

## Putin terms ties with India special; praises PM Modi for pursuing 'independent foreign policy'

MOSCOW(KCN): Russia has special ties with India and they have always supported each other and will remain so in the future, President Vladimir Putin has said, as he

said Russia and India continue to cooperate in the military and technical areas.

"We have special ties with India that are built on the foundation of really close allied relations for decades. We never had any outstanding issues with India, we have always supported each other and I'm positive that's how it will remain in the future as well," Russian state media RT quoted Putin as saying.

Putin's comments came more than a month after Prime Minister Modi told him that today's era is not of war as they met on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's summit in Samarkand, Uzbekistan in September.

India has not yet **CONTINUED ON: P-7**



praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for pursuing an "independent foreign policy" in the interest of his country.

Putin's remarks came at a plenary session of the Valdai International Discussion Club, a Moscow-based think tank on Thursday. He

## Rahul hopes Twitter will now act against hate speech, not stifle voice of opposition in India

NEW DELHI(KCN): Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi hoped on Friday that Twitter would now act against hate speech, check facts more robustly and not stifle the voice of the opposition in India, soon after billionaire Elon Musk took over the social media giant and fired four of its top executives.

Gandhi's Twitter handle was temporarily locked after he shared a picture of a rape victim and received a notice from the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR).

He had not used his account on the microblogging website for some time after that. The Congress leader has been using his

Twitter handle to attack the Narendra Modi government often.

"Congrats @elonmusk. I hope @Twitter will now act against hate speech, fact check more robustly, and will no longer stifle the opposition's voice in India due to government pressure," Gandhi tweeted.

Musk closed the deal to buy Twitter and tweeted: "The bird is freed", soon after completing the whopping USD 44 billion takeovers of the website and firing four of its top executives, including CEO Parag Agrawal and legal executive Vijaya Gadde.

Citing people with knowledge of the situation, a news report said **CONTINUED ON: P-7**



Bhubaneswar(KCN): It was a golden moment at Dhauli Peace Pagoda. An aura of peace and harmony was emanating through the mantras and sermons as Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik joined hundreds of monks from Japan, America, Ukraine and Kazakhstan to celebrate the golden jubilee of the peace pagoda. Speaking on the occasion, as Chief Guest the Chief Minister, giving a clarion call for world peace, said that peace has no alternative. It has its significance in all ages. Peace is the only option to achieve the goals of a better and beautiful world. Secretary to CM V K Pandian graced the occasion.

"Let us work together to spread the message of peace and create a safer world for our future generation," he called upon all.

Delving into the glorious history of Odisha, he said that the pages of Odisha history starts with Dhauli and the Kalinga war. Although, the war ended with massive bloodshed, Dhauli continues to sing the moral victory of the entire humanity. It is this place where Ashoka realised the futility of war and bloodshed, and embraced Buddhism. In fact, Dhauli changed the course of world history by spreading the message of global peace and harmony, he added.

He further said that the 50th year commemoration of the establishment of Dhauli Shanti

Stupa is a matter of great pride, glory and joy for all of us. This is the land that transformed Emperor Asoka to Dharmashoka. The Shanti Stupa stands here as a monument symbolizing and spreading the message of peace,



harmony and progress, he added. He said that Dhauli Peace Pagoda is a great creation of modern architecture. It bears the testimony of Indo-Japanese friendship that stands for global peace and mutual co-operation. The place will continue to

## Buddhist monks arrive for Dhauli Shanti Stupa celebrations



BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Buddhist monks from across the world have arrived in the Capital City to take part in the golden jubilee celebration of the Dhauli Shanti Stupa, located on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, on Friday.

Ahead of it, hundreds of monks and Buddhist disciples singing Buddhist hymns took out a peace rally in the city starting from Raj Bhawan to Dhauli Stupa or Peace Pagoda on

Thursday. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will attend the golden Jubilee celebration on Friday and the Shanti Stupa will remain closed for visitors until the event concludes.

For the mega event, the State government recently took up conservation for the Peace Pagoda and areas nearby at the cost of Rs 1.87 crore. Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra had recently reviewed preparations for the event at Dhauli.

## Ukraine War: Russia's hope for victory revealed in battle for Bakhmut

BAKHMUT(KCN): Russian soldiers pummeling a city in eastern Ukraine with artillery are slowly edging closer in their attempt to seize Bakhmut, which has remained in Ukrainian hands during the eight-month war despite Moscow's goal of capturing the entire Donbas region bordering Russia.

While much of the fighting in the last month has unfolded in southern Ukraine's Kherson region, the battle heating up around Bakhmut demonstrates Russian President Vladimir Putin's de-

sire for visible gains following weeks of clear setbacks in Ukraine.

Taking Bakhmut would rupture

controlled part of Donetsk and neighboring Luhansk province since 2014. Before invading

forces occupied or mostly occupied.

Ukrainian soldiers work with a captured Russian tank in Bakhmut, the site of the heaviest battle against the Russian troops in the Donetsk region, Ukraine, Oct. 27, 2022. (Photo:AP)

Bakhmut suffers from Russia's onslaught

Russia has battered Bakhmut with rockets for more than five months. The ground assault accelerated after its troops forced the Ukrainians to withdraw from Luhansk **CONTINUED ON: P-7**



Ukraine's supply lines and open a route for Russian forces to press on toward Kramatorsk and Sloviansk, key Ukrainian strongholds in Donetsk province. Pro-Moscow separatists have

Ukraine, Putin recognized the independence of the Russian-backed separatists' self-proclaimed republics. Last month, he illegally annexed Donetsk, Luhansk and two other provinces that Russian

# Call for World Peace

spread the message of peace for all the time to come, he added.

Offering tributes to Fuji Guruji, he said, "On the eve of this momentous occasion, I offer my sincere tributes to most revered

He also expressed gratefulness to Revered Takao Takedo of Japan, Bhikshu and Bhikshuni of Nipponzan Myohoji for conducting today's Morning Prayer for spreading global peace and harmony.

The Government of Odisha has taken steps for beautification and holistic development of Dhauli Shanti Stupa to make it an international tourist destination, he said.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister announced construction of an Instream Storage on the Daya River at Basantpur. The estimated cost of the project is Rs 95 Crore. The tender process for the project has already been started. The Chief Minister extended his warm greetings and good wishes to all the revered Bhikshus, saints and the august gathering present here from across the globe.

At the outset, the monks received the Chief Minister with traditional beating of drums. Rev. monk G. Nakasato. Reverend monks G. Nakasato and Rabi Sahoo gave the welcome address. Vote of thanks was offered by Devotee Makoto Masui. Rev. monk G. Nakasato read out sermons.

Among others Minister Ashok Panda and Minister Aswini Patra, Chief Secretary Suresh Mohapatra and senior officers attended.

Nichidatsu Fuji Guruji of Japan, Founder and Preceptor of Nipponzan Myohoji, for his invaluable contribution in building this "Biswa Shanti Stupa" at Dhauli. Further, the steps taken by Kalinga-Nippon Buddha Sangha to make it happen is also appreciated."



# SOA connects Taiwan Scanner on Health Touts

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Taiwan has evinced interest to collaborate with Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) Deemed to be University for joint degree program and to enable students to learn Mandarin for enhancing their prospects for placement in Taiwanese companies.

it is famous for its medical and engineering institutes

Mr. Chen, who called on SOA Founder President Prof. (Dr.)

Taiwan Education Centers in Indian universities including in IIT-Bombay and IIT-Madras. "We will be providing Mandarin teachers from Taiwan to teach Indian students who can learn the language as it would help them in getting placement in Taiwanese companies," he said.

The collaboration would also explore the possibility of introduction of two year post-graduate courses in semiconductors and exchange of students and faculty. The students can study in India for one year and then spend another year in Taiwan for industry exposure, he said adding it would help in their getting recruited in companies there including Foxconn, one of the largest manufacturers of high end semiconductor chips.



and set up a Taiwan Education Center in the university where students can learn Mandarin," Mr. Peters Li-ying Chen, Assistant Representative Director, Education Division of Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre in India, said here on Friday.

Manojranjan Nayak in the university office, said Taiwan is keen to facilitate signing of MoUs between Indian and Taiwanese universities for joint collaborations and academics. He said the Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre in India had already set up 25

often allegedly persuading patients to seek treatment in private clinics on the false information that there is no proper medical facility available at the Government hospitals. Secretary Health & FW has asked the authorities to alert all faculties, treating doctors, paramedics, and other staff of the Government hospital is

Bhubaneswar(KCN): State Government has issued instructions for strict monitoring and necessary crackdown on brokers indulged in diverting patients to private clinics and hospitals in Out Patient Department (OPD)s of Government Hospitals Secretary Health & Family Welfare, Shalini Pandit has asked the authorities of the Medical and Health Institutions to be alert over unwanted elements operating in the premises of the Government Health Care Institutions.

In a letter she has pointed out that it has come to notice that some unwanted elements are operating in the premises of high case load Government hospitals, in the guise of helping the patients coming from far flung areas to locate the Out Patient Departments (OPDs). They demand money from the patient's

families with the false assurance of free treatment in private hospitals/ clinics. The said elements are

tals to exercise strict vigil in the matter and take immediate remedial measures upon noticing any such activity in the

found operating in connivance with such elements and/ or aiding and abetting them, necessary administrative actions may be initiated against them under CCA Rules apart from appropriate legal action.

Further, you are requested to take immediate steps to put in place proper signboards in Odia and English, from the point of entrance to the hospital, giving clear directions / route chart to the location of various OPD Departments.

The name of the OPD in Odia and English should be displayed in front of each OPD of different treating Departments for knowledge of patients and their relatives.

This may be treated as "Most Urgent". Deviation, if any, in this regard shall be viewed adversely by the Department, warned Secretary Health & Family Welfare.



premise of -Government hospitals. The station-in-charge of the local Police Station may be promptly intimated about the matter for detention of such elements and initiation of appropriate legal action against them. In case any faculty, treating doctor, paramedic, and other staff of the Government hospital is

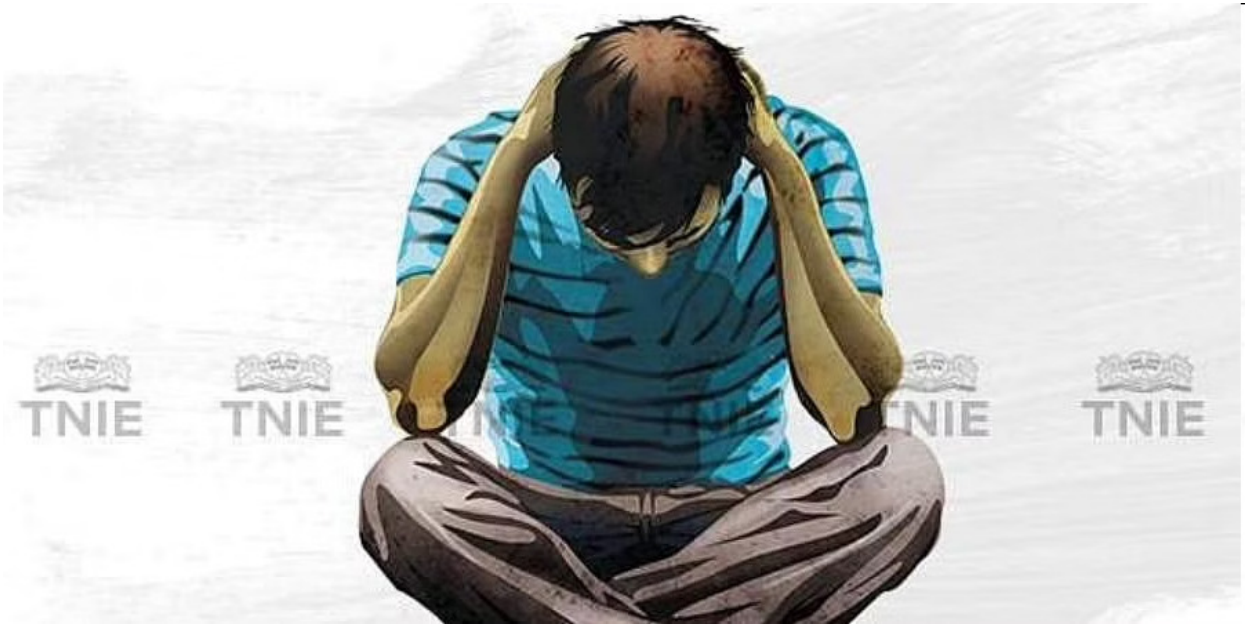
## Alarming rise in people seeking mental health treatment in Odisha

BHUBANESHWAR(KCN): In what could be termed a wake up call for Odisha, there has been an alarming rise in cases of mental

mostly youths, adolescents and students are victims of mental disorders. "Although middle-aged patients are more in terms of

While the suicide cases in the State rose by around 24 per cent in two years, the suicide rate increased from 10.5 per cent in

the State. "People tend to take extreme steps following the failure of coping resources when the situation is overwhelming. They



health disorders in the State. Apart from rise in suicidal deaths, disorders like anxiety, depression and substance use have increased since the Covid-19 pandemic.

A I I M S - Bhubaneswar has recorded almost double the number of cases in the last two years. Head of the Department of Psychiatry Dr BR Mishra said the number of people visiting the OPD for mental health consultation has soared to 120 a day now from 60 to 65 in 2019. The premier hospital has treated more than 20,000 cases in the last two years.

As per a recent study on patients visiting the hospital,

absolute numbers, the prevalence is high in the age group of 15 to 30 years. Family disputes, relationship issues, job, marital discord and substance use are the reasons behind the rise in the post-pandemic era," Dr Mishra said.

Data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) showed suicide rate has also increased during the period and it is above the national average of 12 (number of people committing suicide in one lakh population). As many as 5,651 people took their own lives in 2021 in Odisha against 5,546 in 2020 and 4,582 in 2019.

2019 to 12.5 per cent in 2021. Odisha topped the list of states with highest number of suicides due to family problems. Of the 5,651 suicidal deaths in 2021, suicides due to family issues accounted for 71.4 per cent (4,033) last year. Apart from hospitals, people approaching private organisations for mental health issues has also seen an uptick in the recent times. Mental health experts believe reporting of severe mental disorders like schizophrenia is still low due to stigma attached to it. However, despite the rise in reporting of other disorders, the treatment gap still remains huge in

find suicide as a method to escape. Family has an important role to play to identify the behavioral changes. Sensitisation is a must and people suffering from mental illness should be encouraged to seek help from professionals keeping aside the stigma," Dr Mishra added. Mental worry Suicides, anxiety, depression and substance use have gone up in State People visiting A I I M S , Bhubaneswar OPD for mental health consultation has soared to 120 daily Suicide cases rose by around 24 pc in two years 5,651 people took their own lives in 2021 in Odisha

or boarding buses. Some peddlers are also carrying the contraband through the railway route up to Jaleswar and then Balasore. In a few instances, police officers found out that even women and children were engaged by the drug peddlers to transport brown sugar. Ganja transportation is difficult but small quantities of brown sugar can be carried very easily which sometimes it becomes difficult for the police to nab the peddlers, said sources. "Our recent investigations have indicated that West Bengal is the gateway of the brown sugar trade in Odisha. We have started coordinating with our West Bengal counterparts and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) to share information with us about brown sugar sellers and peddlers operating mainly in Lalgola in Murshidabad district and Nadia district," said a senior police officer.

## Odisha drug bust: Six held with 10 kg brown sugar worth Rs 11 crore

BHUBANESHWAR(KCN): In a major drug haul, Balasore police on Friday arrested six peddlers and seized over 10 kg of brown sugar having a market value of Rs 11 crore. One of the accused is a native of Madhya Pradesh. Acting on a tip-off about a deal involving

(STF) of the Crime Branch arrested a drug peddler in Arad Bazar and seized over 1 kg of brown sugar worth Rs 1 crore from him.

Sources said the drug peddlers are procuring brown sugar mainly from West Bengal by either using private transport



a huge quantity of brown sugar, the police conducted a raid at the Fuladi area in Sahadevkhunta on Thursday and nabbed the peddlers along with the contraband stuffed in six polythene packets.

Some of the peddlers managed to give police a slip, said sources. The police's initial investigation suggests that the accused - Ayub, SK Hussain, SK Safiq alias Laden, SK Raju, SK Sameer and Rintu Tarei had procured the brown sugar from the bordering area of West Bengal and Assam. While Ayub is a resident of Madhya Pradesh, the other five peddlers are natives of Arad Bazar in Balasore. The accused had planned to supply the contraband in various parts of Odisha, said the police. One motorcycle and scooter each, six mobile phones, one Aadhaar card and Rs 21,000 cash have been seized from them. In July this year, the Special Task Force

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## Appealing to fans' inner writers, Anupam Kher offers autographed



**NEW DELHI:** Asking his fans to rejuvenate their inner writers, veteran actor Anupam Kher, offered them to send his autographed book 'Your Best Day is Today' on Tuesday. Kher hopped on to Twitter and shared a candid picture of him. Calling on his fans to give a suitable

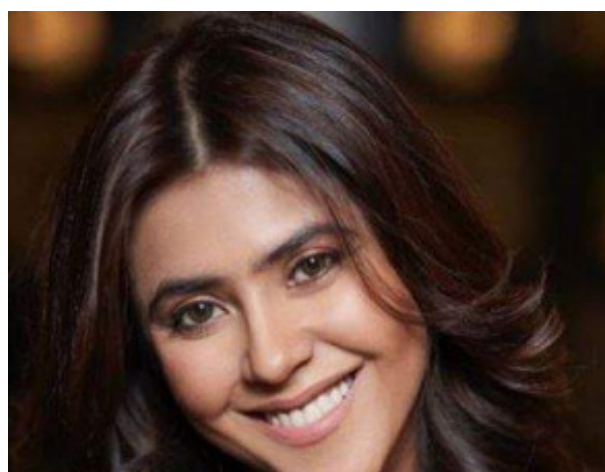
caption for the picture, he wrote "Mujhe meri ye tasveer pasand hai. (I like this picture of mine) I will send an autographed copy of my latest book #YourBestDayIsToday to the person whose caption for this pic I like the most!" Adding to the cation, he noted "Hindi or

English - apka caption kisi bhi bhasha me chalega! Chaliye! Apne andar ke lekhak ko jagaaiye!! (your caption will go in any language! Let's go! Wake up your inner writer,) with Hibiscus smiling face and heart-shaped smile emoticon. Within a few hours of being posted, fans of

the former Chairman of Film and Television Institute of India started coming up with innovative captions and showcased their creative skills. A day ago, the 65-year-old star shared a clip of his mother lauding PM Modi and scientist's efforts for the new COVID-19 vaccines.

## SC grants Ekta Kapoor interim protection from arrest in FIR over web series

**NEW DELHI(KCN):** The Supreme



Court on Thursday granted interim protection from arrest to TV producer Ekta Kapoor in an FIR against her for al-

leged objectionable content in her web series "XXX season 2". A bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde granted interim protection to

Kapoor. She had moved the apex court after the Indore bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, in November this year, dismissed her petition seeking that a case filed against her for alleged objectionable content in web series "XXX season 2" be quashed. The High Court had dismissed a petition of Kapoor seeking quashing of a case registered against her for alleged obscenity in a web series produced by her.

The complainant had alleged an episode of the series 'XXX uncensored' was obscene and caused annoyance to him, hurt his religious feelings and dishonored the Army. The case was registered at the Annapurna police station, Indore, under Sections 294 (Obscene acts and songs), 298 and 34 (Acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) of the India Penal Code and various relevant sections of the IT Act and the State Emblem Act.

## Phenomenal experience: Riteish Deshmukh praises Anil Kapoor, Anurag Kashyap's 'AK vs AK'

**NEW DELHI(KCN):** Actor Riteish Deshmukh lauded Vikramaditya Motwane's 'AK vs AK' and termed the Netflix based film "a phenomenal experi-

ence". Deshmukh took to Twitter to share a poster of the movie, which features Anurag Kashyap and Anil Kapoor in lead roles. "Mind has been

blown!!! #AKvsAK is a phenomenal experience - @VikramMotwane take a bow my friend," tweeted Deshmukh. He then went on to

only you could do this, you are pure gold in this film but @HarshKapoor\_has outdone your entire performance in one scene," the 'Housefull' actor's



daughter and films the search for her in real-time. The Netflix India Original film was released on the platform on December 24, which also happens to be Anil Kapoor's birthday.

tweet further read. While Kapoor essays the role of a yesterday actor, Kashyap plays the role of a disgraced film director in the film. 'AK vs AK,' revolves

around the story of a movie star and a film director who get into a public spat, following which the director retaliates by kidnapping the actor's

charge a single

## Aakanksha Singh joins team Mayday

Ajay Devgn's Mayday has been creating a massive buzz because of its interest-

the icing on the cake is that Ajay Sir is directing the film. It's actually happening!



ing star cast, which includes Amitabh Bachchan, Ajay Devgn, Rakul Preet Singh and Angira Dhar. Talented actress, Aakanksha Singh has now joined the team. Aakanksha will essaying the role of Ajay Devgn's wife in the film. She joined the shoot yesterday. Aakanksha says, "It's like a dream come true to be a part of such a big and much-awaited film. I am so excited to share the screen with Ajay Sir and Amitabh Sir; and

It's an important role and I am lucky that the first muhurat shot of the film had me in it." Ajay Devgn took to social media to announce that the shoot had begun yesterday. "Happy to officially begin Mayday in a start-to-finish shooting schedule. Seek blessings from the Almighty and my parents. Nothing is complete without the support of all my fans, family and well-wishers. Releases on 29th April 2022 (sic)" he posted.

## 'Wanted to make a film on Indian Army with Shah Rukh Khan', says Director Kabir Khan

**MUMBAI(KCN):** Filmmaker Kabir Khan, who is gearing up for the release of his web series "The Forgotten Army: Azaadi Ke Liye", based on Indian National Army (INA), says he wanted to make a film on the subject starring Shah Rukh Khan. He added that Shah Rukh didn't charge a fee for the voiceover he gave for the series.

paisa for his voiceover assignment. "When I was making this series, I thought I should ask Shah Rukh (to be the narrator) because Shah Rukh's father had involvement with this army. His father knew General Shahnawaz Khan, who was an important part of INA. So, I knew he (Shah Rukh Khan) has sympathy and attachment with Azad Hind Fauj and I called him up. It's not an easy task to ask a superstar for a voiceover but Shah Rukh instantly agreed to do it. Usually, when you discuss a film with Shah Rukh, it's a long process, but in this case Shah Rukh literally did the voiceover for us on the second day. I don't know whether he would like me to reveal this, but he didn't take a fee from us. I think the kind of attachment he has with Azad Hind Fauj reflects in his act." Incidentally, Shah Rukh did a cameo in Kabir Khan's 2017 release "Tubelight", starring Salman Khan.



## Create, Connect and Share Respect: A better internet starts with you

29<sup>th</sup> October is observed as International Internet Day. The internet is defined as a remote connection between two computers. The first internet connection was made on October 29th, 1969. This was just two months after Neil Armstrong landed on the moon. To commemorate the event, International Internet Day was celebrated for the first time on October 29th, 2005.

It's hard to fathom a world without the Internet. The Internet provides instant access to information. Search engines make this information easy to attain. Besides gaining knowledge, internet users have an endless supply of entertainment. The internet makes it possible to do banking and shopping from the comfort of your own home. Internet is not just a need or luxury, it has become a household necessity.

Internet connects you with your friends, and family, and access the top courses without moving geographically. Now, the Internet has revolutionized communication systems and even our attitudes towards everything. Old are the days of the usage of fax and the mail services.

Internet has changed our lives in numerous ways. It has raised our standard of living and made several tasks extremely smooth and easy. However, it also offers several disadvantages. The Internet's drawbacks can't be overlooked any longer as numerous teenagers are affected by Internet Addiction Disorder, then many ladies became online shopaholics.

Internet addiction is detrimental to not only fitness but also psychological state. Hacker programs a virus that gets into the pc and ruins valuable data. Users' personal information like name, address, master card, bank

**Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit**

details, and other information are often accessed by culprits when used on the web, leading to significant economic loss. Time spent online flies fast without consciousness. After getting attracted the user is trapped into the trap, users are trapped by a "net", spending less time with people in the real world. Less interaction and face-to-face communication, actually, may end in a decrease in social abilities. The unnecessary emails, advertisements, etc. are sometimes said to be spam because they need the power to hamper the system and make the users face many problems. One of the main disadvantages of internet is that it serves as a major distraction at work place. Whether it is a student or a working professional everyone these days is addicted to internet. While internet is a great way to enhance your knowledge and grow professionally it can also distract you from work. As it

is said people tend to adopt the bad habits faster so, instead of making the most of the information available on the internet to improve their knowledge and skills, people usually fall prey to the numerous sources of entertainment the internet offers. From gaming to watching videos, from listening to music to overspending while shopping online, from stalking their relatives and friends online to copying their lifestyle – people, these days, indulge in such useless activities and their work/studies take a back seat. Apart from this, hacking, spamming and other such notorious activities on the internet have also become quite common. Internet is such a great platform to enhance and promote one's business and grow professionally. We must use it for that purpose only rather than letting it distract us from work.

B-15 Jyoti-Kalash Society, Jodhpur Tekra, Satellite, Ahmedabad

## Hate speech is antithetical to freedom of expression

Recently the Honourable Supreme Court of India took a serious view of the rising incidence of hate speech in

our country and has directed the three states of Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and New Delhi to take suo motu action against the offenders who aid and abet hate speech

### Letter to Editor

#### Stop animal violence

Isolation chambers, restraint chairs, and guillotines are some of the horrifying torture methods that one can't imagine being used on a dog, a cat, cows, buffaloes, sheep, goats, ducks, hens, monkey, donkeys or another sensitive animal for so called experimental research. It sounds like something out of the Middle Ages. The majority of public and private laboratories currently subject cats, dogs, monkeys, cows, buffaloes, and other individuals to painful procedures. However, these are tools found in the torture chambers of modern animal experimenters. For instance, stereotaxic devices are steel, vice-like machines used to confine animals by the head, often while they're fully conscious, are some of the techniques experimenters employ to torture the weak animals. Cows, buffaloes, donkeys etc are frequently held in abnormal positions for long periods of time in restraint chairs. Their waists and necks are cinched, inflicting excruciating pain. Metal rods called cranial implants are inserted into the heads of sheep, goats, monkeys, dogs, cats and other animals to further manage their suffering. Animals that are completely conscious may have gavage tubes are thick plastic tubes forced down their throats and up their nostrils to administer drugs. Animals are compelled onto tiny, electric devices known as shock plates. They are repeatedly shocked after which, in primitive tests that might persist for days or even weeks, they may experience feelings of helplessness, dread, and depression. As a result, our legislation or judiciary must take action immediately to demote animal torture devices in order to keep these defenceless animals out of the annals of history. Science is not a place for violence.

Vijaykumar H K, Raichur

in any form and no matter whichever religion they may belong to. Some of the firebrand leaders of religious, casteist or ethnic groups or political parties in our country at times vitiate the atmosphere with their disparaging remarks or provocative comments against another group or community that they hate or dislike. They are least bothered about the consequences that would ensue. Our country has witnessed many communal riots or desecration of places of worship from time to time between the majority and the minorities, the reasons of which can squarely be attributed to hate speech and misunderstanding. According to thinker Caitlin Ring Carlson, "No culture, country or form of communication is immune from the existence or influence of hate speech." Scholar Alexander Tsesis equates hate speech with "the proverbial bark that comes before the bite of bias-motivated violence or genocide."

A close observation of all hate speech cases in India reveals that the perpetrators of crime often take advantage of the freedom of speech and expression guaranteed by the Constitution of India under Article.19(1) and misuse it. Right to freedom of opinion and expression is also enshrined in Art.19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights. Every democratic country in modern times has granted freedom of speech and expression to its citizens as a fundamental right which inter alia includes freedom to criticize, to dissent, to resist illegal decision etc. However, while exercising freedom of expression adequate precaution may be taken to not hurt the sentiment of a person or a community or a religion as it may give rise to resentment. British thinker John Stuart Mill in his book "On Liberty" defends personal liberty or personal freedom as a pre-condition

**Pradeep Kumar Nayak**

for personal development. He defines liberty as "the freedom to do what one desires." He divides individual actions into self-regarding action and other-regarding action. Government or state should not control or impose restrictions on the self-regarding actions because they do not adversely affect others in the society. For example- someone eating, reading or sleeping at his home come within the purview of the first category and are free from Government control. On the contrary, smoking in a crowded bus or playing on the music system with a high decibel of noise at midnight while others are asleep, are other regarding actions that should be hedged with appropriate restrictions. Therefore, hate speech is undoubtedly other-regarding action that needs to be regulated and checked by law. Those who indulge in hate speech must know of its consequences and the extent of damage it would bring about in the society. Eminent Political Scientist Sir Isaiah Berlin opinion "my right to swing my arm ends where the other fellow's nose begins" is arguably the best exposition of personal liberty with a caveat. J.S.Mill and Isaiah Berlin's defence of personal freedom is based on "imposition of reasonable restrictions" on individual actions that affect others. In our country the rising incidences of hate speeches made by some of the religious leaders of the majority and minority communities have not only given rise to social tension but also have polarized the Indian society. We can never deny the fact that hate speech incites hate crimes and ultimately destroys the brotherhood among the people which is a distinct feature of Indian democracy.

Over the past few years many popular national TV channels of India have been organizing debates where delegates or religious leaders from Hindu and Muslim communities are invited to discuss and debate on sensitive

religious issues such as Ram Temple, Hijab, Talaq that often end up in verbal brawls and take a hostile turn. The debates are believed to have made a dent in the unity and solidarity of the people of different religions. Of course, free speech and freedom of expression are indispensable for a vibrant democracy, but reasonable restrictions should be imposed on toxic content, objectionable words and provocative comments of a person's speech to avoid backlash from an offended or humiliated group. Hate speech is a universal issue and is a matter of concern in most of the countries. In Western countries Right-wing groups often spew poison in their utterances against non-whites and immigrants. On the other hand, India is not an exception because the Right-wing groups here very often use provocative statements against minorities and instill a sense of insecurity among them.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution No.73/328 in July 2019 to combat xenophobia and hate speech at the international level. According to Antonio Guterres, the UN Secretary General "Hatred is a danger to everyone and so fighting it must be a job for everyone." In our country Section 295(A) and Section 153 (A) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) deal with issues of malicious intention of outraging the religious feeling of a group and using derogatory expressions in words or signs to incite feeling of hatred between castes or religious groups respectively. In many cases the offenders go scot free because of the lukewarm responses of the authorities. It is time, stringent punishments are given as per law to the culprits to contain hate speech and to ensure peace and brotherhood in our society.

The author is a retired Principal Kalinga Vihar, Bhubaneswar, Email:pradeep\_phlb@rediffmail.com



# Iran's elite technical university emerges as hub of protests

TEHRAN: The ageing brick campus of the Sharif University of Technology, Iran's elite technical school, has long been a magnet for the nation's brightest minds, with a record of elevating its students to the highest reaches of society.

Thousands of Sharif University alumni power



Iran's most sensitive industries, including nuclear energy and aerospace. One of supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's closest advisors has taught there for decades. But as demonstrations erupt across Iran — first sparked by the death in September of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in the custody of the country's morality police — the scientific powerhouse known as "Iran's M.I.T." has emerged as an unexpected hub for protest, fueling Iran's biggest antigovernment movement in over a decade.

"We've become politically active because there is nothing to lose," said an electrical engineering major and activist in Sharif University's student association who spoke on condition of anonymity. Like others who insisted their identities be shielded, he feared reprisals. "The way things are now in Iran, you have to emigrate and leave your family and friends or stay and fight for your rights."

Across the country and despite a violent crackdown, Iranians have taken to the streets, venting their outrage over social repression, economic despair and global isolation — crises that have clipped the ambitions of Iran's young and educated generation. Over the last few weeks, university campuses have become a hotbed of opposition after years of dormancy, as students take up the mantle of activism they haven't held in years.

"Students have come to the realization they will not achieve their rights in this framework," said Mohammad Ali Kadivar, an Iran scholar at Boston College. "They are demanding the end of the Islamic Republic."

Protests have flared nearly every day for the past month at Sharif University — and escalated after security forces cracked down violently on Oct. 2, resulting in an hourslong standoff between students and police that prompted an international outcry and shocked the country.

"Whether it's true or not, people have this feeling that it's safer to protest on campus," said Moeen, a Sharif University alum who has observed the protests and spoke on condition that only his first name be used. "It's easier than orchestrating something at a random square in Tehran. There are student syndicates. There's leadership."

Students of the Sharif University of Technol-

ogy protest with a banner reading: "No to mandatory hijab" and "Dear Zhina, (Amini's nickname), you won't die, your name will become a symbol," Oct. 7, 2022. (PhotoAP) Hub for Iran's past uprisings

University campuses have been pivotal to Iran's opposition movements before. After the U.S.-backed 1953 coup, University of Tehran students revolted over then-Vice President Richard Nixon's visit to the capital. The shah's security forces stormed the campus and shot three students dead. Sharif University, among other campuses, was wracked

by protests two decades later when Marxist and Islamist student groups lit the fuse of the



1979 Islamic Revolution, which ushered in the clerical establishment that still rules Iran. Once in power, the young theocracy worked to ensure universities would no longer be breeding grounds for opposition: The clerics purged professors, arrested dissident students and set up their own powerful student associations. Political issues occasionally galvanized students despite the risks. Pro-reformist students protested at the University of Tehran in 1999, prompting a fearsome raid by security forces who fatally shot a student and flung others out of windows. But broadly over the decades, Tehran's campuses became subdued, students and experts said, particularly Sharif University — a competitive, high-tech hub considered less liberal and activist than others in the capital. Amid American sanctions and raging inflation, some students joked the university was essentially an airport, as the best and brightest students rushed to leave for Europe and the U.S. after graduation.

A turning point came in 2018, students said. Former President Donald Trump pulled the U.S. out of Tehran's landmark nuclear deal that year and reimposed harsh sanctions. Deepening global isolation and frustration over lagging political reforms convinced many students that nothing would come of

engaging with the system.

A year later, in the fall of 2019, a fuel price hike set off the deadliest nationwide unrest since the Islamic Revolution. The Sharif Islamic Association, a misnomer for the students' largely secular representative body, jumped into action, organizing demonstrations on campus.

In 2020, the student group boycotted classes and held a protest vigil after the Iranian military's downing of a Ukrainian passenger plane killed 176 people, including over a dozen Sharif University graduates. Later that year, authorities arrested two top students on widely disputed security charges, stoking outrage. "We have no industry, we are in a bad economic situation, and the environment is ruined," said the student association activist, listing the reasons for the protest. "But the biggest reason is freedom. We just want basic things that you have all over the world." Police outside the Sharif University of Technol-

ogy during a student protest sparked by the death in September of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini, Oct. 7, 2022. (PhotoAP)

Students revolt after Amini's death

When news spread of Amini's death after her arrest for allegedly violating Iran's strict rules on women's dress, students buzzed. Iran's government insists Amini was not mistreated in police custody, but her family

says her body showed bruises and other signs of beating after she was detained. "Even my conservative friends said, 'If we don't take to the streets now, we never will,'" Moeen said. Sharif University authorities denied the student association a protest permit, members said. Crowds demonstrated anyway, pumping their fists and chanting "Death to the dictator!" — a slogan that protesters have used around the country.

On Oct. 2, the protests devolved into violent mayhem, according to statements from the association.

As hundreds of students chanted against Khamenei, plainclothes security forces raided campus. Professors formed a human shield so students could flee. But security forces beat the professors, ripped through their interlocked hands and chased protest-

ers into the parking garage.

They unleashed paintballs, tear gas and metal pellets on shrieking students. Several were wounded and some 40 were arrested, most of whom have now been released. "It was brutal," said one professor who witnessed the events. "For the sake of its own future, the government should care about these students. They're the nerds. But it was clear it only cared about oppressing them."

Tensions were further inflamed when the minister for higher education, Mohammad Ali Zolfogol, visited the campus and, instead of reassuring students, accused them of "lawlessness" and warned they'd be held responsible, according to a computer engineering student who attended the meeting and videos posted online.

Students at Tehran's Sharif University of Technology attend a protest, Oct. 7, 2022. (PhotoAP)

In an attempt to defuse the resentment, the university created a forum, billed as a safe space for students to voice their complaints. The university president, the U.S.-sanctioned Rasool Jalili, who served on Iran's Supreme Council of Cyberspace, presided over the program.

Women boldly took the stage without the mandatory hijab, according to videos shared by members of the association. Students lashed out at the university for its failure to protect them. And there were consequences to speaking out. On Sunday, the university announced it would temporarily ban over two dozen students who contributed to the "unstable environment."

That prompted more demonstrations, as students raged against both university authorities and the ruling clerics. Most recently this week, female students streamed into the



male-only section of the dining hall in protest over campus gender segregation as male students cheered them on. The university closed the cafeteria on Tuesday, hoping to end the demonstrations.

Instead, the students moved their lunch to the campus yard, videos showed. A professor joined in solidarity. Young women and men picnicked side by side on the pavement, chanting: "Woman! Life! Freedom!"

# Congress chief Kharge visits Ambedkar's memorial, Azad's 'mazaar'; pays homage to them

NEW DELHI(KCN): Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday visited the memorial and 'mazaar' of B R Ambedkar and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, and paid floral tributes to the two freedom fighters and former Union ministers.

After visiting Ambedkar's memorial here, Kharge posted a quote of the former law minister and the chief architect of the Constitution on Twitter. "Bhakti in religion may be a road to the

salvation of the soul. But in politics, Bhakti or hero-worship is a sure road to degradation and to eventual dictatorship. Visited Dr B.R. Ambedkar Memorial in Delhi today and paid floral tributes to Babasaheb," Kharge, who took over as Congress chief on Wednesday, said in a tweet and posted pictures of him paying homage to Ambedkar at the memorial. Kharge also visited the 'mazaar (grave)' of Azad here and paid floral tributes to India's first Educa-

tion Minister. Mallikarjun Kharge paying tributes to

India's First Education Minister, he believed in our



Maulana Abul Kalam Azad at his grave in New Delhi. (Photo | PTI)

"Paid floral tributes to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad at his mazaar in Delhi. A revolutionary freedom fighter and

country's democratic and secular credentials and strongly opposed the idea of partition on religious lines," Kharge said on Twitter. Ahead of his taking over as Congress chief, Kharge had vis-



ited Rajghat on Wednesday and paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi.

He had also visited the memorials of former prime ministers Jawaharlal

Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi and former deputy

prime minister Jagjivan Ram, and paid tributes to the leaders.

On Wednesday, Kharge took charge as the Congress' first non-Gandhi president in 24 years, citing Rahul Gandhi's slogan "daro mat" to energise workers and declaring that the party will demolish the government's "system of lies, treachery and hatred". Kharge, 80, had defeated Shashi Tharoor to win the Congress presidential election, to succeed Sonia Gandhi.



# PM Modi moots idea of "One Nation, One Uniform" for police

**SURAJKUND (HARYANA):** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday mooted the idea of "One Nation, One Uniform" for police, saying it is just a suggestion for consideration and he is not trying to impose it on the states.

Addressing a "Chintan Shivir" of state home ministers through video-conferencing, Modi also warned of forces that are increasing their intellectual sphere to push the youth towards extremism and pervert the minds of coming generations. "Every form of Naxalism, be it the one with guns or the one with pens, have to be uprooted to prevent them from misleading the youth of the country," he said.

Modi said for the sake of the unity and integrity of the nation and with the inspiration of Sardar Patel "we can not allow any such forces to flourish in our country". He said such forces get significant help internationally.

About his "One Nation, One Uniform" suggestion, the prime minister said he thinks that the identity of the police forces across the country could be identical. "The One Nation, One Uniform for police is just an idea. I am not trying to impose it on you. Just give it a thought. It may happen, it may happen in 5, 50, or 100 years. But let's give it a thought,"

Modi said.

He said this will not only ensure the manufacture of quality products because they will be used on a large scale but also will give a common identity to law enforcement personnel as people will recognise them anywhere in the country.

States can have their number or insignia, he added.

Modi also urged the state governments to review old laws and amend them to the current context as he battled for co-ordinated action by all the agencies to meet the emerging challenges of law and order and security. Modi said it was "very important" to maintain a good perception of police and the "wrongs here" should be addressed.

Even though law and order is a state subject as per the Constitution, they are equally linked with the unity and integrity of the country, he said.

Modi said every state should learn, get inspired from each other and work together for internal security. "Working together of states for internal security is a constitutional mandate as well as responsibility towards the nation," he added.



The prime minister said all agencies -- both central as well as that of states -- should cooperate with each other to ensure efficiency, better outcome and protection to the common man.

He said law and order is directly linked to development and hence it

is everyone's responsibility to maintain peace. "When the strength of the country will increase, the power of every citizen, every family will increase," he noted. Modi said it is very important for the entire law and order system to be reliable and stressed for maintaining a good perception of police among the people. He said several reforms for strengthening the law and order system have taken place in the last few years.

"We need to think about a common platform for technology that can be shared by all. Best practices of one state can be shared with others," he said, adding smart technology should be adopted for a smarter law and order system.

Referring to the circulation of fake news, Modi said fact check of such news is a must and technology plays a big role in it.

"People must be made aware of mechanisms to verify messages before forwarding them," he said. The prime minister said the good old system of generating human intelligence by the police and security agencies should be strengthened for achieving better results. He asked the states not to look at the budget while selecting technology as "investment in today's technology is a saving in the future". Referring to the ongoing 'Amrit Kaal', the prime minister said an 'Amrit' generation will emerge carrying the essence of the 'Panch Pran'.

"The Panch Pran' must be the guiding force for good governance," he said. Modi said the law and order system can be im-

proved with the help of smart technology as maintaining law and order is a 24X7 job. He pointed out that crime is no longer localised and instances of inter-state and international crimes are going up.

That is why mutual cooperation between state agencies as well as between central and state agencies is crucial, Modi said.

He said whether it is cybercrime or the use of drone technologies for the smuggling of weapons or drugs, the government needs to keep working towards new technologies to tackle the menace.

"The law and order system can be improved with the help of smart technology," the prime minister said, adding the 5G, along with its benefits, brings the need for a heightened alert.

Modi mentioned the 'Police Technology Mission' of the central government and stressed the need for a common platform as differing technologies of different states do not talk to each other.

"We should have a pan-India outlook, all our best practices should be interoperable and should have a common link," he said.

He also talked about the decriminalisation of many things in company law as a step in this direction and asked the states to also evaluate and get rid of outdated rules and laws.

Modi said the laws enacted by the central government aim to strongly handle corruption, terrorism and hawala.

"Laws like UAPA have given strength to the system in a decisive battle against terrorism," he said. The prime minister also advocated the need to think about developing special capabilities for tourism-related policing.

He said tourists are the biggest and fastest ambassadors of the reputation of any place.

He also said police vehicles should never be old as it affects the efficiency of the force.

The two-day 'Chintan Shivir' is being organised here by the Union Home Ministry with the objective to prepare an action plan for the implementation of 'Vision 2047' and 'Panch Pran' announced in Prime Minister Modi's Independence Day speech.

Home secretaries and director generals of police (DGPs) of states, director generals of central armed police forces (CAPFs) and central police organisations (CPOs) are attending it.

## Governor nod to 423 new assistant teacher posts



**BHUBANESWAR:** To tide over the teacher training crisis in the State, Governor of Odisha and Chancellor of Universities Prof Ganeshi Lal has approved creation of over 400 posts of assistant professor (teacher education) in various disciplines.

The posts would be created in 16 teacher education institutes (TEIs) and three general colleges offering BEd and MED courses.

## 35 Bangladeshi fishermen rescued, another 45 still untraceable

**BHUBANESWAR(KCN):** The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and Odisha Marine Police have rescued 35 Bangladeshi fishermen but another 45 are still untraceable after four boats

Officials of the department of Higher Education (DHE) said on Thursday that a total 423 assistant professor posts will be created and these will be governed by the Odisha Education Service College Branch Recruitment Rules, 2020. Of these posts, while 198 are new posts and the rest 225 posts were earlier requisitioned by the School and Mass Education department.

As per the survivors, they remained afloat for about five days by clinging on to the debris of their boats near India-Bangladesh International Maritime Boundary Line. The Marine



reportedly sank off Odisha coast due to Cyclone Sitrang.

Sources said the ICG rescued 20 fishermen on Tuesday and State Marine Police moved 15 others to safety off Bhadrak coast a day later. According to official sources, about 80 fishermen left from Bangladesh in four boats - Jasmine, Amma Jaan, Tony and Nishi Akhtar on October 21. The next day, the boats are believed to have capsized in the Bay of Bengal under the influence of the system which intensified into a cyclone a day later.

The ICG scrambled its Dornier aircraft on Tuesday afternoon to ascertain whether anyone was in distress due to the tropical storm. The aircraft launched a search operation to trace if any fishermen, boat or merchant vessel was in distress. The maritime security agency spotted 20 fishermen and dropped a raft to save them. A merchant ship en route from Malaysia to Kolkata was diverted to render assistance to the rescued fishermen.

police officers said initial investigation suggests 20 fishermen were onboard each boat. Ten fishermen were rescued from Nishi Akhtar, three from Tony and two from Amma Jaan. The remaining fishermen of the three boats and all 20 onboard Jasmine are still missing, said the officers. Sources said the situation remains grim and the boats are patrolling to trace if there are any more survivors.

"We have requested the fishermen community to inform us if they spot any survivors. Bangladeshi authorities have been informed about the rescued fishermen and they will be handed over," said Additional DG Sudhanshu Sarangi, who also is the State Maritime Security Coordinator. Sarangi said he is in contact with National Maritime Security Coordinator Vice Admiral Ashok Kumar and ICG is coordinating with the Bangladeshi authorities. ICG ship Varad is continuing the search operation in the region.

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## Elon Musk takes over Twitter, two top Indian officials escorted out

NEW YORK: Elon Musk completed his \$44 billion acquisition of Twitter Inc., according to people familiar with the matter, putting the world's richest man in charge of the struggling social network after six months of public and legal wrangling over the deal. Among Musk's first moves: changing the leadership. Departures include Twitter Chief Executive Officer Parag Agrawal; Vijaya Gadde, the head of legal, policy and trust; Chief Financial Officer Ned Segal, who joined Twitter in 2017; and Sean Edgett, who has been general counsel at Twitter since 2012, according to people familiar with the matter. Edgett was escorted out of the building, said two of the people, who asked not to be identified because the information isn't public. Agrawal and Segal were in Twitter's San Francisco headquarters when the deal closed and were also escorted out, the sources added.

Shareholders will be paid \$54.20 per share, and Twitter will now operate as a private company. The completion caps a convoluted saga that began in January with the billionaire's quiet accumulation of a major stake in the company, his growing exasperation with how it's run and an eventual merger accord that he later spent months trying to unravel. On Oct. 4, Musk agreed to proceed on his originally proposed terms, and a Delaware Chancery Court judge gave the two sides until Oct. 28 to wrap up the deal. That deadline was met, and now Musk, who is CEO of both Tesla Inc. and SpaceX, also controls Twitter, a service he uses often but criticizes openly, and that he has promised to change dramatically. The company's shares are no longer expected to trade on the New York Stock Exchange. Musk's ownership will bring immediate disruption to Twitter's operations, in part because many of his ideas for how to change the company are at odds with how it has been run for years. He has said he wants to ensure "free speech" on the social network, which is likely to mean looser content moderation standards, and plans to restore some high-profile accounts that were kicked off Twitter for breaking rules, such as former US President Donald Trump's. More broadly, Musk's initiatives threaten to undo years of Twitter's efforts to reduce bullying and abuse on the platform.

As the deadline neared, Musk began putting his stamp on the company, posting a video of himself walking into the headquarters and changing his profile descriptor on the platform he now owns to "Chief Twit." He arranged meetings between Tesla engineers and product leadership at Twitter, and he planned to address the staff on Friday, people familiar with the matter said. Twitter's engineers could no longer make changes to code as of noon Thursday in San Francisco, part of an effort to ensure that nothing about the product changes ahead of the deal closing, the people said.

Twitter employees have been bracing for layoffs since the transaction was announced in April, and Musk floated the idea of cost cuts to banking partners when he was initially fundraising for the deal. Some potential investors were told Musk plans to cut 75% of Twitter's workforce, which now numbers about 7,500, and expects to double revenue within three years, a person familiar with the matter said earlier this month.

While visiting Twitter headquarters on Wednesday, Musk told employees that he doesn't plan to cut 75% of the staff when he takes over the company, according to people familiar with the matter.

In June, during an all-hands meeting following his purchase agreement, Musk said that Twitter "needs to get healthy," a reference to trimming costs. He has also said only "exceptional" employees will be able to work from home and everyone else must

### Rahul hopes Twitter will now act against hate speech, not stifle voice of opposition in India

Continued from page-1

Musk "has started cleaning the house at Twitter with the firings of at least four top executives".

Besides Agrawal and Gadde, Twitter's chief financial officer Ned Segal and general counsel Sean Edgett were also fired.

"At least one of the executives who was fired was escorted out of Twitter's office," the report said. Gandhi also shared a graph of "manipulation" of his Twitter handle.

It highlighted how, between August 2021 and February 2022, the new followers of the Congress leader were suppressed.

Parag Agrawal's 11-month tenure as Twitter CEO ends as Elon Musk takes control. Gandhi claimed that he had made 20 appeals to Twitter, even as the social media giant denied any wrongdoing.

The graph also shows from January 2021, Gandhi's Twitter account saw the number of new followers growing and after February 2022, it started growing again.

come to the office. San Francisco-based Twitter was one of the first large companies to promise all employees they could work from anywhere "forever." Twitter has done some of the work for him. The company announced a hiring freeze in May,



closed or downsized several offices around the world, and canceled a 2023 companywide retreat to Disneyland. Last week, Twitter froze the equity awards accounts for employees in anticipation of the deal closing. That prompted concerns among workers that he stock awards will not be paid, people familiar with the matter said, and some employees are discussing and researching labor laws to ensure they get the correct type of severance. It was long clear that Agrawal probably wouldn't remain in charge once Musk took over. Text messages unveiled during the lawsuit show that the two men had a contentious exchange early on in the deal process, and Musk later mocked Agrawal for being on vacation in Hawaii during some of the early negotiations. Efforts by former Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey to bring them back together after the deal was announced ended poorly.

"At least it became clear that you can't work together," Dorsey texted Musk on April 26. "That was clarifying."

Gadde, meanwhile, oversaw Twitter's content policy efforts, which Musk has lambasted.

Twitter's business, which relies mainly on advertising placed in users' feeds on its social

### Ukraine War: Russia's hope for victory revealed in battle for Bakhmut

Continued from page-1

in July. The line of contact is now on the city's outskirts. Mercenaries from the Wagner Group, a shadowy Russian military company, are reported to be leading the charge.

Russia's prolonged drive for Bakhmut exposes Moscow's "craziness," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said in a nightly address to the nation this week. "Day after day, for months, they have been driving people there to their deaths, concentrating the maximum power of artillery strikes there," Zelenskyy said.

The shelling killed at least three people between Wednesday and Thursday, according to local authorities.

Ukraine's military is firing mortars and heavy artillery to repel the Russian forces who were less than 5 kilometres away by early Thursday, according to the Institute for the Study of War, a think tank in Washington.

A Ukrainian soldier fires a mortar in the front line near Bakhmut the site of the heaviest battle against the Russian troops in the Donetsk region, Ukraine, Oct. 27, 2022. (Photo/AP)

Russia needs a victory in Bakhmut given it is losing control over large swaths of the north-eastern region of Kharkiv to a Ukrainian counteroffensive last month and its deteriorating position in Kherson. The areas were among the first the Russian military captured after the Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine.

"Russia's suffering defeats across the board. ... They need the optics of some kind of an offensive victory to assuage critics at home and to show the Russian public that this war is still going to plan," said Samuel Ramani, an associate fellow at the Royal United Services Institute, a defense and security think tank based in London.

The Wagner Group has played a prominent role in the war, and human rights organizations have accused its soldiers for hire of committing atrocities. Their deployment around Bakhmut reflects the city's strategic importance to Moscow. However, it's unclear if the mercenaries have made many tangible gains, according to Ramani.

"We're seeing a situation where the Wagner

network, has struggled in the time since Musk publicly entered the chat in April. In the second quarter, the company reported its first year-over-year sales decline since the height of the pandemic, and Twitter likely experienced a similar slump for the third quarter, though the company hasn't announced plans to report earnings.

Musk has mentioned the possibility of building a subscription product for Twitter to supplement ad revenue, though it's unclear which products or features might cost extra. Twitter already offers a subscription product, called Twitter Blue, which includes access to a tweet editing feature, but the company has said it is primarily targeted at power users. Musk hasn't been impressed. In April, he called Twitter Blue an "insane piece of s--t" in a text message to a friend.

The prospect of less restrictive content moderation under Musk's leadership has prompted concerns that dialogue on the social network will deteriorate, eroding years of efforts by the company and its "trust and safety" team to limit offensive or dangerous posts. On Thursday, Musk posted a note to advertisers seeking to reassure them he doesn't want Twitter to become a "free-for-all hellscape." The past six months have been challenging for Twitter employees, who have primarily followed the ups and downs of the roller-coaster deal through the news headlines. Many have been unhappy with Musk's involvement, with some questioning his qualifications to run a social networking company. His support of a far-right political candidate in Texas, plus sexual harassment accusations from a former SpaceX flight attend in May, have raised concerns with many of Twitter's workers. During a video Q&A with Musk in June, some employees mocked Musk on internal Slack channels. Others have ridiculed or chided him publicly on Twitter throughout the deal process.

Group is quite effective at creating terror amongst the local residents but much less effective at actually capturing and holding territory," he said. At the very best they're gaining 1 kilometre a week toward Bakhmut, he said.

A house damaged by the Russian shelling is seen in Bakhmut, the site of the heaviest battle against the Russian troops in the Donetsk region, Ukraine, Oct. 26, 2022. (Photo/AP)

While in the city this week, journalists from The Associated Press saw burned-out cars, destroyed buildings and people struggling to survive amid a cacophony of constant shelling. Bakhmut has been without electricity or



water for a month, and residents worry about heating their homes as temperatures drop.

"We hoped that this (war) would end or that we would have conditions that allow us to live. But since last month, conditions have been terrible," resident Leonid Tarasov said.

Few shops are open. The AP saw people using firewood to cook on the streets and drawing water from wells.

Bakhmut had a population of about 73,000 people before the war, but approximately 90% have left the city, according to Pavlo Korylenko, the Ukrainian governor of the Donetsk region.

Some of those who remained asked in recent days to be evacuated from areas that are now too dangerous for volunteers or soldiers to get to because of the fighting, Roman Zhylenkov a volunteer with the local aid group Vostok-SOS, said. Others feel trapped.

"People who left moved to stay with their children or brothers and sisters. They had places to go," Ilona Ierhlieieva said as she mixed soup on an open fire by the side of the road. "But as for us, we don't have a place to go. That's why we are here."

## Maruti shares climb nearly 6 per cent after earnings announcement

NEW DELHI: Shares of Maruti Suzuki India on Friday jumped nearly 6 per cent after the company reported an over four-fold increase in consolidated net profit in the second quarter that ended September 2022.

The stock climbed 4.95 per cent to settle at



Rs 9,494.10 apiece on the BSE.

During the day, it rallied 5.54 per cent to its 52-week high of Rs 9,548. On the NSE, it jumped 5.59 per cent to end at Rs 9,548 apiece.

The company's market valuation climbed Rs 13,534.83 crore to Rs 2,86,797.83 crore on the BSE. It was the biggest gainer on both the Sensex and Nifty.

Grand slam: Maruti Suzuki's Grand Vitara comes in three variants, including strong hybrid

On Friday, Maruti Suzuki India reported an over four-fold increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 2,112.5 crore in the second quarter that ended on September 30, 2022, riding on record sales.

The company had posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 486.9 crore in the same period last fiscal, it said in a regulatory filing.

Indo-Japan tie positive for manufacturing sector: Maruti Suzuki Chairman Bhargava Total revenue from operations was at Rs 29,942.5 crore as against Rs 20,550.9 crore in the year-ago period. Maruti Suzuki said it sold a total of 5,17,395 vehicles during the quarter, its highest ever in any quarter.

### Putin terms ties with India special; praises PM Modi for pursuing 'independent foreign policy'

Continued from page-1

condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine and it has been maintaining that the crisis must be resolved through diplomacy and dialogue. "PM Modi is one of those individuals in the world who is able to pursue an independent foreign policy in the interest of his country, and his people without any attempts to stop him," said Putin.

Russia has been a major supplier of military hardware to India. In October 2018, India signed a USD 5 billion deal with Russia to buy five units of the S-400 air defence missile systems, notwithstanding a warning by the US that going ahead with the contract may invite sanctions under the provisions of Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA).

Putin said India has walked a great development path from being a British colony to its modern state and this has yielded significant results for the country's almost 1.5 billion people.

"It (India) attracts general respect from everyone in the world. A lot has been done in recent years under PM Modi's leadership. He is a true patriot of his country. And this concept of his, 'Make in India', is a significant effort. (India) really has progressed in its development. A great future lies ahead of it," Putin said, according to a translation of his remarks by the Russian Embassy in India.

"(India) is not only the largest democracy, in a good sense of this word, but it should be proud of its growth rate, that's the basis of its progress and development," Putin added. The Russian leader said that the economic cooperation between Delhi and Moscow is growing as well.

"Prime Minister Modi asked me to increase fertiliser supplies which is crucial for Indian agriculture and we have done that," he said, adding that the supplies have been increased 7.6 times without giving details. Putin said he believes that countries such as India not only have a great future ahead of them but are going to have a growing role in forming global policies. His comments came ahead of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's visit to Moscow on November 8.



## BCCI ends gender disparity in cricket, announces equal pay for men and women

NEW DELHI(KCN): In a landmark decision, the BCCI on Thursday announced equal match fee for its centrally-contracted female and male players in a bid to promote gender equality in the country's most popular sport.

BCCI secretary Jay Shah took to Twitter to announce the significant development. "I'm pleased to announce @BCCI's first step towards tackling discrimination. We are implementing pay equity policy for our contracted @BCCIWomen cricketers. The match fee for both Men and Women Cricketers will be same as we move into a new era

women's cricket to where men's cricket is today," the legendary Mithali Raj told PTI when called for her reaction.

"As a member of the women's cricket fraternity I thank the BCCI and honorary secretary Jay Shah for this announcement. We are already witnessing the growth and popularity of women's cricket from 2017 till now. It's a great move in the right direction."

This decision was taken at the BCCI Apex Council emergent meeting on Thursday.

Outgoing Apex Council member and former India



of gender equality in cricket," Shah tweeted. As per the newly introduced system, the Indian women's cricketers will now receive Rs 15 lakh per Test, Rs 6 lakh per ODI, and Rs 3 lakh per T20I, the same as their male counterparts.

"The @BCCIWomen cricketers will be paid the same match fee as their male counterparts. Test (INR 15 lakhs), ODI (INR 6 lakhs), T20I (INR 3 lakhs).

"Pay equity was my commitment to our women cricketers and I thank the Apex Council for their support," Shah added.

Earlier this year, New Zealand Cricket (NZC) had struck a deal with the country's players' association, which enabled the women cricketers to earn as much as the male players, while Cricket Australia (CA) is also working to do away with gender disparity.

On expected lines, the decision was welcomed by the cricket fraternity.

"It's a historic move. It's a new dawn for women's cricket. Things were already moving ahead. WIPL together with pay equity policy are steps to get

## Illegal hoardings to go ahead of Men's Hockey World Cup

BHUBANESWAR: With less than two-and-a-half months remaining for the FIH Men's World Cup Hockey, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation has decided to remove illegal hoardings from the roofs of residential and commercial buildings as well as government land as part of its city beautification and safety drive.

traders as well as agencies to not install billboard frames without prior approval from authorities concerned on their premises or any government and private land.

"Billboards, hoardings and advertisements at random places not only spoil the city's beauty but also pose a threat to human lives especially during heavy rains, cyclone and other



A survey for implementation of the drive will start soon. The civic body is also mulling to impose hefty penalty on individuals, households and agencies who have put up advertisement boards and hoardings on rooftops or any government or private land unauthorisedly.

BMC deputy commissioner for revenue Sapan Kumar Nanda said the civic body has already warned residential establishments,

such natural events. They also violate BMC's advertisement rules," Nanda said.

He said the civic body will take up the drive at zonal level by roping in a private agency which will identify the unauthorised hoardings and advertisement boards with the help of BMC teams formed at zonal level and dismantle them using its own manpower.

The agency will be allowed to sell the materials recovered during the process.

## Relentless rain washes out England-Australia clash, makes their road to semis tougher

MELBOURNE(KCN): The crucial T20 World Cup clash between old rivals Australia and England was on Friday called off without a ball being bowled due to intermittent rain, making the race to semifinals tougher



for the two top teams.

After the Afghanistan-Ireland game in the afternoon was washed out at the MCG, it was a double whammy for the crowd as weather played spoilsport again.

Only two teams each from the two groups qualify for the semifinals. After two rained out games on Friday, England found themselves in the number two spot after sharing a point with Australia.

Title favourites England had suffered a shock loss to Ireland in Super 12s.

Australia too have three points from as many games after losing their tournament opener to New Zealand. They are fourth in the group with the worst run rate among four teams locked on three points. New Zealand lead the group and Ireland are second.

Rain has affected most of the games at the MCG barring the Indo-Pak blockbuster played on Sunday.

"That's the wettest I've ever seen in this stadium. The run-ups were a real issue and around the inner circle, it was very wet. It's more about players' safety," said Australia skipper Aaron Finch.

"We saw one of the Zimbabweans go down the other day. If you are trying to run there, it's going to be a real issue. Everyone was ready to play, there was a great turn-out, disappointing not to get on.

"The amount of rain that Melbourne has had has been amazing."

When asked about Matthew Wade, who was down with COVID-19, he added: "He was going to play tonight. He had few symptoms yesterday but he was good to go."

England skipper Jos Buttler too expressed disappointment after the second no show of the day.

"It was supposed to be a massive occasion, full house here against Australia, biggest game of your career, very disappointed not to be able to play tonight. But full focus on our next match and keep our tournament alive. We've been playing some good cricket leading into the tournament.

"Really disappointing the other night specially when we had majority of things in our favour. We don't become a bad team overnight. We are full of match-winners. Looking forward to the rest of the tournament," said Buttler referring to the loss to Ireland.




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