of time” because there will only ever be 21 million bitcoins while there are 50 million millionaires in the world. “Imagine when each one of them decides they should own at least ONE #Bitcoin,” he proclaimed. Bitcoin's value has since halved.

The rest of the world is not impressed. The Bitcoin plan has adversely affected El Salvador's credit rating

and relations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). With investors more wary of lending to the country, local borrowers have had to offer higher interest rates.

In January, the IMF urged El Salvador to reverse Bitcoin's legal tender status because of the “large risks for financial and market integrity, financial stability and consumer protection”. Bitcoin is notorious for its use in scams and other illegal activities, as well as its volatility. Bukele tweeted a dismissive response involving a Simpsons-themed meme.

This seems particularly rash, given El Salvador has been seeking a loan of more than \$1 billion from the IMF.

International credit rating agencies Fitch has downgraded El Salvador's credit rating this year, citing concerns about its Bitcoin policies. No other country with its own currency, not even ones such as Zimbabwe and Venezuela with discredited currencies, has followed suit and made Bitcoin legal tender. Given El Salvador's record, it is unlikely any ever will. Explained Why El Salvador's Bitcoin experiment has proven to be a spectacular failure his article is republished from The Conversation under a Creative Commons license. Read the original article.

## Neanderthals had better cognition, just one mutation gave homo sapiens edge to outlive: study

Researchers from the Max Planck Institute of Molecular Cell Biology and Genetics in Dresden, Germany, claim to have discovered a genetic mutation that caused the brains of Homo sapiens to produce neurons more quickly. The gene in question, called TKTL1, has a Neanderthal version that differs from the present human variant by one amino acid. Wieland Huttner, professor and emeritus director at the institute and research author, said, “We've identified a gene that contributes to making us human.” The study team discovered that the modern human variation of the gene caused an increase in a particular type of... cell that generates neurons in the neocortex region of the brain when the two copies of the gene were put into mouse embryos. Similar outcomes were

obtained when the two gene variations were examined in organoids—lab-grown brain tissue created from human stem cells—and ferret embryos. According to the study, which was published in the journal Science, the team reasoned that this capacity to produce more neurons likely gave Homo sapiens a cognitive advantage unrelated to overall brain size, indicating that contemporary humans have “more neocortex to work with than the ancient Neanderthal did.” Recent archaeological discoveries indicate that Neanderthals were more advanced than popular culture's portrayals of brutish cavemen might imply. Our ancestors employed sophisticated tools and could survive in both cold and hot climes. In addition, they swam, produced yarn, and made art.



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# Tackling inequality key to climate fight: Study

Tackling inequality is key to securing the public support needed to overhaul the global economy and reverse climate change, an update to the landmark 50-year-old computer simulation of environmental stress has found. Based on modelling by MIT scientists of a world destabilised by growing consumption, the 1972 "Limits To Growth" simulation has been attacked as flawed by some but applauded by others as prescient of accelerating planetary stress. read more

Building off its predecessor, the Earth4All model developed by a cross-discipline team of researchers sought to explore what it would take to increase the wellbeing of humanity during the rest of this century using data from the 1980-2020 period. Its central conclusion was that, if left unchecked, rising inequality in the next 50 years would leave people less trusting of governments and other institutions, making co-operation to deal with climate change and other threats more difficult.

"When social trust goes down, this limits the speed of public

**The Earth 4 All model developed by a cross-discipline team of researchers sought to explore what it would take to increase the well-being of humanity during the rest of this century**



policy action. This translates into how much regulation and subsidies you can do in terms of greening the economy and energy system," study co-author Per Espen Stoknes told Reuters.

To track wellbeing, the researchers created an 'Average Wellbeing Index' using data including disposable income, income inequality, government services, the climate crisis, perceived progress, and their relationship to measures of social trust.

Using two scenarios - labelled 'Too Little Too Late', with no

change to human behaviour, and 'The Giant Leap', where the world's economic and social systems are transformed - the model seeks to show how differing policies would impact the world.

Under the business as usual scenario, the wellbeing of the average worker - taken to mean those who spend most of what they earn in a year - peaks around the year 2000, before declining out to 2050 and then levelling to 2100, despite continued growth in the global economy over the same period. By making changes

such as phasing out fossil fuel use, putting adequate pensions in place, taxing the richest 10% more and cancelling the debt of low-income countries, the Giant Leap pathway allowed wellbeing to continue to rise. The model estimated the pathway leading to a stabilisation of global temperatures below 2°C above the industrial era and eradicating poverty by 2050 would cost 2-4% of global output, or between \$2 trillion-4 trillion annually. By comparison, the International Monetary Fund estimated that governments

together put in \$9 trillion of fiscal support for their economies in the first five months of the coronavirus pandemic alone. "We absolutely need to place a value on social and environmental and economic indicators at the same level," said co-author Sandrine Dixon-Decleve, co-president of the Club of Rome think tank which originally published the "Limits To Growth" report. "Inequality and poverty play a huge role in enabling us to move forward," she added. "Net-zero poverty has to be as much of a goal as net-zero emissions." A book outlining the results of the model, "Earth for All: A Survival Guide for Humanity" will be published in German on Tuesday, with versions in English and other languages following. Doug Heske, chief executive of U.S.-based Newday Impact Investing, signalled its value for ESG investors. "Earth for All provides a powerful new framework for how responsibly-minded investors can thoughtfully allocate capital in ways that will have the greatest impact," he said.

## Doomscrolling can cause health issues, says study

Scrolling is the bane of the information age. We have all experienced this. We scroll and scroll for more even our eyes are numb and our mind can't process the info. The scrolling does not stop even if it's a bad news making us excessively sad. Such doomscrolling does not yield anything good but we do it nonetheless. Now a study has found that doomscrolling leads to poor physical and mental health.

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, doomscrolling is the tendency to "continue to surf or scroll through bad news, even though that news is saddening, disheartening or depressing".

Sometimes sadness has a pull and the internet is absolutely



filled with sad stories.

The study in question has been published in journal Health Communication. The study found that 16.5 per cent of

around 1100 people surveyed who doomscrolled showed signs of greater levels of anxiety, stress. Even their health was affected. 27.3 per cent of the

respondents reported 'moderately problematic' levels. 27.5 per cent were not affected too much and 28.7 per cent faced no problems.

Bryan McLaughlin, Associate Professor at Texas Tech University, was the lead author of the study. He said that 24-hour-news cycle has a potential to bring about a 'constant state of high alert' in some people,

"For these individuals, a vicious cycle can develop in which, rather than tuning out, they become drawn further in, obsessing over the news and checking for updates around the clock to alleviate their emotional distress," he said. "But it doesn't help, and the more they check the news, the more it begins to interfere with other aspects of their lives." You can now write for wionews.com and be a part of the community. Share your stories and opinions with us here.



# List of essential drugs updated, new diabetes, anti-cancer drugs added

**Updated for the first time since 2015, NLEM has changed anti-microbials, keeping in mind the resistance pattern, including drugs that are part of national missions such as Bedaquiline, used for treatment of TB, and added nicotine and two opioids for replacement therapy**

(SAI Bureau) The Union Health Ministry on Tuesday launched the new National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM), expanding the list to include newer therapies for diabetes, such as the medicine Tenueligliptin and the insulin Glargine, and also incorporating four more anti-cancer therapies. The new anti-cancer therapies included are Bendamustine Hydrochloride, which is used to treat certain type of blood and lymph node cancers; Irinotecan HCl Trihydrate, used alone or in combination with other drugs to treat colorectal and pancreatic cancers; Lenalidomide for treating various type of cancers; and Leuprolide acetate, used to treat prostate cancer.

Updated for the first time since 2015, NLEM has changed anti-microbials, keeping in mind the resistance pattern, including drugs that are part of national missions such as Bedaquiline, used for treatment of TB, and added nicotine and two opioids for replacement therapy. The NLEM guides the government's procurement policy and decides the price cap for medicines. The updated list has deleted 26 drugs from the previous



one and added 34 drugs, increasing the list to 384 drugs. "It is positive that the diabetes section has been expanded to include Tenueligliptin and insulin Glargine (Lantus). However, there was a need to include more synthetic insulins and other classes of oral antidiabetics, keeping in view the diabetes epidemic," said Malini Aisola, co-convenor of All-India Drug Action Network.

As for cancer, she said, it is "disappointing that more of the highly priced, effective treatments for various cancers have not been included in the list. This is an area where pharma

innovation is fastest, and recognising this the WHO has in recent years taken steps to expand the cancer section of the global Model Essential Medicines List." Welcoming the move to include nicotine and two opioids, Dr Ravindra Rao, additional professor at National Drug Dependence and Treatment Centre of AIIMS, said: "It is well documented that without nicotine replacement therapy, the quit rate of tobacco — be it smoking or chewing tobacco — is only about 2% per year, compared to more than 10% with the therapies. A pack of nicotine gum is much more expensive

than a pack of beedi or gutkha, so it is unaffordable for most." He added, "Opioid replacement therapy is also known to increase retention of patients in the programme and higher quit rates. And, opioids lead to the highest illicit drug-related mortality and morbidity." The rotavirus vaccine, now part of the government's universal immunisation programme, has also been added. Keeping the national programme on Lymphatic Filariasis (elephantiasis) in mind, the new NLEM has included the anti-parasitic drug Ivermectin, which was empirically prescribed — without scientific data — by many for Covid-19 at the height of the pandemic. A highly effective broad-spectrum antibiotic, Meropenem, has also been included. Even as newer TB drugs like Bedaquiline were included, the committee removed three anti-tubercular drugs from the previous NLEM, including Kanamycin injection that was used in patients with drug-resistant TB. With the government now introducing an all-oral regimen for such patients, the drug was also associated with severe side-effects such as kidney problems and hearing loss.

## Cancer should be made a 'notified disease', recommends Parliamentary panel



(News Agency) On Monday, the parliamentary standing committee on health and family welfare submitted a report to the Rajya Sabha recommending that cancer should be declared as a 'notified disease' citing many unreported cancer deaths in India. The committee also noted that this hinders data collection due to the ambiguity of the actual cause of death and called for a CoWin-like portal for registration.

The committee made these

recommendations in the 139th report on "Cancer Care Plan and Management: Prevention, Diagnosis, Research & Affordability of Cancer Treatment" submitted to the Chairman of the upper house of Parliament. "The Committee notes that Cancer is still not classified as a notifiable disease which results in underreporting of cancer deaths... It has been brought to the notice of the Committee that many times death is simply recorded as a

cardio-respiratory failure without mentioning the actual cause of death," states the report. A 'notifiable disease' is any disease that a citizen needs to report to the public health authorities, which is mandated by law. The collation of this information allows the authorities to monitor the disease and issue early warnings in case of a possible outbreak. Therefore, the committee has called for cancer to be a notified disease which would mandatorily require cancer deaths to be reported to the government machinery.

The panel headed by MP Ram Gopal Yadav also called for a CoWin-like portal for registration, which would aid real-time data collection, and counselling, while also offering supportive resources for cancer care with interactive tools. The report added, "The portal can

also be equipped to aid those affected by cancer by guiding them through the treatment and management journey".

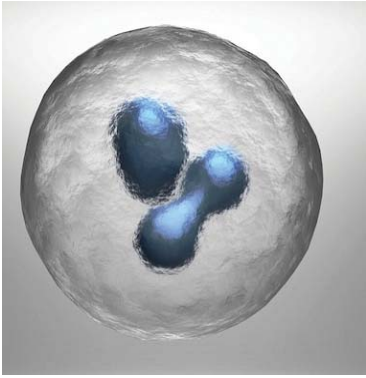
Meanwhile, they have also expressed displeasure over the current mechanism in place which is the National Cancer Registry Programme (NCRP). The NCRP has been working since 1982 through two other registries, Population Based Cancer Registry (PBCR) and Hospital Based Cancer Registry (HBCR). Notably, only 10% of the Indian population is covered by PBCRs. The committee strongly believes that there is an urgent need for rural-based PBCRs "to get realistic information about the incidence and type of cancers across the country." The committee also called upon the National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research (ICMR) to take requisite action and set up a

population-based cancer registry in rural areas of these states — Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana, and Orissa. "Such requisite action is all the more necessary to collect data & information not only for policy making on cancer treatment but also for uniform distribution of cancer care," the report. The Ministry must also expand the scope of PBCR and ensure conducting more rural-based PBCRs to get accurate information about the incidence and types of cancer across the country, said the committee. They also recommend that the Ministry link the Cancer Registry data with Ayushman Bharat/PMJY, mortality databases, and the Hospital Information System (HIS) which they believe would improve cancer registration, follow-up, and outcome data.



# Indian scientists unravel hidden process behind transition of cells

Scientists at the Indian Institute of Science have looked behind the scenes and analysed the underlying mechanism that drives cell transitions



(News Agency) Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have devised an experiment that sheds light on the mechanism that leads to

transitions in cell membranes. The transition is essential for several biological phenomena such as cell division, cell mobility, transport of nutrients into cells, and viral infections. Changes in the geometry and topology of self-assembled membranes underlie diverse processes across cellular biology and engineering. The team of researchers have looked at colloidal membranes, which are micrometer-thick layers of aligned, rod-like particles. These membranes provide a

more tractable system to study as they exhibit many of the same properties as cell membranes, and unlike a plastic sheet, where all the molecules are immobile, cell membranes are fluidic sheets in which each component is free to diffuse. The study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences states that the experiment reveals the three-dimensional details of the pathway by which membranes undergo topological shape changes in real-time. The

colloidal membranes were made by a solution of rod-shaped viruses of two different lengths: 1.2 micrometers and 0.88 micrometers. The team studied the shape of the colloidal membranes changes as one increases the fraction of short rods in the solution. "I made multiple samples by mixing different volumes of the two viruses and then observed them under a microscope," explains Ayantika Khanra, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Physics and the first author of the paper. Over

time, the membranes began merging and growing in size, and when the saddles merged laterally, they formed a bigger saddle of the same or higher order. IISc in a statement, however, said that r, when they merged at an almost right angle, away from their edges, the final configuration was a catenoid-like shape. The team wants to further the study and understand how other microscopic changes in the membrane components affect the large-scale properties of membranes.

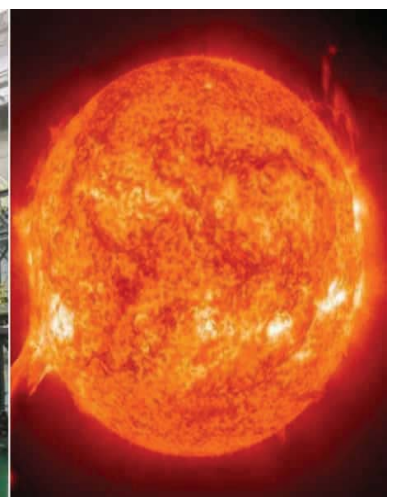
# South Korean scientists create an 'artificial sun' in pursuit of unlimited clean energy

Scientists from Seoul National University and the Korea Institute of Fusion Energy have made a major breakthrough in their pursuit of clean nuclear energy by creating an 'artificial sun' at

the Korea Superconducting Tokamak Advanced Research (KSTAR) reactor. Reportedly, the reactor reached temperatures upward of 100 million degree Celsius for 30 seconds.

Comparatively, the core of the sun hits temperatures around 15 million degrees.

It is pertinent to note that nuclear fusion is considered the holy grail of energy and it is what powers



## PM Modi to inaugurate science conclave in Ahmedabad on Saturday

PM Modi will inaugurate the Centre-State Science Conclave on Saturday



(News Agency) Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Centre-State Science Conclave being held in Ahmedabad on Saturday. The prime minister will inaugurate the event by video-conferencing from Delhi and address the gathering.

The first of its kind science conclave is being organised to facilitate innovation and entrepreneurship in the country and strengthen Centre-State coordination and collaboration mechanisms. "It will strengthen Centre-State coordination and collaboration mechanisms - in

the spirit of cooperative federalism - to build a robust science, technology & innovation (STI) ecosystem across the country," the Ministry of Science & Technology said in a statement. The two-day conclave will include sessions on different thematic areas, including the STI Vision 204, future growth pathways and vision for sti in the states and digital health care for all. There will also be discussions on the need for doubling private sector investments in research and development by 2030 and

agriculture-technological interventions for improving farmers' income. Meanwhile, researchers and scholars will also talk about innovations for producing potable drinking water, Clean Energy for All and the Hydrogen Mission. The Deep Ocean Mission and its relevance for coastal states will also be discussed. The conclave comes months after Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for gave the slogan of Jai Anusandhan (research, innovation), while addressing the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort on Independence Day. PM Modi said that to the slogan of Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan, former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee had added Jai Vigyan and now, India will add Jai Anusandhan to it. The newest addition is being hailed as a welcoming change by academics who have for long complained about the poor investment in the field of research and development.

our sun. It merges atomic nuclei to create massive amounts of energy, which is the opposite of the fission process used in atomic weapons and nuclear power plants, which splits them into fragments.

By mimicking the natural reaction of the sun, scientists are hoping that the technology may help humanity harness vast amounts of energy and help battle the energy crisis.

"We usually say that fusion energy is a dream energy source - it is almost limitless, with low emission of greenhouse gases and no high-level radioactive waste - [but the latest breakthrough] means fusion is not a dream," said Yoo Suk-jae, president, Korea Institute of Fusion Energy. Unlike fission, fusion emits no greenhouse gases and carries less risk of accidents or the theft of atomic material. The scientists at KSTAR are not sitting on their laurels and have already put their

sights on operating the reactor for five minutes or 300 seconds. "This is not the end of the story, we must move on to 300 seconds - 300 is the minimum time frame to demonstrate steady-state operations, then this plasma can work forever," However, this is not the first time that an artificial sun has been created in laboratories. As reported by WION, Chinese scientists have been working on developing smaller versions of the nuclear fusion reactor since 2006.

Reportedly, last year in December, the Experimental Advanced Superconducting Tokamak (EAST) fusion energy reactor created an artificial sun, reaching temperatures of 70 million degrees Celsius for 1,056 seconds, which is five times hotter than the sun.

Prior to that in May, the same reactor ran for 101 seconds at a temperature of 20 million degrees Celsius.



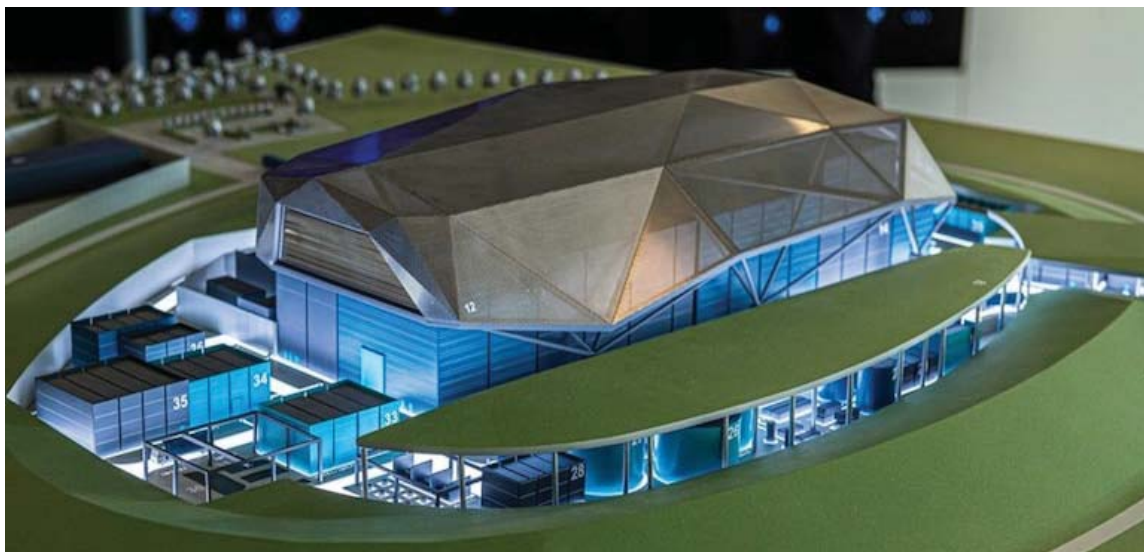
# Small nuke reactors emerge as energy option, but risks loom

UK-based Rolls-Royce SMR says its small modular reactors, or SMRs, are much cheaper and quicker to get running than standard plants

(SAI Bureau) A global search for alternative sources to Russian energy during the war in Ukraine has refocused attention on smaller, easier-to-build nuclear power stations, which proponents say could provide a cheaper, more efficient alternative to older model mega-plants.

UK-based Rolls-Royce SMR says its small modular reactors, or SMRs, are much cheaper and quicker to get running than standard plants, delivering the kind of energy security that many nations are seeking. France already relies on nuclear power for a majority of its electricity, and Germany kept the option of reactivating two nuclear plants it will shut down at the end of the year as Russia cuts natural gas supplies.

While Rolls-Royce SMR and its competitors have signed deals with countries from Britain to Poland to start building the stations, they are many years away from operating and cannot solve the energy crisis now hitting Europe. Nuclear power also poses risks, including disposing of highly radioactive waste and keeping that technology out of the hands of rogue countries or nefarious groups that may pursue a nuclear weapons program. Those risks have been accentuated following the



shelling around Europe's largest nuclear power plant in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, which has raised fears of potential nuclear disaster. In the wake of the war, however, "the reliance on gas imports and Russian energy sources has focused people's minds on energy security," Rolls-Royce SMR spokesman Dan Gould said.

An SMR's components can be built in a factory, moved to a site in tractor trailers and assembled there, making the technology more attractive to frugal buyers, he said. "It's like building Lego," Gould said. "Building on a smaller scale reduces risks and makes it a more investible project."

Some SMRs are essentially pressurized water reactors identical to some 400 reactors worldwide, while other designs use sodium, lead, gas or salt as a coolant instead of water. The

key advantages are their size — about one-tenth as big as a standard reactor — the ease of construction and the price tag. The estimated cost of a Rolls-Royce SMR is 2.2 billion to 2.8 billion pounds (\$2.5 billion to \$3.2 billion), with an estimated construction time of 5 1/2 years. That's two years faster than it took to build a standard nuclear plant between 2016 and 2021, according to International Atomic Energy Agency statistics. Some estimates put the cost of building a 1,100-megawatt nuclear plant at between \$6 billion and \$9 billion. Rolls-Royce aims to build its first stations in the U.K. within 5 1/2 years, Gould said.

Similarly, Oregon-based NuScale Power signed agreements last year with two Polish companies — copper and silver producer KGHM and energy producer UNIMOT — to explore the possibility of building SMRs to

power heavy industry. Poland wants to switch from polluting, coal-powered electricity generation. Rolls-Royce SMR said last month that it signed a deal with Dutch development company ULC-Energy to look into setting up SMRs in the Netherlands. Another partner is Turkey, where Russia is building the Akkuyu nuclear power plant on the southern coast. Environmentalists say the region is seismically active and could be a target for terrorists. The introduction of "unproven" nuclear power technology in the form of SMRs doesn't sit well with environmentalists, who argue that proliferation of small reactors will exacerbate the problem of how to dispose of highly radioactive nuclear waste. "Unfortunately, Turkey is governed by an incompetent administration that has turned it into a 'test bed' for corporations," said Koray Dogan

Urbarli, a spokesman for Turkey's Green Party. "It is giving up the sovereignty of a certain region for at least 100 years for Russia to build a nuclear power plant. This incompetence and lobbying power make Turkey an easy target for SMRs," said Koray, adding that his party eschews technology with an "uncertain future." Gould said one Rolls-Royce SMR would generate nuclear waste the size of a "tennis court piled 1-meter high" throughout the plant's 60-year lifetime. He said initially, waste would be stored on site at the U.K. plants and would eventually be transferred to a long-term disposal site selected by the British government.

M.V. Ramana, professor of public policy and global affairs at the University of British Columbia, cites research suggesting there's "no demonstrated way" to ensure nuclear waste stored in what authorities consider to be secure sites won't escape in the future. The constant heat generated by the waste could alter rock formations where it's stored and allow water seepage, while future mining activities could compromise a nuclear waste site's integrity, said Ramana, who specializes in international security and nuclear energy.

## Study reveals this blood test can now detect if you have cancer without any clear symptoms

(By Staff Reporter) A recent study by Pathfinder revealed that even a simple blood test can detect multiple cancer types in a patient even before there are any obvious symptoms of illness.

The study was offered to over 6,000 adults aged 50 or older and detected few cases of illness. The overall results revealed that nearly a third of the cancer tests were for cancer, which was not regularly checked or was in the early stages.

In addition to detecting sickness, the test also predicts the location of cancer, enabling medical professionals to accelerate further treatments required to confirm cancer. This

was the first time that results from Galleri tests were returned to patients and doctors to guide them through any further tests or treatments.

NHS England has called the Galleri test a gamechanger and plans to release the tests of trials of 165,000 individuals next year.

6,621 adults were offered blood in the study, out of which 6,529 were detected as negative, but probable cancer was detected in 92. Furthermore, 36 people, or 1.4 per cent of the study group, had solid tumours or blood cancer, and a woman was diagnosed with two cancers at the same time. The test also

discovered 19 solid tumours in organs like the breast, liver, lung, and colon, along with ovarian and pancreatic cancer. In total, 36 tumours were found, of which 14 were in early stages and the remaining 26 were cancers that were not regularly checked. Fabrice Andre, a senior researcher, said, "Research like this is crucial for making progress against late-stage cancers and giving more patients the chance of a good outcome. The Pathfinder trial results give us a better understanding of how frequently cancer is found by this blood test in people who haven't been previously

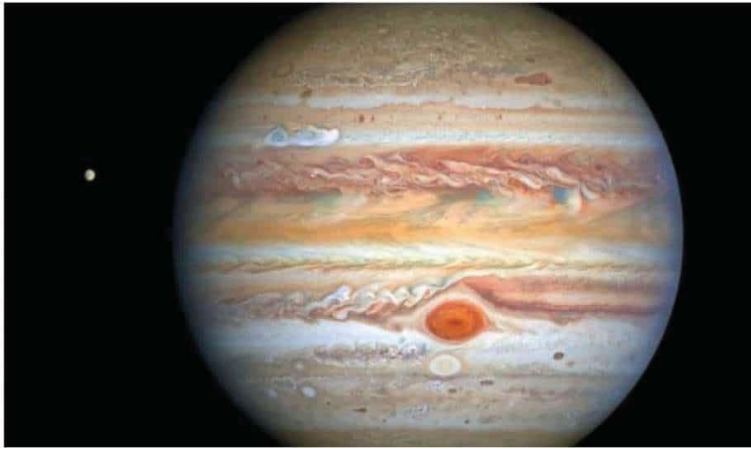


diagnosed. He further said, "But we will need data from this test and other similar tests in development, especially to understand whether people actually survive for longer after their

cancer is picked up," The Guardian. However, the technology is still in the process of development. Doctors hope the technology may save lives by detecting cancer at early enough stages for surgery and treatment to be more effective.



# Tweak in Jupiter's orbit may help life on Earth: Study



(SAI Bureau) Jupiter is not just that. Jupiter absorbs many one massive blob of gas in the space-rocks travelling towards the inner Solar System, the

Earth's neighbourhood. This means that Jupiter may have saved us countless times. Dinosaurs got unlucky, it seems. But now, a new study says that if Jupiter was to tweak its orbit a bit, it would increase habitability on planet Earth. Jupiter's orbit around the Sun is almost completely circular. This is not true about other planets including Earth. Their orbits are 'eccentric', that is, they are oval-shaped. The degree to which orbit of a planet tends to assume oval shape is

called eccentricity. The eccentricity of Jupiter's orbit is low because it is nearly circular. It is quite logical to imagine that if Jupiter's orbit is tweaked in any manner, the planet with massive gravity will have an effect on orbits of other planets in the Solar System. Researchers from University of California, Riverside have published a study in which they say that if Jupiter's orbit becomes 'eccentric', it may have a positive impact on the habitability on Earth. "Many are convinced that

Earth is the epitome of a habitable planet and that any change in Jupiter's orbit, being the massive planet it is, could only be bad for Earth," says Pam Vervoort, lead author of the study. "We show that both assumptions are wrong." The study says that the change in Jupiter's orbit would change the eccentricity of orbit of the Earth. This would result in melting of ice to some extent and these regions would be more habitable. The study has been published in The Astronomical Journal.

# US: Transportation board to head probes of fatal space accidents

**The NTSB will be the lead investigative agency in those fatal or injury incidents regardless of whether the person was on board the commercial space launch or reentry vehicle**

(SAI Bureau) With more private companies launching people into space, the US government said Friday that the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) will take the lead in investigating future commercial space accidents where a person is killed or seriously injured. The NTSB will be the lead investigative agency in those fatal or injury incidents regardless of

**Huge asteroid headed towards Earth, will come close on Tuesday - Everything you need to know**



(By Staff Reporter) An asteroid is headed towards the earth but according to the official statement released by NASA, there are no reasons to get worried. The asteroid, which has been named Asteroid 2022 RQ, is massive in size but it will be missing earth by quite some distance. According to the latest calculations, the distance between earth and the asteroid will be around 3.7 million kilometres. NASA's Planetary Defense Coordination Office has said that the asteroid is 84 feet wide, and it is currently travelling at immense speed through the universe. Asteroid 2022 RQ was first discovered by scientists on September 1 and on Tuesday, it will finally come close to the earth. When it comes to the course being followed by the asteroid, the farthest point from the sun will be 328 million kilometres and the closest will be 110 million kilometres. The-sky.org also said that the Asteroid 2022 RQ will approximately take 648 days to complete its journey around the sun. The process used by the researchers to understand the trajectory of Near-Earth Objects (NEOs) like this asteroid has developed considerably over the last few years. The NASA system currently boasts of an accuracy percentage of around 90 when it comes to objects which are 140 meters or larger. The objects are tracked with the help of the NEOWISE Project – an updated version of the Wide-field Infrared Survey Explorer which can effectively find NEOs within a certain distance, according to Live Science. This is also the system that has detected all the latest space activities around the planet.

whether the person was on board the commercial space launch or reentry vehicle, according to an agreement the NTSB signed with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). "This agreement reflects our shared goal to ensure a safe, robust and vibrant US commercial space industry," said Acting FAA Administrator Billy Nolen. The NTSB will also take the lead if there is damage to property not associated with the commercial space launch or reentry activities or the launch site from debris that could reasonably be expected to

cause death or serious injury. The FAA will be the lead investigative agency for all other commercial space mishaps. The last agreement between the two agencies was signed 22 years ago, the NTSB said. The NTSB is currently reviewing public comments on its November 2021 proposal codifying investigative procedures for commercial space accidents and incidents. Under the law, NTSB, an independent federal agency, investigates all fatal airplane crashes and other serious transportation accidents. NTSB

chair Jennifer Homendy told Reuters in an interview it was important to establish lines of command for an investigation before there is a major incident. "We have to be ready.... You don't want to wait until something tragic occurs," Homendy said. "If we are going by history, it's not a matter if, it's a matter of when." Last month, bipartisan leaders on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee leaders introduced legislation to clarify the authority of the NTSB to investigate commercial space transportation accidents.

# Scientists have made first 3D model of planet orbiting binary star system

(By Staff Reporter) Our search for exoplanets continues. With the help of latest technology, we have been building powerful telescopes that can not only scan the skies for what's visible, but also those that can pinpoint developments in lights that are not visible to human eyes. Till now, 5084 extrasolar planets have been confirmed. 3,811 planetary systems outside our Solar System have been found. What's more, there are another 8912 candidates awaiting confirmation. But it has been for the first time that

Long Baseline Array (VLBA) network to detect a Jupiter-like planet in a binary system (GJ 896AB). The binary system is just 20 light-years away from Earth. The team used a technique called astrometry to detect the planet. The same method allowed the scientists to create 3-dimensional architecture of the system. The



scientists have made a 3D structure of binary system with a planet. A binary system involves two stars who orbit each other. Binary system can also have planets revolving around one or both the stars. In a recently concluded study, an international team of astronomers made use of National Science Foundation's (NSF) Very

team of researchers was led by Salvador Curiel Ramirez. Ramirez is a researcher with the Institute of Astronomy at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). His colleagues from UNAM were also part of the team. In addition to this, researchers with the Max Planck Institute for Radio Astronomy (MPIFR) and National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) The research paper has been published in The Astronomical Journal.



# India-Born CEOs Running 58 Top-Notch Companies, 25% Run US Startups, Says Nirmala Sitharaman



are multinational firms," Sitharaman said while addressing the address convocation event of Indian Institute of Information Technology, Design and Manufacturing at Kancheepuram, on Saturday. "These firms have a collective revenue of 1 trillion while 4 trillion in turnover," the finance minister said, while also pointing out, "Fifty-eight India educated CEOs are managing this scale of corporate sizes. But that does not mean that we don't have to work on our education system. We have to keep up the system to continue such feats. We are at a juncture to take India in a leap-frogging sense." The finance minister further said in her address that India forms the second-largest

contingent of the chiefs who manage global firms, and is only positioned behind the US. "Lift your collars with pride, 25 per cent of Silicon Valley startups are managed by Indians". India's working population will overtake China in 2028, Sitharaman said citing UN population data from 2019. "That working age population will reach the level of 65 per cent - of entire population - by 2036 and it stay at the level till 2047," The finance minister further stated that this will also help in the growth of the GDP of India. "It is only when they are skilled, only when they are trained and given equal opportunities - irrespective of gender and class - that they would be able to contribute to the growth of the country. This brings forth the importance of

training them today." Last week, Devika Bulchandani was appointed as the CEO of ad agency Ogilvy, while a week prior to that, Laxman Narasimhan was named the CEO of coffee giant Starbucks. Other prominent CEOs of Indian origin helping global companies include Alphabet's Sundar Pichai, Satya Nadella of Microsoft, Parag Agrawal who heads Twitter and Leena Nair of Chanel. On Friday, Sitharaman said India becoming the fifth largest economy from 11th in a decade is not a "mean achievement" and the people of India should take credit for it, at another event in New Delhi. The finance minister further said that during these 10 years, there was an outbreak of COVID pandemic and everything came to a grinding halt.

(SAI Bureau) The best chief executive officers of companies have been produced by higher education in India, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said, amid a number of CEOs of Indian origin are being recruited by global companies. Acknowledging the conducive ecosystem of India, Sitharaman said that the number of Indian CEOs is just next to the that from the United States as per the S&P (Standard and Poor's) top 500 companies list. "Globally, I might be saying something which all of you might be already aware of, 58 top-notch company CEOs are Indian in origin. They are in 11 such companies which

## Rupee Fall This Year Lowest Among Major Currencies In World; Here's How Other Currencies Declined

**The rupee has fallen 6.5 per cent in 2022 so far, whereas Pakistani Rupee declines 23.7 per cent, Japanese Yen drops 19.8 per cent, British Pound slips 14.9 per cent, Euro plummets 12.15 per cent**

(SAI Bureau) The rupee, which has seen multiple lows so far this calendar year, has fallen just 6.51 per cent against the dollar so far in 2022 as compared with about 7.5 per cent decline in Australian dollars, an 8.59 per cent drop in South African Rand and a 19.79 per cent skid in Japanese Yen. Here's how much the rupee has fallen against the US dollar vis-a-vis other currencies in the world: The Pakistani Rupee has seen a significant decline of 23.77 per cent in 2022 till September 14, while the Japanese Yen has fallen 19.79 per cent, the British Pound has dropped about 14.92 per cent, South Korean Won has plummeted 14.53 per cent. The euro, which recently fell below one dollar, has witnessed about 12.15 per cent fall in total in the current calendar year so far; the Chinese Renminbi has declined 8.72 per cent; the South African Rand has dropped about 8.59 per cent; and the Australian dollar has slipped 7.5 per cent, according to Bloomberg data. The Indian rupee has fallen about 6.51 per cent in the current year till September 14, which is the lowest among these major currencies given here. The rupee was at 73.77 against a US dollar on January 12 this year,

which has now declined to 79.47 to a dollar on Wednesday (September 14). The Indian rupee in August had touched an all-time low of 80.15 against the US dollar. The fall in the Indian rupee this year has been due to the continuous outflow of foreign investments, surging crude oil prices, tight monetary policy by US Federal Reserve, and general dollar strength. This was aggravated by global uncertainties arising out of a geopolitical crisis due to the Russia-Ukraine war.

On Tuesday (September 13), Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran said India is not defending the rupee and the Reserve Bank of India is taking necessary steps to ensure that the movement of the rupee is gradual and in line with market trends. Nageswaran added that the rupee is being managed in a manner that reflects the fundamentals of the economy. "India is not defending the rupee... I don't think Indian fundamentals are such that we need to defend the rupee. The rupee can take care of itself," he said at an event here. "The Indian rupee remained under pressure (on Wednesday) amid a broad-

based gain in the dollar after much-awaited US inflation data came higher than expected," said Dilip Parmar, research analyst at HDFC Securities. The dollar bided well after the rate market started pricing a full percentage point hike in the next week's Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting.

"However, recovery in domestic equities and corporate dollar supply gave support to the rupee after a weak opening," Parmar said, adding that in the near term, spot USD-INR is expected to trade in the range of 79.65 to 78.70. Between October 2021 and June 2022, they sold a massive Rs 2.46 lakh crore in the

India equity markets, which put a heavy strain on the rupee and weakened it significantly. However, there is a clear trend reversal in FPI (Foreign Portfolio Investment) flows from July onwards since when overseas investors turned buyers in India after nine straight months of massive net outflows.

## Retail inflation rises to 7% in August on costlier food items

**The consumer price index-based inflation is above the Reserve Bank's comfort level of 6 per cent for the eighth month in a row**

(SAI Bureau) Retail inflation inched up to 7 per cent in August from 6.71 per cent in July, mainly due to higher food prices, government data showed on Monday. The consumer price index-based inflation is above the Reserve Bank's comfort level of 6 per cent for the eighth month in a row. According to the data, inflation in the food basket was 7.62 per cent in August, up from 6.69 per cent in July and 3.11 per cent in August 2021.





# Sachin Bansal-led Navi Technologies Gets SEBI Approval to Launch IPO



(SAI Bureau) Flipkart co-founder Sachin Bansal's Navi Technologies Limited has received a green signal from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to get listed on the bourses via an initial public offering. The date and time of Navi Technologies IPO has not been decided yet. The

an offer for sale (OFS) by Bansal who holds a 97.39 per cent stake in the fintech.

According to the DHRP, the net proceeds from the Navi Technologies IPO will be used for investment into the company's subsidiaries, Navi Finserv Private Limited ("NFPL") and Navi General Insurance Limited ("NGIL"), and for general corporate purposes. "In addition, our Company expects to receive the benefits of listing of the Equity Shares on the Stock Exchanges, including enhancement of our Company's brand name and creation of a public market for our Equity Shares in India," it said in the draft IPO papers. The company has proposed to invest Rs 23,700.00 million from the Net Proceeds into NFPL, while another Rs 1,500.00 million from

the net proceeds will be invested into NGIL. According to the previous plans, the Navi Technologies IPO was supposed to launch in June. However, the final dates have not been confirmed yet.

Navi Technologies is a tech-driven financial products and services company. Since the company's incorporation, it has expanded offerings under the "Navi" brand to include personal loans, home loans, general insurance and mutual funds. It also offers microfinance loans through a wholly-owned subsidiary, under the "Chaitanya" brand.

"Our Company, in consultation with the BRLMs, may consider the Pre-IPO Placement aggregating up to Rs 6,700.00 million. If the Pre-IPO

Placement is undertaken, the size of the Fresh Issue will be reduced to the extent of such Pre-IPO Placement," said the DHRP.

After moving out of Flipkart, Bansal - along with Ankit Agarwal - founded Navi in 2018. As per its website, Navi is a digital lending app which provides loans of up to Rs 20 lakh instantly through a completely paperless process. ICICI Securities, BofA Securities and Axis Capital, Credit Suisse Securities (India) Pvt Ltd and Edelweiss Financial Services are the book running lead managers to the public issue. To enter the microfinance segment, Navi had acquired Chaitanya India Fin Credit for Rs 739 crore in 2019. Chaitanya had also applied to Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for a universal banking licence.

## Air India to induct 30 more aircraft by 2023

(By Staff Reporter) Air India will induct 30 more aircraft by 2023 as it eyes expansion and fleet revamp. The new aircraft will enter the airline's fleet from late 2022 and will increase its fleet size by 25%, it said. The airline has signed leases and letters of intent for 25 Airbus narrow-body and five Boeing wide-body aircraft to strengthen its fleet. Air India currently has 113 aircraft in its fleet out of which 87 planes are operational. These include 54 narrow-body airplanes and 33 wide-body aircraft. The inoperative 16 narrow-body

aircraft and 10 wide-body aircraft will return to service by early 2023, the airline said. Air India has called it its first major fleet expansion since its acquisition by the Tata Group in Jan 2022. The airline has signed up for leasing 21 Airbus A320neos, 4 Airbus A321neos and 5 Boeing B777-200LRs. The wide-body B777-200LRs will join the fleet between December 2022 and March 2023. Air India will be able to offer premium economy long haul flights for the first time with the B777-200 LR

aircraft. The incoming B777-200LRs will result in additional flights between Mumbai -San Francisco, Mumbai-Newark, Mumbai-New York, and a thrice-weekly Bangalore- San Francisco service.

The four A321 aircraft are expected to join the Air India fleet in the first quarter of 2023, while the 21 A320 will be inducted in the second half of 2023. These aircraft will serve domestic sectors as well as short-haul international destinations.

"These new aircraft, together



with existing aircraft being returned to service, address an immediate need for more capacity and connectivity, and mark a strong step forward. Air India has exciting expansion and renewal plans, of which these new aircraft are just the

beginning" Campbell Wilson, CEO & Managing Director, Air India said. Air India and Air India Express were reacquired by the Tata group in January 2022 under a government-led strategic divestment programme.

## IPEF meet fruitful, says Union minister Piyush Goyal as India stays out of trade policy pillar

India has joined three critical pillars of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) but chose to stay out of the crucial trade pillar

(By Staff Reporter) India has joined three critical pillars of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), prompting Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal to call the first in-person ministerial summit of the US-led initiative "inclusive and fruitful".

However, India chose to stay out of the crucial trade pillar. Goyal said the contours of the framework - particularly on commitments required on environment, labour, digital trade and public procurement — are still emerging. Highlighting that India had engaged very exhaustively in all the various streams of discussion, Goyal said that on three out of four pillars related to supply

chains, tax and anti-corruption and clean energy, India was comfortable with the outcome and text and has joined the declaration. The Union minister also stated that India was in the process of firming up its own digital framework and laws, particularly regarding privacy and data. He added that while continuing to engage with the trade track in the IPEF, the Indian side will wait for broader

consensus on certain aspects among all nations. "We have to see what benefits member countries will derive and whether any conditionalities on aspects like environment may discriminate against

developing countries who have the imperative to provide low cost and



affordable energy to meet the needs of our growing economy," Goyal said. IPEF has 14 members - Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore,

Thailand, Vietnam and the US. Goyal expressed confidence that together the 14-member grouping will "define the rules of trade among countries which believe in fair play, transparency and rules-based trading in the future." Goyal held bilateral meetings with US Trade Representative Katherine Tai, US commerce secretary Gina Raimondo and Australian Trade Minister Don Farrell on the sidelines of the IPEF meet in Los Angeles. "Our trade and investment ties have strengthened with the signing of Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement. Discussed ways to further boost bilateral trade & cooperation under the IPEF", he tweeted.



# Kamaal R Khan says he lost 10kg in 10 days, 'survived only on water' in jail; Twitter asks 'is it even possible?'

**Kamaal R Khan tweeted about losing 10kg in 10 days by drinking only water, while he was in jail in connection with two cases – his old tweets and a molestation case. Here's how Twitter users reacted to his claims**

(SAI Bureau) Kamaal R Khan, also known as KRK, made his Twitter comeback recently after his return from jail, when he announced, "I am back for my vengeance." The actor and self-proclaimed film critic was granted bail a few days ago after he was arrested by police from Mumbai airport in connection with his old tweets on actor Akshay Kumar and other Bollywood celebs, as well as a molestation case registered against him. On Tuesday, Kamaal shared an update on Twitter, and said he had lost weight after 'surviving with only water' for 10 days, while he was in jail. Days after a tweet from Kamaal R Khan's verified Twitter account alleged that the actor-turned-critic was being tortured and facing

threats to his life, KRK's latest tweet was related to his health, and garnered a range of reactions from Twitter users. On Tuesday, Kamaal tweeted, "I was surviving with only water for 10 days in lockup. So, I have lost 10kg weight."

One person reacted to KRK's tweet, and said, "How is that medically even possible? Even with enormous labour and only drinking water, it is impossible to lose 10kg in 10 days. Be it muscle mass or even fat, it is not possible." Another one seemed to agree, "10 din me 10 kilo (10kg in 10 days), is it even possible?" One Twitter user wondered if she too could follow in KRK's footsteps and achieve similar results. She tweeted, "Can I lose 10kg weight in 10 days

by only drinking water?" One person joked about KRK's weight and tweeted, "Baaki jo 8 kg reh gaya hai usko sambhal ke rakhein, ghabrana nahi hai Kamaal saab (Don't be afraid and make sure to retain the remaining 8kg of your weight)." One person tweeted a photo of Kamaal and wrote, "Imagine losing another 10kg muscle mass from here." Meanwhile, others were curious why KRK did not review Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt's latest film Brahmastra that released on September 9. A person tweeted, "The world is waiting for your Brahmastra review." Another one wrote, "Please review Brahmastra! Why did you stop reviewing?"



Responding to the tweet, a user said, "Poor man is in pain and people are asking him for a movie review... let him breath, he's traumatised."

KRK was arrested for two different cases, a 2020 case of alleged derogatory tweets about Akshay Kumar and filmmaker Ram Gopal Verma, and a molestation case registered against him at the Versova

police station in 2021. In the 2020 case, police had said that KRK's tweets were communal and he targeted Bollywood personalities. However, he said in his bail plea that the tweets in question were only his comments on the film titled Laxmii Bomb (released as Laxmii) and no offence as alleged by the police was committed.

## Swara Bhasker recalls she moved to Mumbai with bedding roll, sandook: 'I wanted to become Shah Rukh Khan'

**Swara Bhasker said that she moved to Mumbai 'to become Shah Rukh Khan'. She also revealed that she and her friend struggled to find a house as homeowners felt they were 'awaara' (vagabond) girls**



(SAI Bureau) Swara Bhasker, who started her journey in Bollywood over a decade ago, recently revealed that she moved to Mumbai with the dream of becoming Shah Rukh Khan. Swara shared some interesting anecdotes as she recalled her journey of moving from Delhi, where she lived with her parents in Lutyens, to

Mumbai where she could not find a home for several weeks.

Swara also revealed that while her mother packed her with all the necessities for her move, she could not find a place and had to stay in an office for a month with her friend. Swara made her Bollywood debut with Madholal Keep Walking in 2009.

In a conversation with Mashable

India, Swara said about moving to Mumbai, "I was very clear, I came to become a heroine. Main Shah Rukh Khan banna chahti thi (I wanted to become Shah Rukh Khan). A filmy shot where villagers arrive at CST with their 'boriya-bistara' (luggage), I came just like that. My parents even gave me a bedding roll that no one else has used in 50 years. And I had a sandook (trunk). I think my mom suspected that I would never get married, so everything she would have given me at my wedding, she filled into that trunk. There were utensils, pots, and pressure cookers, and I was like 'Mummy, they have utensils in Bombay.' I had come like this ridiculous person with so much luggage, which of course was a troupe for the rest of my

life, as I have so much baggage." Swara revealed that she and her friend also struggled to find a house in Mumbai as homeowners felt they were 'awaara' (vagabond) girls who looked like they must have boyfriends. It only added to their troubles when a landlord was listing the restrictions in the building to Swara who in return started explaining to him the fundamental right of freedom in the Indian constitution.

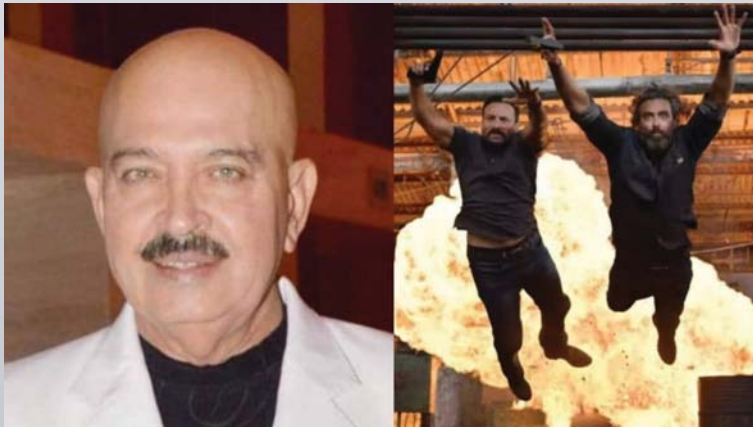
She further recalled, "So I didn't find a house in Andheri. I found one in Goregaon that had just been built and the society wasn't established yet. And for one month I lived in someone's office, so I had to leave before 9 am and come back only after 6 pm. I would sit in malls or on the

streets after leaving at 9. It was screenwriter Anjum Rajabali's office. Yeah, so I used to live at the office of the writer of Raajneeti (2010). Every day he would be calling like 'you again finished the water,' because we two girls would leave after taking a bath and everything. At one point, we were six people living in one BHK in Goregaon." After her debut with Madholal Keep Walking, Swara worked alongside Hrithik Roshan, Aishwarya Rai, and Aditya Roy Kapur in Guzaarish (2010). She gained more recognition with her portrayal of Payal in Tanu Weds Manu (2010). She will be next seen in Jahaan Chaar Yaar, which is scheduled to release in theatres on September 16.



# Rakesh Roshan says he's watched Hrithik Roshan's Vikram Vedha: 'My first reaction was...'

Rakesh Roshan spoke about Vikram Vedha in a recent interview. The filmmaker recalled his first reaction to the teaser of upcoming film that stars actors Saif Ali Khan and Hrithik Roshan



(News Agency) Rakesh Roshan has watched son Hrithik Roshan's upcoming film Vikram Vedha, and recently shared in an interview that he was 'amazed' when he'd watched the film's teaser

on a small monitor in the editing room. The filmmaker said the action-drama was 'very intelligently presented', and both Hrithik and his Vikram Vedha co-star, Saif Ali Khan, have 'done a tremendous

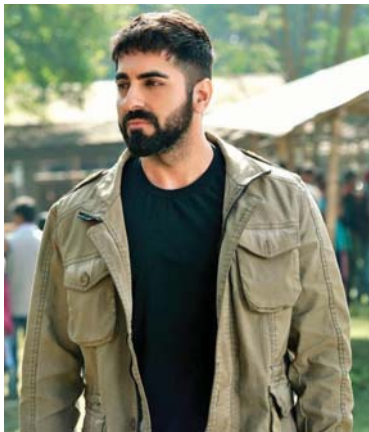
job'. Hrithik and Saif will be seen together for the first time onscreen in Vikram Vedha, the Hindi remake of the Tamil film of the same name. The film's trailer was recently released, weeks after its teaser dropped. Hrithik's father Rakesh Roshan praised filmmaker duo Pushkar-Gayatri for presenting the film's plot 'in a very novel way'. The story of Vikram Vedha is based on an Indian folktale, Vikram aur Betaal, and also stars Radhika Apte. "I have seen Vikram Vedha and it's a very intelligently presented script which shows that the director duo (Pushkar-

Gayatri) has worked very hard. They have presented the plot in a very novel way. Both actors (Hrithik and Saif) have done a tremendous job," Rakesh told Bollywood Hungama. Rakesh also shared his take on the Vikram Vedha teaser, and how he wanted to watch the movie based on just the short clip. "When I saw the teaser of Vikram Vedha, I was amazed and my first reaction was that I have to see this movie. And this was my reaction though I saw the promo alone on a small monitor in the editing room. And as per the comments I have seen, the audience has also

reacted the same way. So, your trailer needs to pack a punch, as it showcases your film," Rakesh said. In the film, while Saif Ali Khan plays a determined police officer, named Vikram, Hrithik plays a ruthless gangster, called Vedha. Directed by Pushkar-Gayatri, Vikram Vedha also stars Rohit Saraf, Yogita Bihani, and Sharib Hashmi in key roles. The film is a Hindi adaptation of the 2017 Tamil film of the same name, which starred R Madhavan and Vijay Sethupathi, and was also directed by the Pushkar and Gayatri.

## When Ayushmann Khurrana said he was shocked when he moved to Mumbai: 'Gandagi bahot hai, kahin bhi imarat...'

(SAI Bureau) Ayushmann Khurrana, who completed a decade in the industry earlier this year, is celebrating his 38th birthday on Wednesday. Though he made his film debut with Vicky Donor in 2012, he moved to Mumbai from his native place Chandigarh back in 2004. After starting his career as a Radio Jockey, the actor was a video jockey, participated in reality television shows, and worked as an anchor for several years before he signed his first film. Ayushmann Khurrana once revealed that it was a huge shocker for him when he moved to Mumbai, as it was dirtier than Chandigarh. He also shared that it was his family who pushed him to move to Mumbai. During a conversation with Rajya Sabha TV in 2015, Ayushmann was asked to name one thing that he would like to change in society. He replied, "I come from a city where there is a lot of focus on cleanliness...Us sheher se aakar jab main Mumbai mein aaya tha to mujhe bahot bada dhakka laga tha ki yahan par gandagi bahot hai. Kahin bhi imarat khadi ho jaati hai, kahin bhi kuch bhi ho jaata hai (When I moved to Mumbai from that city I got a huge shock that there is filth everywhere. A building can crop up anywhere, anything can happen anywhere)." He

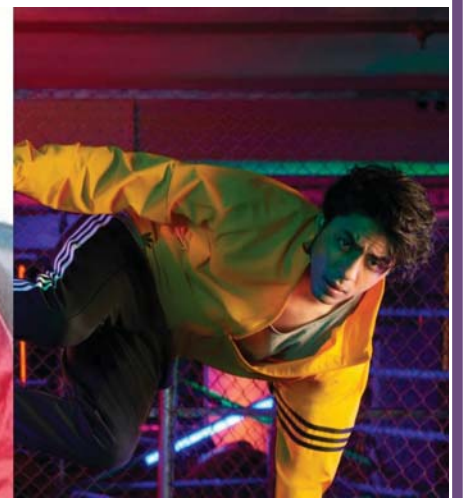


added that he noted after coming to Mumbai that people remove their footwear before entering a house, and would like them to keep the outside clean in the same way. In the interview, Ayushmann also recalled the story of how his father made him move to Mumbai even though he wanted to delay it. The actor said, "After journalism, I had plans to take a two-month sabbatical, rest, groom myself - learn horseriding and fighting to become an all-rounded actor. Main unme se hoon jo ghar se bhaage nahi the actor banne ke liye. Mujhe bhagaya gaya tha (I am one of those who didn't run away from home to become an actor, but was made to go). I'm a very laid-back person and not very ambitious. I get my ambitions from my father. The next day after my exams, my bags were packed, tickets were booked.

## Shah Rukh Khan Has a Perfect 'Main Hoon Na' Picture To Prove Aryan Khan 'Mujh Par Gaya Hai'

(News Agency) Shah Rukh Khan is a superstar and everyone's favourite for a reason. The actor often reacts to his children Suhana or Aryan's pictures on social media, leaving all in complete awe. On Tuesday night, SRK took to Twitter and dropped a throwback picture of himself from his 2004 movie Main Hoon Na to prove that Aryan Khan is exactly like him. In the picture, Shah Rukh Khan can be seen wearing a red shirt, paired with brown

hand. Earlier, Shah Rukh Khan also commented on these pictures dropped by Aryan on his Instagram handle and wrote, "Looking really good!!!...and as they say, that whatever is silent in the



pants as he jumps over a guard rail. The actor dropped this picture along with one of Aryan Khan's recent photoshoot picture and pointed out how the two clicks are very similar. "Mujh par gaya hai....my boy!" he wrote in the caption.

For the unversed, Aryan Khan recently collaborated with a shoe brand when he also shared a couple of uber-cool photos on social media. In the first picture, he was seen half seated in a black outfit which he layered with a pink and black jacket. For another photo, the storkid wore a white t-shirt, trousers and a checkered shirt. In the third click, he was seen balancing on his

father....speaks in the son. By the way is that grey t-shirt mine!!!" Gauri Khan had also commented, "My boy ??... love love love."

On the work front, Shah Rukh Khan has a number of interesting projects in his pipeline. He recently made a cameo in Ayan Mukerji's Brahmastra. Apart from this, he is currently working on three big projects - Pathaan, Jawaan and Dunki. In Pathaan, SRK will share the screen with Deepika Padukone and John Abraham, in Jawaan, he will be seen along with Nayanthara. In Dunki, we'll see Shah Rukh Khan coming together with Taapsee Pannu.





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## Queen Elizabeth II's final flight is the most tracked in history

The aircraft bringing the late monarch's body from Edinburgh to London on Tuesday (September 13) was the most watched flight in history with little over five million viewers



Entire Story on Page 30

Neanderthals had better cognition, just one mutation gave homo sapiens edge to outlive: study



(SAI Bureau) The size of a Neanderthal's brain was equal to, if not slightly larger than, that of a modern human, according to research on ancient skulls. However, because soft tissue doesn't survive well in the fossil record, nothing is known about Neanderthal brain development. The Neanderthals, the Stone Age hominins that lived in Europe and certain regions of Asia before going extinct approximately 40,000 years ago, may have had a cognitive advantage over modern humans, or Homo sapiens, according to an intriguing study that was published on September 8.

(Contd. on page 33)

## How US Decision on Pak F16s Defies Logic and Threatens India's Security



(SAI Bureau) India and the US held their 2+2 Inter-session meeting on September 7, 2022 to follow up on the India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in April 2022, as well as the 5th India-US Maritime Security Dialogue on September 8. Coinciding with these meetings for continued coordination between the foreign and defence

ministries of the two countries on issues of shared strategic interest, the US announced on September 8 a \$435 million package for upgrading Pakistan's F16s, in what seemed an uncoordinated messaging on an issue of great sensitivity to India. Why cast a shadow on a meeting intended to move forward on a

positive strategic agenda by simultaneously announcing a move that undermines it? Is it that this was done to tell India emphatically that the US has wider strategic interests in the region that extend to Pakistan and India's concerns will not be given undue importance.

(Contd. on page 32)

## India to host G20 Summit in Sept 2023, hold over 200 meetings during its Presidency

The G20 is a leading global forum that brings together the world's major economies

(SAI Bureau) India will host the G-20 leaders' summit in New Delhi on September 9 and 10 in 2023 under its Presidency, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced Tuesday. India will assume the Presidency of the G20 for one year from December 1, 2022, to November 30, 2023, and is expected to host over 200 meetings across the country, beginning in December this year.

(Contd. on page 31)



## Why El Salvador's Bitcoin experiment has proven to be a spectacular failure



Entire Story on Page 33