

WORLD 5
UN HUMANITARIAN CHIEF CALLS GAZA 'UNINHABITABLE'

MONEY 8
GOYAL REMAINS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT \$2 TRILLION EXPORT TARGET

AGENDA 9
DECARBONISATION FRONTIERS

NEW DELHI, SUNDAY JANUARY 7, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹4



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INDIA ENTERS HALO ORBIT

Modi dedicates historic solar mission milestone to scientists

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



ISRO's PSLV-C57 carrying Aditya-L1, India's maiden solar mission spacecraft, lifts off from the launch pad at Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota. PTI

India on Saturday achieved a historic milestone in space as the Aditya-L1 spacecraft, the country's space-based observatory designed to study the Sun, reached its final destination approximately 1.5 million kilometres from Earth. The observatory was launched on September 2nd of last year. Announcing the success of this mission, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said it is a testament to the relentless dedication of scientists who have realised one of the most complex and intricate space missions. Modi said he joins the nation in applauding this

extraordinary feat. "India creates yet another landmark. India's first solar observatory, Aditya-L1, reaches its destination. It is a testament to the relentless

dedication of our scientists in realising one of the most complex and intricate space missions," the Prime Minister said on X. "I join the nation in

applauding this extraordinary feat. We will continue to pursue new frontiers of science for the benefit of humanity," he said. President Droupadi Murmu congratulated the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for successfully placing India's first solar observatory, Aditya-L1, into its destination orbit, and said the mission will benefit all of humanity. "Another grand feat accomplished by ISRO! As part of India's maiden solar mission, Aditya L1, the observatory has been placed in the final orbit and reached its destination at Lagrange Point 1," Murmu said in a post on X.

Continued on Page 2

One Nation, One Election panel seeks public opinion

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Law Commission, examining the issue of holding simultaneous elections in the country, may explore the possibility of conducting the three-tier democratic exercise in two phases within a single year. According to sources, in the first phase, Lok Sabha and Assembly polls could be conducted, while in the second phase, local body polls might be organised.

It has sought public discourse on the issue before reaching a final decision. This approach, the sources said, is practical, taking into account the diverse climatic conditions of the country. In August 2018, the previous Law Commission endorsed the Narendra Modi Government's proposal to conduct simultaneous polls for the Lok Sabha and Assemblies, saying it would prevent the country from being in a constant poll mode.

Continued on Page 2

Advantage BJP in Kerala, influential Christian leader poised to join party

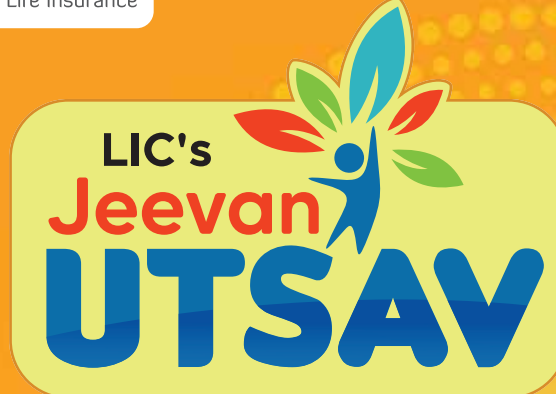
KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The January 3 visit to Thrissur by Prime Minister Narendra Modi could be a game-changer in Kerala politics. The BJP, yet to win a Lok Sabha seat from the State, is likely to register its first-ever victory in 2024 elections. PC George, a seven-time MLA and a veteran leader of the Kerala Congress (a party representing the interests of the Catholic community as well as the Church), is all set to join the BJP. George disclosed his plan in a TV

panel discussion on Friday night, saying he would not hesitate to join the BJP. "As of the current date, the BJP is the only political outfit interested in the progress of the country, and I am not averse to the idea of joining it," said George. The Christian leader lost last Assembly poll, marking his first-ever loss, as Islamist extremists issued a diktat to community members not to vote for him due to his stance against the infamous Love Jihad incidents, which are on the rise in Kerala.

Continued on Page 2





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Navy to track down pirates after foiling hijack bid in Arabian sea

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Having thwarted hijacking of a merchant vessel and rescuing all 21 crew, including 15 Indians, the Indian naval forces on Saturday were investigating suspected vessels in the North Arabian Sea to track down the pirates involved in the incident.

hijacked ship. The Indian warship intercepted the vessel in the North Arabian Sea at about 3.15 pm on Friday and asked the pirates to abandon the vessel. Later, elite Marine commandos (MARCOS) boarded the ship and sanitized it besides evacuating all the crew members.

Predator drones to assist the vessel, MV Lila Norfolk, after it sent a message on the UK Maritime Trade Operations portal, saying unknown armed personnel had boarded it on Thursday evening.



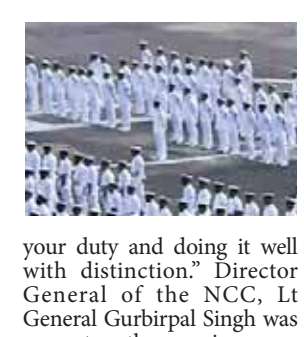
destroyer arrived at the scene of action by 1515 hours. Continuous aerial recon of MV Lila Norfolk was undertaken by MQ9B (Sea Guardian drone), P81 (maritime patrol aircraft) and integral helicopters," it said in the statement.

have been rescued and are safe. Indian Naval forces are investigating the suspected vessels in the area," it said.

350 NCC cadets joined Navy as Agniveers in last one year: Chief Admiral R Hari

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Navy Chief Admiral R Hari Kumar on Saturday here praised the National Cadet Corps (NCC) and said about 350 NCC cadets have joined the Navy as Agniveers over the last year.



your duty and doing it well with distinction." Director General of the NCC, Lt General Gurbirpal Singh was present on the occasion.

Centre notifies new guidelines for drugs recall

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

In a bid to make the pharmaceutical industry accountable and ensure quality drugs, the Union Health Ministry has notified the Revised Schedule M guidelines under which pharmaceutical firms will have to intimate the licensing authority about recalling a drug and also report product defects, deterioration or faulty production.

failed the mandatory quality test for export till October 2023. The notification aims to tighten the noose around the pharmaceutical companies as Schedule M part of Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1940 deals with 'Good Manufacturing Practices' to be followed by pharmaceutical manufacturing units in the country.



It also specifies that release of the finished product is conditional upon satisfactory results of these tests. "The licensing authorities shall be informed if a manufacturer is considering action following the faulty manufacture, product deterioration, a suspect product or any other serious quality problems with a product," as per the guidelines.

authorities for information on the adverse drug reactions emerging from the use of drugs manufactured or marketed by the licensee. In order to have smooth transition from the present Schedule M to revised Schedule M, it has been decided to provide a transition period of six and 12 months for large manufacturers (over Rs 250 crore turnover) and MSMEs (less than Rs 250 crore turnover), respectively.

(CDSO) has inspected 254 manufacturing units and 112 public testing labs in the last few months. Major issues found during RBI inspections are poor documentation, lack of process and analytical validations, absence of self-assessment, absence of quality failure investigation, absence of internal product quality review, absence of testing of incoming raw material and faulty design of manufacturing and testing areas etc, the official said.

Robotics suit to enhance Parkinson's patients mobility

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

In what could be called a significant advancement in the field of medical technology, researchers have developed a robotic suit that has shown effectiveness in helping people with Parkinson's disease to move around more freely.

Provide Ayushman Bharat beneficiaries free medicines, says Parliament Panel

ARCHANA JYOTI NEW DELHI

Coming to the rescue of several patients needing long term treatment in the chronic diseases such as cancer and kidney ailments, a Parliamentary Standing Committee has asked the Government to consider providing medicines free of cost to all such beneficiaries of the Central health flagship, Ayushman Bharat — Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY).

The observation follows the committee's interaction with the beneficiaries of Ayushman Bharat when it noted that even if the patients were insured, they were bearing the high indirect cost that at times went beyond their ability to pay.

cedures and surgeries are not covered under the scheme. The panel also found that to address such issues, some of the hospitals have set an example by successfully attracting CSR funds and private investment to create funds to bear the expenditure of beneficiaries for the cost of treatment over and above the insured sum of ₹5 lakhs.



cer where long-term treatment is required, is a matter of concern. "The Government should consider providing medicines free of cost to all the beneficiaries across the states through the PMJAY scheme," said the committee, while commending on support to the patients on their indirect cost and expenditure beyond the ₹5 lakh cover offered by PMJAY.

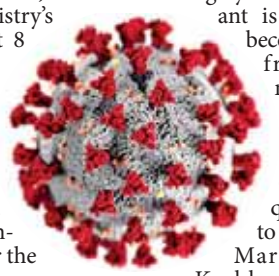
The committee also noted that some of the complex and high-end surgeries or chronic treatment cost more than the sum of ₹5 lakhs covered under the PMJAY. Also, some of the costly procedures and surgeries are not covered under the scheme.

India sees spike of 774 Covid cases in 24 hours

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

India has recorded a single-day rise of 774 Covid-19 cases while the number of active cases stands at 4,187, the Union Health Ministry said on Saturday. Two deaths -- one each from Tamil Nadu and Gujarat -- were reported in a span of 24 hours, according to the Ministry's data updated at 8 am.

After the major variants of COVID-19 like Alpha, Delta and Omicron, JN.1 very likely represents a new chapter in pandemic evolution, claimed the experts. According to Ryan Gregory, a biology professor at the University of Guelph in Canada, JN.1 has ushered in "a new era".



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GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER RURAL WORKS ELECTRICAL CIRCLE BHUBANESWAR No.09 dt.04.01.2024 E-Mail-serw.elect@yahooin

INDIA Bloc to decide in 10-15 days on allocation of posts: Kharge

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday said leaders of INDIA parties would take a decision within 10-15 days on allocation of posts in the Opposition bloc, remarks that come amid speculation that the alliance could pick a convener ahead of the Lok Sabha elections.

On who will be the convener of the alliance, Kharge said, "it is like asking 'kaun banega crorepati'." "When we hold our meeting, we will decide in 10-15 days who will hold which post," he asserted, while noting that all are working unitedly for solutions to issues.

On seat-sharing talks, he said the Congress has already constituted a committee and its members are working, whose convener is Mukul Wasnik and Ashok Gehlot and Bhupesh Baghel are members.

Goyal remains optimistic about \$ 2 trillion export target

PTI ■ KOLKATA
Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Saturday expressed optimism that the country will meet its ambitious USD 2 trillion export target by 2030, notwithstanding geopolitical headwinds and inflationary concerns. Speaking at the inauguration of the Patsan Bhawan, which houses the Jute Commissioner's office and headquarters of Jute Corporation of India and National Jute Board, in New Town, Kolkata, Goyal acknowledged the challenging global situation. He cited the Ukraine war, the Israel conflict and issues related to the Red Sea as factors impacting trade. "To address low food grain production and curb domestic inflation, we have implemented restrictions. However, despite all these challenges, India's exports will continue to



Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Textiles Piyush Goyal with BJP MP Locket Chatterjee during the inauguration of 'Patsan Bhawan', in Kolkata

grow, aiming at reaching USD 2 trillion by 2030 from the current USD 770-775 billion," Goyal said. He highlighted the potential of the jute industry, stating that with "contribution from the jute sector and concerted efforts from the Centre and state governments, we can achieve new heights". India currently exports around Rs 1,500 crore worth of jute. Goyal, who also holds the portfolios of textiles and consumer affairs, food and public distribution, urged industry players to increase the figure. He also asked the jute sector to showcase products at the upcoming Bharat Tex 2024, the world's biggest-ever textiles event, to be organised from February 26-29 in New Delhi. Goyal also highlighted the achievements of the central government and appealed to the people of West Bengal for their support in the upcoming general elections.

Red Sea crisis may push shipping cost by up to 60 per cent: GTRI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
The increasing Red Sea crisis may impact trade as it is expected to push shipping costs by up to 60 per cent and insurance premium by 20 per cent, a report by economic think tank GTRI said on Saturday. This conflict could also result in increased shipping costs (40-60 per cent) and delays due to rerouting (up to 20 days more), higher insurance premiums (15-20 per cent), and potential cargo loss from piracy and attacks. The situation around the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait, a crucial shipping route connecting the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean, has escalated due to recent attacks by Yemen-based Houthi militants. Due to these attacks, the shippers are taking consignments through the Cape of Good Hope, resulting in delays of about 20 days. The Houthi conflict's disruption of the Red Sea shipping lanes significantly impacts



Indian trade, especially with the Middle East, Africa, and Europe, the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said. It said that India, heavily reliant on the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait for crude oil and LNG imports and trade with key regions, faces substantial economic and security risks from any disruption in this area. For overall merchandise trade with Europe and North Africa, about 50 per cent of imports and 60 per cent of exports, totalling USD 113 billion, might have used this route, it said. It added that the conflict has necessitated India to consider alternative routes, such as the longer Cape of Good Hope, which could lead to increased energy costs. India might look to diversify its sources of crude oil and LNG, and explore alternative trade routes to reduce dependency on the conflict-prone Red Sea passage, it said. "This conflict could also result in increased shipping costs (40-60 per cent) and delays due to rerouting (up to 20 days more), higher insurance premiums (15-20 per cent), and potential cargo loss from piracy and attacks," it said.

While India is implementing measures to ensure the safety of its ships in the Red Sea, the effectiveness may be limited as most Indian cargo is carried by global shipping firms, the report added. "India must brace for an extended period of shipping disruptions in the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait. This requires a strategic blend of diplomatic, economic, and humanitarian measures to safeguard its interests. The situation demands a nuanced approach, balancing immediate needs with long-term geopolitical and economic considerations," GTRI Co-Founder Ajay Srivastava said. He suggested steps such as diversifying crude oil imports from regions like West Africa, the Americas, and the Mediterranean; relying on ports outside conflict zones, like Oman and Djibouti, for transshipment and regional trade; and offering financial support and insurance schemes to Indian companies affected by trade disruptions.



Textile mill associations urge Government for financial support

PTI ■ MUMBAI
Textile mills associations have urged the government for financial relief to help them tide over the ongoing crisis owing to the slowdown in exports, along with quality control issues. In an appeal to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday, the textile mill associations said the industry is going through acute financial stress, due to slowdown in exports — especially in the cotton-based segment — following external factors such as the prolonged Ukraine-Russia conflict and the recent Israel-Hamas war. The prolonged economic impact of global conflicts, coupled with challenges like an 11 per cent import duty on cotton and issues related to Man-Made Fibre (MMF) Quality Control Orders, has led to a significant drop in capacity utilisation, ranging from 50 per cent to 70 per cent, for almost a year, the statement said.

CureBay raises ₹62 crore from Elevar, others

PTI ■ MUMBAI
CureBay, a startup focused on solving primary healthcare in remote locations, has raised Rs 62 crore in a series-A funding round led by Elevar Equity, existing investor as well as its founders and leadership team members. The fund will enable the health-tech innovator to continue creating access to high quality and affordable healthcare in under-served locations, build an intelligent and robust health data platform and also to hire over 200 professionals including data scientists, healthcare experts, the startup said in a statement on Saturday. CureBay is also planning to expand its count of clinics from the existing 90 to over 200 across Odisha, Chhattisgarh and also enter Jharkhand, said its founder and chief executive Priyadarshi Mohapatra. Jyotsna Krishnan, managing partner at Elevar Equity, said, rural households aspire to have affordable access to healthcare services. CureBay's blended distribution model, augmented with technology, is well-positioned to address this gap wherein millions of customers in medically under-served locations are eager to pay for timely, quality healthcare. Founded in 2021, CureBay has connected over 100,000 patients in under-served areas with healthcare providers through its tech-based model. Currently it has over 90 clinics, covering close to 32,000 villages in Odisha and Chhattisgarh.

E-way bill generation without B2B e-invoice details to be blocked from March 1

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Businesses with turnover above Rs 5 crore will not be able to generate e-way bill without including e-invoice details for all B2B transaction from March 1. Under the goods and services tax regime, e-way bills are required for inter-state transportation of goods valued over Rs 50,000. The National Informatics Centre (NIC) said on analysis it was found that some of the taxpayers, who are eligible for e-invoicing, are generating e-way bills without linking with e-invoice for B2B (business to business) and B2E (business to exports) transactions. In some of these cases, the invoice details entered separately under e-way bill and e-invoice are not matching with respect to the certain parameters. This is leading in mismatch in the e-way bill and e-invoice statements. "... to avoid such situations, e-way bill generation will not be allowed without e-invoice details from 1st March 2024. This is applicable for e-invoice enabled tax payers and for the transactions related to supplies under B2B and exports," the NIC informed GST taxpayers. However, e-way bills for other transactions such as B2C and non-supplies will function as usual without any change, the NIC said.

Digital identity cards issued

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
BLS International Services Limited, a globally recognised leader in providing administrative and consular services, has played a pivotal role in the successful implementation of Estonia's e-residency digital identity card programme since April 2021. As per the figures shared by Kaarel Kallas spokesperson of Police and Border Guard, Estonia "Over the course of two years, approximately 1,300 e-resident digital identity cards have been issued through BLS". The Estonian Police and Border Guard Board (PPA) has consistently monitored and verified BLS International's adherence to the stringent process requirements of their contract, showcasing the high standards maintained in the issuance of these essential identity documents.



E-commerce platforms cannot become haven for counterfeiters: HC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
An e-commerce platform cannot become a haven for infringers of intellectual property and have such a system which provides an avenue to counterfeiters, the Delhi High Court has said. The court observed that e-commerce websites are commercial ventures and are inherently profit oriented, which is not objectionable, but they have to protect intellectual property rights of others. "An e-commerce platform cannot become a haven for infringers. Men are not angels. Where easy money is visible, the conscience at times takes a nap," said Justice C Hari Shankar in a recent order. "E-commerce websites are commercial ventures, and are inherently profit oriented. There is, of course, nothing objectionable in this; but, while ensuring their highest returns, such websites have also to sedulously protect intellectual property rights of others. They cannot, with a view to further their financial gains, put in place a protocol by which infringers and counterfeiters are provided an avenue to infringe and counterfeit. Any such protocol has to meet with firm judicial disapproval," the court stated. The court's observations came while dealing with a lawsuit by sportswear brand Puma SE which alleged that e-commerce platform Indiamart was being used by various sellers to peddle its counterfeit goods. The platform submitted that it was not the originator of the information relating to the goods put up for sale on its website as it was merely a space-provider and would be willing to take down any listing put up by a counterfeiter when it is brought to its notice. In its interim order, the court observed that counterfeiting is a well-known commercial evil, even in the virtual world, and e-commerce platforms are statutorily required to make reasonable efforts to ensure that infringing content is not posted on its website and the platform is not used for selling counterfeit goods. It said that prima facie, the e-commerce platform in the instant case aided the commission of the unlawful act of counterfeiting and infringement and it cannot claim the benefit of "safe harbour" from liability under the Information Technology Act. "There is nothing inherently illegal in IIL (Indiamart IndiaMESH Ltd) providing a drop down menu from which prospective sellers, on the Indiamart platform, can select the brand which they intend to sell. If, however, there are not, in place, sufficient checks and balances to prevent counterfeiters from misrepresenting themselves as genuine sellers, the protocol cannot withstand judicial scrutiny," the court stated. The court directed taking down of all infringing listings in relation to Puma on Indiamart while also asking the platform to not provide any of the registered Puma trademarks in respect of any goods as search options in the drop down menu presented to prospective sellers at the time of their registration.

Drone transported tuberculosis medicines in Uttarakhand in 34 minutes

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Drone logistics company TechEagle on Saturday said its drone transported essential tuberculosis medicine in just 34 minutes. During its flight from AIIMS Rishikesh to secluded regions like Chamba Community Health Centre and Hindolakhil Primary Health Centre, the drone navigated through complex terrains and elevations, achieving an altitude gain of over 2.5 km in a single 47-km journey, the company said in a statement. The same distance would take more than four hours by road. This mission, aligned with the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Yojna, transported essential tuberculosis medicine, exhibiting the potential of drone technology in revolutionising healthcare logistics, it said. "TechEagle... Achieved a groundbreaking milestone by completing one of the longest drone delivery flights in collaboration with AIIMS Rishikesh," the company said.



TN Government 3rd Global Investors Meet set to begin on January 7

PTI ■ CHENNAI
Tamil Nadu is all set to host the third edition of the Global Investors Meet, and the first one by the ruling DMK government, from Sunday with a galaxy of leaders set to participate in it. A host of representatives from several multinational companies, over 450 international delegates, and representatives from 50 countries are expected to attend the two-day event. The previous editions of the Global Investors Meet (GIM) were held in 2015 and 2019,



when AIADMK was the ruling party, under the chief ministers late J Jayalithaa and Edappadi K Palaniswami, respectively. The Ministry of Industries and Guidance Tamil Nadu—the state's investment promotion agency—, who are the organisers of the event, expect over 30,000 participants during GIM 2024 with Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal set to be part of the inauguration along with Chief Minister M K Stalin and his cabinet colleagues. "As the Tamil Nadu Global Investors Meet 2024 approaches, the air is thick with anticipation! With over 30,000 participants, our campaign - Titans of Tamil Nadu - has sparked widespread excitement," Stalin said. "GIM 2024 will feature 450 plus international delegates, 170 globally acclaimed speakers,

and representation from 50 countries underscoring Tamil Nadu's industrial prowess," he said in a social media post. "We also have an MSME pavilion, Tamil Nadu ecosystem pavilion, several country pavilions and the StartupTN pavilion — providing a fantastic opportunity for delegates to witness the industrial marvel of the state and foster business collaborations," he added. Minister for Industries TRB Rajaa welcomed the delegates who are scheduled to participate in the Global Investors Meet. "A Global Industrial Giant, a stable and progressive state. The best destination for your investments. Welcome to Tamil Nadu," he said. "For GIM, we have a totally different target apart from Rs 3 lakh crore worth of investments which have come in. We are expecting investments of a few lakh crores more to come in," Rajaa told PTI recently. Setting the ball rolling for GIM 2024 in 2023, Stalin unveiled the 'logo' for the Global Investors Meet. Symbolizing the Tamil word 'Tha', the logo also refers to Tamil Nadu flourishing in all its parameters.

Textiles, pharma, fisheries powered industrial revolution in Gujarat in past 20 years: Officials

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD
A land of vibrant cultural heritage and traditions, Gujarat has undergone industrial evolution in the last two decades riding on the success of key sectors like textile, pharmaceuticals, diamond and fisheries, officials have said. Gujarat has become a global powerhouse in the textile, apparel and garment sectors by contributing over 60 per cent of India's denim fabric, spurred by the state's textile policy launched in 2012. Since then, the size of its textile exports has grown 2.3 times, they said. The growth in textile manufacturing has positioned Gujarat as a driving force in the country's economic growth, officials said ahead of the state's big-ticket Gujarat Vibrant Global Summit, which will be held next week.

"To take advantage of our future, we will have to invest in the local supply chain. This is the way to build a developed India, and this is the way to fulfil the dream of a developed India - to fulfil the dream of a \$5 trillion economy," Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said at an event last year. With a coastline of 1,600 km, Gujarat is also a powerhouse in the fisheries sector, contributing 17 per cent to India's total fish exports. In 2020-21, the state's fish production touched 8.74 lakh tonnes, officials said. From fishing operations to processing, the sector also plays a crucial role in generating employment, said industry insiders and government officials. "The central and the state governments have come up with a new gas machine for small fishermen which is benefiting them in many ways," said Jitu Kahada, leader of the fishermen community in the state. Gujarat's pharmaceutical industry is another big driver of the state's economy, officials said. As per official figures, Gujarat accounts for 53 per cent of India's medical devices manufacturing and 78 per cent of the

country's cardiac stents manufacturing. The sector also employs nearly 50,000 workers in over 4,000 manufacturing units. "Gujarat makes a contribution of 30 per cent in the country's pharma sector. In pharma exports, Gujarat's share is 28 per cent. With a robust industrial infrastructure, Gujarat's chemical and petrochemical sector has witnessed remarkable growth," said Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel at an industry event. As a result of proactive government policies, the state con-

tributes to around 75 per cent of the country's total dye and intermediates manufacturing, officials said. "I believe that the support and the direction Gujarat has given us through the journey of the growth from a small-scale industry, all the major industries here, started off as small-scale industries, and today we have reached global heights and global scales," said Jai Shroff, CEO of UPL Limited, which provides sustainable agricultural solutions and services. The world's largest diamond trading hub, the Surat Diamond Bourse, inaugurated recently by PM Modi, symbolising Gujarat's dominance in the global gems and jewellery market, officials said. "Surat's diamond has provided employment to 8 lakh people since the beginning, now Surat diamond bourse is also providing employment to another 1.5 lakh people. I would like to congratulate all my friends in the diamond trading business who have worked day and night to give a boost to this industry," Modi said in Surat recently. The state's thriving dairy sector is now worth over Rs 1 lakh crore, with daily remuneration of Rs 200 crore to 36 lakh milk producers through the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), home to the globally recognised Amul brand, according to a government release.



Coco to face Elina in Auckland Classic final

AP ■ AUCKLAND (NEW ZEALAND)

Coco Gauff will defend her title at the Auckland Classic against Elina Svitolina after beating fellow American Emma Navarro 6-3, 6-1 in the semi-final on Saturday. Gauff needed only 62 minutes to sweep past fourth-seeded Navarro and now has won 18 straight sets and nine consecutive matches over two years in Auckland. She has lost only 15 games in four matches so far this year. Gauff's win in Auckland last

year was the start of a golden run which culminated when she won her first major title at the US Open. She seems in similar, compelling form this year, dominating matches with her serve and powerful ground shots. She set down 10 aces in 12 games in beating Navarro. "It's a good start to my 2024," Gauff said. "Emma's a great player. We've played each other when I was like 12 years old and she was 15 so it's our second time playing since then. So, it's really cool to play on

this stage. I wish her the best for the rest of the season." Gauff is 19, Navarro 22. Gauff broke Navarro in the opening game of the second set and went on to win the set in 32 minutes in a controlled and dominating performance. Her deep ground shots allowed her to follow to the net where she dominated and used her powerful forehand with accuracy. "I'm just being aggressive with my serve and return," Gauff said. "We played one set in practice over here before the



tournament began and she was playing really well, so I think I knew I had to be at my best to be able to win." Gauff's opponent in Sunday's final will be second-seeded Svitolina, who needed two medical timeouts on her way to a 2-6, 6-4, 6-3 win over Wang Xiyu of China. Svitolina dropped her serve in the third game of the first set and again, to love, in the fifth game to trail 4-1. She received courtside treatment for a lower back injury and then left the court for a

medical timeout. When she returned, she immediately broke Wang's serve but lost her own and lost the set 6-2. Svitolina took the second set with a solitary break in the 10th game. She called for another medical timeout at the start of the third set but returned to hold serve and to break Wang for 3-1 and 5-1 leads. Wang broke back in the seventh game, but Svitolina rallied and served out the set in the ninth game, which included a couple of aces.



Legend Mario dies at age 92

AP ■ RIO DE JANEIRO

Mario Zagallo, who won two World Cups as a player, one as a coach and another as an assistant coach for Brazil, has died. He was 92. The first person to win the World Cup both as a player and a manager, Zagallo is for many Brazilian soccer fans synonymous with patriotism, grit and glory. Brazilian soccer confederation president Ednaldo Rodrigues said in a statement in the early hours of Saturday confirming Zagallo's death that Zagallo "is one of the biggest legends" of the sport. No cause of death was released by the federation or his family. "We offer solidarity to his family members and fans in this moment of grief for the departure of this great hero of our soccer," Rodrigues said. Several Brazilian clubs where Zagallo played and coached also expressed their sorrow for his death. Zagallo's social media channels called him "a dedicated father, a loving grandfather, a caring father-in-law, a loyal friend, a victorious professional and a great human being." "A gigantic hero. A patriot that leaves us a legacy of great achievements," the text added, without giving more details about Zagallo's death. One of the most charismatic and superstitious figures in Brazilian football, he also was known for his fondness of the No. 13 and constant use of the phrase "You will have to put up with me" - voiced loudly at critics. He said 13 was his lucky number because it carries the last two digits of his birth year: 1931. He always highlighted any link, however coincidental, between 13 and his football successes. Zagallo played a role in nearly every major chapter in Brazilian football history, from its first World Cup title in 1958 to the tournament it hosted in 2014. Former Brazil coach Tite visited him to hear his advice before taking the team to the 2018 and 2022 World Cups.

He was Brazil's forward when it won the World Cup in 1958 in Sweden and 1962 in Chile, and one of the first players to act as a false winger, playing between midfielders and strikers. Zagallo stopped playing professionally in 1965 and began his coaching career with Rio de Janeiro club Botafogo the following year. Named national team coach in 1970, just before the World Cup in Mexico, he inherited a squad that included Pelé, Jairzinho, Gerson, Roberto Rivellino and Tostão. Brazil crushed Italy 4-1 in the final, becoming the first three-time champion. He also coached Brazil in 1974, but without Pelé, the team finished in fourth place. Zagallo was assistant coach to Carlos Alberto Parreira when Brazil won the 1994 World Cup in the United States, again beating Italy in the final. And he was back at the helm four years later for the World Cup in France, when Brazil lost 3-0 to the hosts in a final marked by striker Ronaldo's unexplained convulsions before the game. Zagallo was criticized for letting Ronaldo play. "He was cleared to play by the doctors," Zagallo said. "Anyone in my position would have done the same thing. I wasn't going to be the one keeping him from playing in a World Cup final." His final coaching role with the national team was as Parreira's assistant in 2006. Brazil was a pre-tournament favorite to win its sixth World Cup title in Germany. But the squad led by Ronaldinho, Kaká, Ronaldo and Adriano fell to France in the quarter-finals. Zagallo was one of the few coaches who had successful coaching stints with all four traditional Rio clubs - Flamengo, Fluminense, Botafogo and Vasco da Gama. He began his career as a striker with Rio's America and later also played for Flamengo and Botafogo, one of the few Brazilian clubs which rivaled Pelé's Santos in the 1960s.

AIFF evaluates possibility of implementing Additional Video Review System in India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The AIFF has written to the International Football Association Board, the body that determines the laws of the game, to explore the possibility of India participating in the trial of the 'Additional Video Review System' (AVRS). The VAR technology, which was first used in FIFA events in 2016-17, supports the decision-making process of the referee in four game-changing situations: goals and offences leading up to a goal, penalty decisions and offences leading up to a penalty, direct red card

incidents, and mistaken identity. "Our prime objective here is to reduce the margin of error by empowering match officials with the technology to assist in their decision-making," All India Football Federation (AIFF) president Kalyan Chaubey said in a media release. "While we will continue to work to implement VAR, I feel that, to begin with, AVRS can be a great option for a country like India. "AVRS would help us study the impact of the technology, train our match officials with the new



concept, and assess its adaptation by players, coaches, and clubs alike," he added. The President's recommendation aims to consider the extension of the existing technical infrastructure to accommodate an 'on-demand' video review request from the referees through a multi-angle, multi-camera broadcast feed. Several countries across the globe use VAR in their domestic club competitions after it was first introduced in Australia and the United States. However, its mass adoption is limited due to financial and infrastructure requirements set

out in FIFA's Implementation Assistance and Approval Programme (IAAP). The President has suggested the AIFF Referee Department undertake the study to seek FIFA's suggestions and approval. Throughout a match, the VAR team constantly checks for clear and obvious errors related to four match-changing situations. The VAR team communicates with the on-field referee only for clear and obvious mistakes or serious missed incidents. But it is ultimately the on-field referee who will take a call whether he needs help from the VAR.

Brazil young soccer talent expected to become top European transfer targets



AP ■ RIO DE JANEIRO

European clubs looking for deals in the January transfer window will find future stars among the latest generation of young soccer talent in Brazil. Two of them will soon be in Europe - Real Madrid's teenage sensation striker Endrick and Barcelona's target man Vitor Roque. But other players are still available in the Brazilian market. Paris Saint-Germain already signed two of them - Sao Paulo defender Lucas Beraldo and Corinthians midfielder Gabriel Moscardo. Here's a look at some of the other top young players in the Brazilian league:

LIBERTADORES title in November and reminds fans of a younger Diego Costa; strong core, powerful shots and explosive temper. Olympique Lyon reportedly offered the Rio de Janeiro club 10 million euros (\$10.95 million) for him, but Fluminense refused. Kennedy sits on the bench most matches because his team's starter in the position, Germán Cano, was recently elected the best player in the Americas.

RIKELME The 20-year-old Cuiaba left-back is fast, tall and can cross. He was a starter for his team most of the season. Often compared to Renan Lodi, Rikelme scored one goal and had one assist in his latest Brazilian league match. Stats don't tell it all about the young footballer, though, as he also works as a playmaker. Portugal's Braga has reported-

ly made an offer for the young defender, but it was rejected. Cuiaba says it wants at least 4 million euros (\$4.383 million) to start negotiations for him.

THIAGO BORBAS The 21-year-old Red Bull Bragantino striker came from Uruguay's River Plate for 4.8 million euros (\$5.23 million). Fans saw him struggle during the first half of last year. But then he settled and scored nine goals in 33 matches in the Brazilian league. Compared to Liverpool's Darwin Núñez, Borba started from the bench most of the season. Feyenoord is reportedly interested in the Brazil-based Uruguayan player.

WESLEY The 20-year-old Flamengo right-back finally made fans hopeful they had found a replacement for veteran Rafinha, who left the club in 2020. Wesley played 36 matches in the Brazilian league, with one goal scored and one assist given. He has a lot of confidence, speed and intensive marking, as Cafu in his younger days. Local media reports Flamengo wants between 10 million and 15 million euros (\$10.95 million to \$16.43 million) for him.

STÉVÃO The 16-year-old Palmeiras midfielder is regarded as one of Brazil's most promising players for the next number of years; "Little Messi" is his nickname. He wears number 10 in the club's under-17 team and scores goals just as easily as he assists. Paris Saint-Germain and Barcelona are reportedly watching him already.

Spectacular goals help Spurs, Fulham to narrow FA Cup wins

Brentford draws with Wolves



AP ■ LONDON

Tottenham and Fulham won through to the fourth round of the FA Cup while fellow English Premier League sides Brentford and Wolves will endure a replay after they drew 1-1. Spurs beat Burnley 1-0 with a late goal from Pedro Porro, while Fulham overcame Rotherham 1-0 with a first-half strike from Bobby De Cordova-Reid. In London, Wolves played almost the entire match with 10 men but came from behind to earn a replay against Brentford. Spurs hasn't won the FA Cup since 1991 and it made heavy work of a home tie against a side second to last in the league. Although Ange Postecoglou's team was on top throughout, Burnley defended stoutly and it wasn't

until the 78th minute that Porro got the breakthrough. His shot from 25 meters out was a worthy match winner and one of several spectacular strikes among the three games. Only five league places separate Wolves and Brentford so, on paper, their fixture was one of the most evenly matched. Brentford gained the momentum after just nine minutes when João Gomes was sent off for a bad foul. It took the lead shortly before halftime when Neal Maupay controlled a loose ball in the penalty box and fired home. Although Brentford dominated in terms of possession and shots on goal, Wolves never looked beaten and it drew level 19 minutes into the second period when Tommy Doyle's screamer gave Brentford goalkeeper Thomas Strakosha no chance. Fulham dispatched struggling Rotherham more easily than the one goal suggested. Rotherham lies on the bottom of the second-tier Championship with just one win in its last 14 games, and it came unstuck after 24 minutes when it lost possession while trying to play the ball out from the back. De Cordova-Reid lashed an unstoppable drive into the top corner from 20 meters out. Rotherham goalkeeper Viktor Johansson saved his side from a worse fate. On Saturday, cup holder Manchester City is at home to Huddersfield, and Sunderland takes on northeastern rival Newcastle.



Iga, Hubert lead Poland into United Cup mixed teams tennis final

AP ■ SYDNEY

No. 1-ranked Iga Swiatek won her singles match Saturday after Hubert Hurkacz gave her team the early lead over France to advance Poland to the United Cup mixed teams final. Swiatek won 4-6, 6-1, 6-1 over Caroline Garcia while ATP No. 9-ranked Hurkacz's 6-3, 7-5 defeat of Adrian Mannarino gave them an unassailable 2-0 lead. For good measure, Poland later won the mixed doubles for a final 3-0 score line. Australia plays Germany in the other semi-final later Saturday, with the winner to face Poland in Sunday's final, also at Sydney's Ken Rosewall Arena. Swiatek said she need to make a "big adjustment" after her opening-set loss to Garcia. "I was making bad decisions and I needed to be more composed," Swiatek said. "After the break after the first set, I came back more focused, so I'm pretty proud of myself." Hurkacz won 31 of 36 points on his first serve and had 15 aces. "He's really difficult to play against; I was just fighting for every point and I was able (to) stay positive and was really resilient today," Hurkacz said. Top-seeded Poland lost just one match in the group stage of the tournament in Perth before beating China 3-0 to reach the final four for the second straight year. In the Australia-Germany semifinal, Ajla Tomljanovic is scheduled to lead the tie-off for the hosts against Angelique Kerber before Alex de Minaur takes on Germany's Alexander Zverev. Mixed doubles will see the Australian team of Storm Hunter and Matt Ebden take on Laura Siegemund and Maximilian Marterer of Germany, although late changes can be made.

Formula E cancels Hyderabad E-Prix

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Formula E has announced the cancellation of the Hyderabad E-Prix, alleging a contract breach by the new Telangana government. The second Formula E race in India was slated to be held on February 10. Formula E has alleged a breach of contract by the Municipal Administration and Urban Development Department (MAUD) that falls under the control of Telangana government. "The cancellation comes following a decision by the Municipal Administration and Urban Development Department (MAUD), under the control of the Government of Telangana, not to fulfil the

Host City Agreement signed on 30 October 2023," Formula E said in statement on Friday. The inaugural electric race in the country was held in February last year with Telangana's then IT Minister KT Rama Rao playing a huge role in bringing the race to Hyderabad. However, KTR's BRS party lost the state election to Congress in December and the new government has not shown the same willingness to host the race. "Formula E Operations (FEO) has been left with no choice other than to formally give notice to MAUD that it is in breach of contract." "FEO is considering its position and what steps it may take under the Host City



Agreement and applicable laws. All of FEO's rights in that regard are reserved," the statement read.

Initially, a four-year agreement was signed between Formula E, Telangana government and Greenko, which has

pulled out of the event after the inaugural edition. However since the change of guard, the future of the race

had been shrouded in uncertainty with Formula E raising fresh concerns last week. "We are extremely disappointed for the huge motorsport fanbase in India. We know that hosting an official motorsport world championship race is an important and prestigious occasion for Hyderabad and the whole country," said Co-Founder & Chief Championship Officer of Formula E Alberto Longo. "The President of the Federation of Motor Sports Clubs of India (FMSCI), Akbar Ebrahim, and his team have been incredibly supportive in bringing Formula E back to Hyderabad. "They share our disappointment in the decision of the Government of Telangana

which means that will not happen," he added. The inaugural race in the city had delivered an economic impact of nearly USD 84 million. "It is deeply frustrating that we cannot build on the success of the inaugural race last year, which delivered almost 84m USD in positive economic impact to the region," Formula E CEO Jeff Dodds said. "We are also disappointed for our major Indian partners, particularly Mahindra and Tata Communications. Racing in Hyderabad was important to showcase the benefits of adopting electric vehicles in a market where pollution from vehicle engines has a massive impact on public health and the environment."

INDIA WOMEN WARY OF AUSTRALIA BACKLASH

PTI ■ NAVI MUMBAI
Mercurial Indian Women's team will be keen to produce another all-round show as they look to seal the three-match series against Australia in the second T20I here on Sunday.

Putting behind the disappointment of a 0-3 hammering in the ODIs — marred by poor efforts in all areas — India Women came out firing on all cylinders in the first T20 to thrash Australia by a huge nine-wicket margin for the first time in history. Criticised for being sloppy in the ODIs, India were spectacularly athletic in the field on Friday, while the bowlers led by young Titas Sadhu did not allow Australia to get away at any stage in the first half of the opening T20. Shafali Verma (64 not out) and Smriti Mandhana (54) then shared 137 runs — India's best opening partnership against Australia in T20I history — to take them home. It was a near-perfect night for the 19-year-old Sadhu (4/17), who set the ball rolling with three powerplay wickets, while spinners Deepti Sharma and Shreyanka Patil too claimed two wickets each to support the young pacer.



them in an away series 2-1 in 2015-16. But accomplishing this task would be easier said than done given India will have to show consistency and at the same time, watch out for Australia's fightback who will be determined to celebrate legendary Ellyse Perry's 300th international game. "Really excited for Sunday, actually. I think it's a great opportunity for our team to celebrate someone who has been, you know, at the forefront of our game and sort of seen the evolution of women's cricket right around the world in Ellyse Perry," Australia captain Alyssa Healy said.

But the visitors lost wickets in heaps on either side of the Litchfield-Perry rearguard, which they need to address. The visitors also were not up to the mark on the field, giving away too many extras. In fact, Darcie Brown gave away 14 extras in the first over itself and Australia would look to be more disciplined with the ball. **SQUADS:** **INDIA:** Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana (vc), Jemimah Rodrigues, Shafali Verma, Deepti Sharma, Yastika Bhatia (wk), Richa Ghosh (wk), Amanjot Kaur, Shreyanka Patil, Mannat Kashyap, Saika Ishaque, Renuka Singh Thakur, Titas Sadhu, Pooja Vastrakar, Kanika Ahuja, Minnu Mani. **AUSTRALIA:** Darcie Brown, Heather Graham, Ashleigh Gardner, Kim Garth, Grace Harris, Alyssa Healy (c&wk), Jess Jonassen, Alana King, Phoebe Litchfield, Tahlia McGrath (vc), Beth Mooney (wk), Ellyse Perry, Megan Schutt, Annabel Sutherland, Georgia Wareham.

If India produce turning tracks, it will negate bit of their strength in seam attack: Bairstow

PTI ■ LONDON
England wicketkeeper batter Johnny Bairstow feels if India opt for turning pitches during the five-Test series later this month, "it will negate bit of their strength in their seam attack". England had lost the Test series 1-3 to India on spin-friendly tracks during their 2021 tour of the country. "India can produce different pitches: it doesn't have to turn. We've seen how potent their seam attack has been recently," Bairstow told Sky Sports.



"I've not spoken to anyone about that. As long as I'm over there, as long as I'm fit and firing, the selection decisions will be taken out of my hands. But look, I'm fairly happy with where I'm at, whether I'm keeping, batting or whatever it is." Defending champions England had a miserable ODI World Cup in India last year and with the Test series soon approaching, Bairstow wants to "get himself into a position where he can go and take on an Indian Test". "I've been getting my ankle right, just training in the gym pretty hard, catching up with friends and family."



In South Africa, fuller length doesn't work: Mukesh

PTI ■ CAPE TOWN
He should have played ahead of Shardul Thakur and Prasidh Krishna in the Test series opener against South Africa but when Mukesh Kumar finally got his chance at Newlands, the Indian team realised what exactly it missed during the mauling in Centurion. While the seasoned duo of Mohammed Siraj (7 wickets) and Jasprit Bumrah (8 wickets) did the bulk of the damage, Mukesh was the ideal third seamer with four wickets in the second Test, which included two top-order dismissals in the second innings.

He was bowling slightly back of length but was still able to move the ball late. "I think I have been able to fulfil the role assigned by the team management. I am satisfied with my bowling and best part is that I have worked hard and reported my best," Mukesh told reporters about his performance during India's series-leveling win. A smart operator, Mukesh had quickly realised that despite being comparatively lesser in terms of pace generated by the two senior speedsters, he can't bowl too full on South African tracks.

Jhulan message to young Titas to just bowl fast works wonders for India

PTI ■ NAVI MUMBAI
India pacer Titas Sadhu said the legendary Jhulan Goswami has been a big part of her life and her advice to concentrate on "just bowling fast" is a principle that the 19-year-old follows everyday. Titas joined Goswami in recording one of the most successful spells for any Indian bowler in T20Is against Australia here on Friday, returning 4-0-17-4 to set up a commanding nine-wicket win in the first T20I. Titas' spell was the first time an Indian bowler had taken four or more wickets since Goswami's 3.5-1-11-5 against Australia at Visakhapatnam in March 2012. "I can tell you one thing. That was the first conversation I had with Jhulan di and she told me 'stop thinking about everything else, just bowl fast'."

played like more than 100 matches for India and for 20 years old!" Titas expressed. The right-arm bowler said it was tough for her to warm the bench for the entirety of the inaugural Women's Premier League season for the Delhi Capitals shortly after winning the first-ever women's U-19 World Cup for India. "Especially coming from that U-19 high to sit (out) for the whole tournament. It was rough and the first couple of matches it was pretty clear that I probably won't get a chance until very late and it is very hard."

Gavaskar backs Rohit, Kohli to play T20 World Cup

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Former captain Sunil Gavaskar has backed Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli to play in the T20 World Cup in June, saying the two senior players are not only the key batters but also terrific fielders in the Indian team. Both Rohit and Kohli have not played a T20I since India's semifinal loss to England at the 2022 T20 World Cup but the duo is keen to return to the shortest format.

as the Mumbai Indians' captaincy form Rohit. Whether Rohit will lead India in the shortest format if included in the team is yet to be known. But given Rohit's experience, he will still have a lot to offer despite not leading the side, according to Gavaskar. "We don't know if Rohit will be captain, but whatever the case, any captain will surely benefit from that. "Kohli's form has been outstanding in the last 1.5 years. He played unbelievably in the 2023 World Cup, making 750 runs with 3 centuries. So there is no doubt about his limited-overs batting," he added.



Warner leads Australia to victory

AP ■ SYDNEY
David Warner scored 57 runs to help lead Australia to an eight-wicket victory over Pakistan on Saturday in his final test match, ending a 112-test career as a winner on his home ground. With Australia needing only 11 runs to claim its third consecutive victory in the three-test series, Warner was out lbw off the bowling of Sajid Khan. He walked off the Sydney Cricket Ground to loud applause as he waved to the crowd.

Factionalism rears ugly head again to hurt Bihar cricket

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Factionalism is nothing new to Bihar cricket and the ugly infighting that has been running well over two decades has robbed the state of some notable talents, besides attracting the ire of the BCCI. Bihar has already lost the services of Ishan Kishan, who was born and raised in Patna, and pacer Mukesh Kumar, who hails from Gopalganj, to Jharkhand and Bengal respectively. They had to leave the homeland to pursue a cricketering career in a much more sustainable environment.



Cricket Association Secretary Amit Kumar and another outfit came with the blessings of BCA President Rakesh Tiwary. Eventually, the side that had the backing of Tiwary and captained by veteran left-arm spinner Ashutosh Aman played the match against the 41-time champions. "First of all, why should they select the Moin-ul-Haq stadium for this match? There are better facilities at the Urja Stadium in Rajbansi Nagar which is in Patna itself.

in politics, and not in cricket. We are trying to take legal recourse and find a way ahead for Bihar cricket, which cannot afford another round of mismanagement," he said. The veteran coach agreed. "Several officials join the association only to make money. They are least interested in developing cricket. "We have given an opportunity to a 12-year-old player (Vaibhav Suryavanshi), and I will not be surprised if he decides to move to another state soon so that he can develop into a better player," he added.

"I don't want other people to decide who I am. I want to decide that for myself"
— Emma Watson



DECARBONISATION FRONTIERS

The G20 summit emphasises climate action, promoting eco-friendly practices rooted in India's LiFE movement. COP28 discusses carbon credits, market challenges, India's surge, and cooperative solutions for decarbonisation, WRITE **SAGAR KISAN WADKAR** and **NAVEEN KUMAR SINGH**



Throughout the G20 summit, a central theme revolved around addressing climate change, particularly through the endorsement of climate finance, technology, and equitable energy transitions for developing nations. The LiFE movement, grounded in India's sustainable traditions, promotes eco-friendly practices. During a special forum at the G20 Presidency COP28, the president underscored climate action as an opportunity for growth, urging global unity, action, and commitment to achieve the 1.5-degree goal while ensuring inclusivity for all.

CONCEPT OF CARBON CREDIT
In the ongoing discussions at COP28, the issue of carbon credits holds significant relevance. Carbon credits play a crucial role in international efforts to mitigate climate change, serving as a unit of measurement for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Typically, one carbon credit is equivalent to one ton of carbon dioxide (CO₂) or its equivalent. Once issued in the form of a carbon credit certificate by a government or any other recognised body, this carbon credit becomes tradable in nature. The concept operates by incentivising projects and initiatives that reduce or remove emissions, offering them carbon credits as recognition for their contribution to environmental sustainability.

HISTORY OF CARBON MARKET
The Conference of the Parties (COP), established as the supreme decision-making body of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992 during the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, convenes annually to discuss strategies for combating climate change. The inaugural COP took place in 1995, marking the beginning of a series of meetings that have played a pivotal role in international efforts to address climate change. In 1997, the concept of carbon commodification gained prominence with the Kyoto Protocol, and it further progressed with the Paris Agreement in 2015. Although the roots of carbon commodification trace back to the 1960s, its formal structure materialised after the Kyoto Protocol. While the instituted mechanisms cannot be labelled outright failures, they faced significant constraints. For instance, some developed countries did not ratify the protocol. Moreover, there was disagreement between developed and developing nations: emissions reductions were mandatory for developed countries but voluntary for developing ones. This was accompanied by the over allocation of emission allowances to certain countries, causing a surplus of carbon credits in the market and consequently driving down their value. This was further compounded by people's perceptions about the credibility of carbon projects. Efforts were made to address these issues with the Paris Agreement in 2015, introducing global initiatives such as Nationally Determined Contributions and provisions for financial support to developing countries.

DELIBERATIONS DURING COP28
Currently, COP28 is in progress in the UAE, where discussions are underway to advance various work streams. The major agenda is to implement the Paris Agreement. COP28 is an opportunity to identify global solutions for limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees, as agreed during the Paris Agreement, inform countries' preparations for revised and more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) due by 2025, accelerate the green transition that is already happening and ultimately achieve the delivery of the Paris Agreement goals. These include crucial issues, such as

- finalising the details of the loss and damage finance facility to assist vulnerable communities in coping with immediate climate impacts;
 - working on a global financial goal to support developing countries in their climate change mitigation and adaptation endeavours;
 - hastening both an energy transition and a just transition; and
 - addressing the substantial emissions gap.
- The outcomes of these deliberations at COP28 will contribute to shaping the global response to climate change and steering the world towards a more sustainable and resilient future.

ISSUE OF CARBON MARKET AND NEED FOR INSTITUTIONALISATION

The carbon credits market, essential for mitigating climate change, is plagued by opacity due to its intricate structure. With numerous projects generating credits and a myriad of market participants engaging in trades, the lack of a centralised regulatory structure creates gaps in transparency. This multifaceted dynamic results in a situation reminiscent of "one step forward, two steps backward." One of the critical issues lies in the absence of a requirement for disclosing the price paid for carbon credits. This lack of transparency allows organisations to potentially misrepresent their commitment to offsetting emissions. Some may purposefully miscalculate their carbon footprint or purchase cheaper credits that might not withstand standardised scrutiny, leading to instances of "greenwashing." A significant hurdle in today's carbon credit markets is the lack of standardised followup for projects that apply for carbon credits. Many projects, unable to meet their carbon mitigation commitments, sell their credits to third parties, falling short of achieving the ultimate goal of net-zero emissions. This raises questions about the effectiveness of carbon credit initiatives and the need for more stringent oversight. Efforts have been made to enhance transparency in carbon credit prices by compiling trading data from market players and accredited registries like The Gold Standard, Climate Action Reserve, Verified Carbon Standard, and the American Carbon Registry. However, challenges persist, leaving room for potential fraud or dubious activity in emissions trading markets. As a major discussion, COP28 introduces the creation of a global carbon market which will be overseen by the supervisory body. This is indeed a welcome step as it tries to bring credibility and transparency to the carbon market.

INDIA'S CARBON MARKET SURGE

India has advanced its decarbonisation strategy by introducing two pivotal regulations aimed at tackling opacity: the Carbon Credit Trading Scheme and the Green Credit Programme Implementation Rules. Between 2010 and 2022, India not only issued 35.94 million Carbon Credits but also actively participated in trading these credits on the global international markets. Now the introduced regulations are supposed to provide more incentive to the corporate, NGOs, farmers and other individuals with the goal of achieving the country's nationally determined contributions. The Carbon Credit Trading Scheme implemented by the Ministry of Power, Government of India caters to big players in the carbon landscape

working on "cap" and "trade" mechanisms. The Green Credit Programme Implementation Rules, to be implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, is meant to bring structural reforms and transparency in "Voluntary Carbon Market". These regulations provide a framework for transparent transactions and adherence to international standards. However, mere introduction of such regulations are not sufficient. As per a study conducted by Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and Transforming Agrifood Systems in South Asia (TAFSSA), the carbon projects being conducted at present are not able to provide monetary benefits to the farmers which had been attributed to various factors like need of local implementation partner, limited awareness among farmers about carbon credits and lack of regulated marketplaces makes projects financially unsustainable. Thus, India requires a proper Institutional Management system for overseeing and managing carbon and green credits effectively. Now, it cannot be denied that carbon projects are only going to increase in the coming future with special focus on farmers and other micro level projects. The Green Credit Programme encompasses diverse sectors, including tree plantation, water conservation, sustainable agriculture, waste management, air pollution reduction, mangrove conservation, ecomark initiatives, and sustainable building and infrastructure. It seeks to create a market-based mechanism, offering Green Credits as incentives to individuals, cooperatives, urban and rural local bodies, private sectors, industries, and organisations for environmentally positive actions can be a game changer in this. The programme being voluntary in nature can bring more positives which is also evident as though still in draft stage many organisations have shown their interest in enrolling with the programme.

COOPERATIVES-COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTION FOR DECARBONISATION

Cooperatives, as community-driven organisations, possess inherent mechanisms to address social, economic, and environmental concerns, making them ideal institutional frameworks for decarbonisation efforts. These cooperative structures inherently integrate efforts across these spheres, offering a comprehensive approach to tackle the challenges of reducing carbon emissions. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, cooperatives have demonstrated their resilience, further emphasising their effectiveness as versatile entities capable of enduring and adapting in challenging times. In India, we have two types of cooperatives: credit and non-credit. As per NCU, 2018 statistical profile, there are 8,54,000 cooperative units in India, of which 1,77,000 units (20 per cent) are credit cooperatives. The remaining units engaged in a variety of non-credit cooperative activities, such as textiles, hospitals, services, industrial, producer, processing, dairy, fisheries, sugar, marketing, consumer, labour, housing, etc. The outreach of the cooperatives in the farm sector is quite high. About 98,000 PACS are

spread across 91 per cent of total villages of India. It is estimated that around 30 crore people including 13 crore framers in India are directly connected to cooperatives. India has recognised their importance and established a separate Ministry of Cooperation in July 2021 to provide administrative, legal, and policy frameworks to strengthen this sector. This has sparked renewed enthusiasm amongst cooperators and stakeholders. Numerous initiatives have been launched to bolster the cooperative movement, signaling a revitalised effort towards its enhancement and expansion. The key initiatives of aligning with decarbonisation strategies are as follows:

- Model bylaws for PACS, the fundamental agricultural cooperatives can drive India's decarbonisation strategy by fostering sustainable agricultural practices, reducing emissions, and supporting farmers' income;
- Three new multi-state cooperative societies in the areas of quality and climate-resilient seed production and distribution, organic farming and certification and export marketing. These multi-State cooperative societies focus on sustainable practices that reduce carbon emissions, encourage climate-resilient agriculture, and promote eco-friendly products in the market, collectively contributing significantly to the broader decarbonisation strategy;
- World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in Cooperative Sector aims to boost PACS infrastructure, reducing food grain wastage, enhancing food security, and empowering farmers economically, aligning with the decarbonisation strategy;
- The Solar Cooperative in Dhundi Village, Gujarat, serves as a pioneering model for India's decarbonisation efforts. It monetises solar energy, offers rural electricity solutions, and provides farmers with sustainable incomes. Its replicable nature aligns with India's goals of cutting carbon emissions and fostering clean energy practices nationwide;
- Bio-ethanol policy via sugar cooperatives can significantly contribute to the bio-revolution by utilising agricultural resources for clean, renewable fuel production, promoting sustainability, reducing waste, and fostering rural development;
- Similarly, housing cooperatives in different states are under redevelopment and given an opportunity they can go for green buildings which fall under the green credit programme of decarbonisation strategy.

Thus, cooperatives, especially agricultural ones, indeed hold a distinctive chance to establish a sustainable food and agriculture value chain. This involves meeting the needs of an expanding global population while ensuring the well-being and economic stability of farmers. Achieving the 1.5 degrees Celsius goal offers business benefits and environmental gains, driving on-farm decarbonisation. Cooperatives' pivotal role extends beyond implementation, nurturing new ventures and integrating sustainable practices with carbon initiatives from COP 28, exemplifying a blueprint for a sustainable future.

(Sagar Kisan Wadkar is Adviser, Research & Study, NCU; and Naveen Kumar Singh is Research Officer, NCU, New Delhi)

THE COOPERATIVE MODEL, SHOWCASED AT COP28, SETS A BLUEPRINT FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE IN ALIGNING WITH THE 1.5-DEGREE GOAL. BUT CHALLENGES PERSIST, DEMANDING MORE STRINGENT OVERSIGHT AND INSTITUTIONALISATION. AMID DISCUSSIONS AT COP28, COOPERATIVES STAND OUT AS VERSATILE ENTITIES WITH INITIATIVES ALIGNING WITH DECARBONISATION STRATEGIES, OFFERING A MODEL FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



I DON'T SMOKE, DON'T DRINK MUCH, AND GO TO THE GYM FIVE TIMES A WEEK. I LIVE A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE AND FEEL GREAT. I CAN RUN A MARATHON, YOU KNOW
— SARAH MICHELLE GELLAR

For people looking to start 2024 with a new routine to feel fitter and happier, a new study from the University of Bath suggests that combining mindfulness with exercise could be your key to success. So what exactly is mindfulness? THE HEALTH PIONEER explores

GIVE MINDFULNESS A TRY



MANIFESTING GOALS IN THE NEW YEAR



DR CHANDNI TUGNAIT
MD (Alternative Medicines),
Psychotherapist, Life Coach, Healer,
Founder & Director of Gateway
of Healing.

New Year is the time for resolutions and effectively setting intentions. Manifestation is not magical thinking – it is strategically harnessing the extraordinary power of the human brain. Science shows our brains filter reality based on what we focus upon. So, by concentrating consciously on a future result, we increase the likelihood of behaviours and perceptions automatically aligning to produce that outcome.

This emergence relies on the reticular activating system – the part of the brain filtering stimuli to determine what reaches our awareness. When we intensify mental imagery about a goal, neurons wire together forming maps which reorient senses and actions accordingly. Research on athletes proves training concentration expands possibility.

However, transformation requires more than visions alone. We must cultivate the feelings, habits and discipline which bridge current reality with realized dreams. Our brains instigate self-fulfilling prophecies based on deeply held beliefs, not surface wishes. So manifesting destiny unfolds by consolidating desire, emotion, and behaviours into an identity narrative we already inhabit. Through psychological coherence, focused motivation and continual micro-adjustments between plan and performance, we shift dreams into the familiar.

Here are some tips to achieve your goals through manifestations:

- **Reflecting on the past:** Before manifesting new goals, first take a moment to reflect on the previous year. What worked very well? What were the takeaways? Reflecting on both accomplishments and challenges provides valuable insights that can help shape future goals.
- **Setting clear intentions:** What do you hope to accomplish? What aspects of your life would you like to improve? These intentions assist in remaining focused and aligned with the actual desires.
- **Making a vision board:** A vision board is a powerful visual depiction of your hopes and aims. It's a beautiful combination of images, phrases, and affirmations that speak to your heart. Making a vision board serves as a daily reminder of your goals, increasing your will to see them through. Make a visually pleasing collage out of images and quotes that motivate you. Place the vision board in an area where it is visible daily.
- **Practicing visualisation:** Visualisation is an important part of manifestation. Take time each day to clearly visualise yourself reaching your objectives. Consider the specifics—the sights, sounds, and feelings connected with achievement. This mental repetition prepares the mind for success and cultivates a positive mindset. Find a peaceful place to practice visualisation and involve all your senses in the process.
- **Breaking down goals into manageable steps:** Because large goals can be overwhelming, they must be broken down into smaller, manageable steps. This makes the journey less intimidating while giving a roadmap for growth. Make a timeline for each stage and recognise accomplishments along the way.
- **Cultivating a positive mentality:** Because our thoughts affect our reality, having a positive mentality is essential for manifesting goals. Affirmations and encouraging thoughts should be used to replace self-doubt and negativity. Surround yourself with people who raise your energy, books that inspire you, or motivating podcasts. Challenge and reframe negative thoughts to cultivate a positive mindset.
- **Embracing adaptability:** Because life is unpredictable, goals may need to be adjusted along the road. Accept detours as chances for growth rather than setbacks and embrace adaptation with an open heart. On the route to manifestation, flexibility is a key skill.
- **Cultivating gratitude:** Gratitude attracts positive energy. Take time each day to show gratitude for the accomplishments, lessons learned, and assistance received. Gratitude shifts our viewpoint, allowing for more abundance in our lives. Manifestation is not a one-size-fits-all process, so identify the tactics that speak to you and breathe authenticity into your path. Harness your brain's creative power this New Year by clarifying the outcome, affirming self-efficacy, attentively perceiving signs of progress and adapting efforts toward embodiment. What the mind conceives and believes, it achieves. Resolve to become your aspirations - and through manifesting intention, make it so!

EXPERTSPEAK



DR SHWETA SHARMA
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Mindfulness is a practice involving purposeful awareness of the present moment without judgment. It originates from ancient Buddhist traditions but has gained significant popularity in modern positive psychology and wellness practices. It is useful in following conditions :-

- **Stress Reduction:** Mindfulness helps individuals manage stress by allowing them to focus on the present moment rather than worrying about the past or future.
- **Improved Mental Health:** Studies show that mindfulness can alleviate symptoms of anxiety, depression, and other mental health conditions.
- **Enhanced Focus and Concentration:** Regular practice of mindfulness meditation can improve attention and concentration.
- **Better Emotional Regulation:** It assists in understanding and regulating emotions, leading to increased emotional intelligence.
- **Physical Health:** Mindfulness has been linked to improved immune function, better sleep, and lower blood pressure.

How to Practice Mindfulness:

- **Mindfulness Meditation:** This involves sitting quietly, focusing on the breath or bodily sensations, and observing thoughts without judgment.
- **Mindful Breathing:** Paying attention to

each breath, feeling the sensations it brings, and gently guiding the focus back to the breath when the mind wanders.

- **Body Scan:** Slowly scanning through the body, paying attention to sensations, tension, or discomfort in different areas.
- **Mindful Activities:** Engaging fully in daily activities like eating, walking, or cleaning by paying attention to the sensations, smells, and feelings involved.

Some Tips for Incorporating Mindfulness:

- **Start Small:** Begin with short sessions and gradually increase the duration as you become more comfortable.
- **Consistency is Key:** Regular practice is more beneficial than sporadic sessions. Aim for daily practice, even if it's just a few minutes.
- **Non-Judgmental Awareness:** Allow thoughts and feelings to arise without judging them as good or bad. Simply observe them and let them pass.
- **Patience:** It's normal for the mind to wander during mindfulness practice. Whenever this happens, gently guide your attention back to the present moment.

Mindfulness is a powerful tool that can significantly enhance one's well-being when practiced consistently. Integrating it into daily life can bring about a profound sense of peace, clarity, and emotional balance.

TYPES OF MINDFULNESS PRACTICE

While mindfulness is innate, it can be cultivated through proven techniques. Here are some examples: Seated, walking, standing, and moving meditation (it's also possible lying down but often leads to sleep); Short pauses we insert into everyday life; Merging meditation practice with other activities, such as yoga or sports.

2024 with a resolution to exercise more can have really positive physical and mental health benefits. But we know that starting out can be tough and

that it can also be hard to stick with it over time. "Mindfulness is an approach that can help us 'train up' the psychological strengths we

need to exercise and be more in tune with our bodies, as well as make exercising more interesting and help us recognise its benefits.

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us.

"This may be because becoming more mindful prompts us to think differently about our lifestyle, makes us more accepting and less judgemental of our own shortcomings, which can help to build healthy habits. "There is a huge potential to use mindfulness to unlock the positive benefits exercise can bring." Steven Yorke, co-founder at Medito added: "Mindfulness mobile apps are a great way to boost our mental wellbeing. Unfortunately, all too often companies put up paywalls, making the benefits of mindfulness inaccessible to some. "At Medito, we believe that meditation and mindfulness should be available free of charge, to anyone, forever. This is why our mindfulness app, Medito, is and always will be free."

"This collaboration with the University of Bath has been a great way to expand the range of mindfulness meditations we can offer, and it feels great to be at the cutting edge of mindfulness science while we do this."

Building on this work, the team are about to start conducting a larger trial to determine the effectiveness and optimal intervention moments for combining exercise and mindfulness. However, yet another study underlines that acceptance is not about acquiescing to your fate, though—like getting a diagnosis of a terminal illness

and just accepting that you're going to die. That kind of "acceptance" leads to worse outcomes, says authors in a 2019 study "Psychological mechanisms driving stress resilience in mindfulness training: A randomized controlled trial."

Nor is it about accepting poor treatment from other people. It's more about accepting your internal experience—your thoughts and feelings—which informs you about how to respond to your external circumstances in a wiser way, say the authors. For example, if you feel angry and accept your anger in the moment, it may prevent you from lashing out at someone and help you see that your feelings aren't their fault.

FREE MEDITATION APPS WORTHY OF YOUR ATTENTION

Mindfulness apps are trending in a big way, promising to help you combat anxiety, sleep better, hone your focus, and more. In fact, the Wall Street Journal reports that more than 2,000 new meditation apps launched between 2015 and 2018, and offerings have only increased as a result of higher demand during the pandemic. According to the New York Times, mindfulness apps surged in 2020.

These are:

- **Mindfulness.com** Available for iOS, Android, and web
Entry price: Free
- **Insight Timer** Insight Timer - Free Meditation Apps Available for iOS, Android, and web
Entry price: Free
- **Smiling Mind** Free Meditation Apps - Smiling Mind app screenshot Available for iOS, Android, and web
Entry price: Free
- **UCLA Mindful** Free Meditation App—UCLA Mindful Available for iOS and Android
Entry price: Free
- **Healthy Minds Program** Available for iOS and Android
Entry price: Free

BOOK REVIEW

BY ARCHANA JYOTI

Divyangs Still Await Social Inclusion

Despite several government policies and welfare measures, a significant number of persons with disabilities (PwDs) especially those with intellectual developmental disabilities/ mental illness continue to be confined to their homes or resort to begging due to the absence of a proper support system.

Obviously, either the policies are not being effectively implemented or are not aligned with the specific needs of this particular sector.

The Supreme Court's recent attention to this matter through a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) is indicative of the urgent need to address the lack of guidelines for the rehabilitation and social reintegration of mentally and physically challenged individuals after they turn 18. This resonates with the concerns of parents and caregivers who worry about the



Price: ₹499.00
Publishers: KPACIDD & JP Gadkari

This book is a telling commentary on the present status of the PwDs in the country and is an essential read on the legislations and government policies and glaring gaps that need to be filled to ensure an inclusive society

future of their wards when care are no longer able to provide care. If you are still clueless about what we are talking about then you must read the book 'Era of Awakening for Persons with Disabilities' authored by 94-year-old seasoned journalist JP Gadkari, fondly known as JP among his friends and those working for the uplift of the sector.

Drawing from his personal experience as the father of an adult autistic son and his extensive involvement in the disability sector, JP sensitively highlights the shortcomings in current government policies and legislation. The book, categorized into

six topics, delves deep into various aspects of the lives of PwDs, including their rights, health, education, employment, social security, inclusion, awareness, and poverty and the gaps that persist, hindering the establishment of an inclusive society. One notable suggestion among many others from the author is the call for a 2021 census to obtain accurate data on the PwD population for better planning. The book also critically assesses the new proposed disability policy, appreciating the government's efforts to adopt a Right-based approach but at the same time pointing out the lack of sufficient

budget and the absence of heads of important autonomous bodies like the Rehabilitation Council of India. Each section appears to analyze the government's actions or lack thereof in these areas, offering a critical assessment of the impact on the lives of PwDs. Part three titled 'Present situation' is a must read, emphasizing on what was expected in the UNCRPD and what exactly has been achieved in the past two decades in respect of multitude of issues like social security, skill development and employment, education, standardization of training of professionals among others.

The author also stressed on skill development training as an essential requirement given their limited capacity for academic education. He says that acquiring some skills through vocational training can help them get some kind of gainful employment so as to lead a dignified life. He suggests this should be entrusted to the National Trust. Dr. Sudesh Mukhopadhyay, former head of the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI), in the Foreword rightly describes the publication as a memoir of the journey from exclusion to inclusion for persons with

IDDs, reflecting the struggle faced by parents and civil society to make the State and system more sensitive and responsive.

The book emphasizes the importance of involving individuals with disabilities in creative processes, as demonstrated by the inclusion of the cover of the book which is designed by an young autistic graphic designer Ujjwal. This action sets an example for the broader theme of promoting inclusivity in society.

In conclusion, the book provides a comprehensive perspective on the challenges faced by PwDs in India, incorporating the voices of individuals with disabilities and their support networks.

The book serves as a call to action, urging the government and society to bridge the existing gaps and work towards creating a truly inclusive environment for all, particularly those living on the edge of the margin.

Hamas Israel conflagration: Global peace bankruptcy

The quintessential Political Contest Model, as advanced by Israeli scholar Gadi Wolfsfeld, posits the narrative that during a conflict, the state actor is pitted against a non-state actor, in tandem with the germination and sustenance of a spectacular effect. The state actor is steadily accoutered with the characteristics of power and resources, such as the military prowess of the high-riding establishment and the economic premise of the regime of the day. On the other hand, the non-state actor is hard-pressed for resources and thus consequently relies upon a spectacular impact, such as that of an insurgent action, which inflicts damage to the state's habiliments and its symbols of state power. This is the Simulacra effect of the non-state actor. The same model has been utilised by the state of Israel to rationalise its actions in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, as well as the related Jewish settlements in the contested terrain. The Israel-Palestine conflict is often scrutinised in an inquisitive quest to identify the culpable agent, leading to collateral damage and the mass destruction of human lives and the remnants of human civilisation. The prologue of "O Jerusalem" sets the stage in Israel, stating, "They knew the sound. For months before this afternoon in May 1948, the forlorn wail had symbolised the frontiers of their existence. It was the skirl of the British bagpipes, and now its call reverberated for the last time down these

ancient stone passages, piping away the few British soldiers left inside the old walled city of Jerusalem. They marched in columns, silent and unsmiling, the rhythmic tramp of their boots blending with the dying notes of the bagpipes. At the head and the rear of each column, one soldier, a sten gun crooked in his elbow, broke the pattern of his unwavering stares, his restless eyes scanning the hostile stone facades around them."

The Balfour Declaration, penned by Arthur James Balfour, contained ambiguities that required interpreters and solution providers to attempt filling the gaps. Released in 1917, the declaration declared British support for the establishment of a national home for dispersed Jews in Palestine. It took the form of a letter from Arthur James Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, to Lionel Rothschild, a leader of the Anglo-Jewish community. Despite this, there was a struggle to balance the two communities in Palestine. It was asserted that neither party should do anything to diminish the civil and religious rights of the non-Jewish communities in the land of Palestine. Thus, one can trace back to history to advance the argument that the seeds of conflict resolution were embedded in the two-nation theory, a concept that still perplexes present-day interlocutors. There is no doubt that Hamas is considered a terrorist organisation of the non-state genre. The incident on October 7, where they caused



mayhem and kidnapped Jews in south Israel, is cited by Benjamin Netanyahu as a justification for the IDF's aggressive actions and relentless attacks on northern Gaza in the early stages of the conflict. Prime Minister Netanyahu contends, "This is a fight till the finish, and the war will be carried on until the whole of the Hamas establishment is annihilated in Gaza Strip." The UNSC has reprimanded Tel Aviv, emphasising the need for a humanitarian corridor to be provided to international aid agencies. Ceasefires, negotiated by neighbouring state actors like

Egypt, have been proposed to facilitate this. Describing Israel's involvement as a ceaseless Armageddon would not be an overstatement, according to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Israel aims to destroy both Hamas' military and governing capabilities. Initially designated as a recalcitrant non-state actor due to its actions on October 7, 2023, Hamas has faced international criticism for the reported massive collateral damage in Gaza. While President Joe Biden expresses unwavering support for Tel Aviv, he urges less intrusive actions, emphasising the

prevention of incidents like the destruction of Shifa Hospital. Similar to the Ukraine-Russia conflict, the issue of collateral damage poses a challenge for the IDF, which contends that civilian facilities, including hospitals, serve as shelters for Hamas terrorists and concealment of their strength through tunnels. The world awaits with bated breath to see how the global ecosystem will navigate the twin conflicts in Ukraine and Israel, especially with the pervasive threat of the pandemic looming. The credibility of international institutions such as the

United Nations and the ambiguous stance of superpowers like the United States have come under scrutiny, notably with the aggressive actions of Houthi rebels in Yemen and the involvement of Iranian agents, which further escalates the conflict. The promotion of peace and stability must be orchestrated by the interlocutors in West Asia and the great powers collectively.

The United States of America has made it clear that it will stand by Israel regardless of the circumstances, and two warship groups have been stationed in the near vicinity.

President Biden has unequivocally expressed this intent to the international community, both at the UNSC and beyond. Collateral damage is strongly condemned by the Americans, as indicated by Biden's statement regarding the tragic news related to Gadi Haggai. The United States has traditionally been a staunch ally of Tel Aviv, and the Jewish lobby, despite facing dehumanisation globally, has a significant influence in the political, social, and economic life of America.

A relevant and timely White House release succinctly asserts, "Today, the world faces an inflection point, where the choices we make, including in the crises in Europe and West Asia, will determine the direction of our future for generations to come. What will our world look like on the other side of these conflicts? Will we deny Hamas the ability to carry out pure, unadulterated evil? Will Israelis and Palestinians one day live side by side in peace, with two states for two peoples?" IR theorist John Mearsheimer staunchly contends that the key pillar of US policy has been the nation-state of Israel, which, according to him, is an undeniable fact. Additional strategic imperatives and a higher moral perch have been incorporated into the US-Israel narrative, and this is prominently reflected in the contemporary crisis.

(The writer teaches at International Relations and International Organisations, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi)

In recent years, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been marked by a complex interplay between state and non-state actors, notably employing the Political Contest Model developed by Gadi Wolfsfeld. This model illustrates the asymmetry in power and resources between state and non-state entities, exemplified by Israel's actions in West Bank, Gaza Strip, and Jewish settlements.



MANAN DWIVEDI

PERSPECTIVE

Dark realities of Xinjiang: Tough test for Uighurs

As reports of China's alleged human rights abuses in Xinjiang surface, a storm of international outrage erupts. Diplomats, politicians, and human rights organisations decry the treatment of Uighurs, accusing China of systematic oppression, torture, and brainwashing. Despite the global outcry and sanctions, China remains defiant, raising questions about the UN's ability to hold the authoritative regime accountable.

The recent reports of China attempting to sell the Xinjiang story to diplomats, politicians, and journalists from friendly nations are eliciting strong protests from various quarters. Many of these visitors have witnessed and experienced outright violations of the basic freedoms of Uighur and other ethnic Muslims in Xinjiang Province.

China is maintaining several "re-education camps" or "vocational training centres" in Xinjiang. The purpose of establishing such camps is to deradicalise the locals in response to the growing Islamophobia in the region. Additionally, the Chinese Government asserts that these centres aim to improve labour skills and alleviate poverty in the province. Local officials strongly believe that these efforts are genuinely beneficial and contribute to restoring social stability, harmony, and prosperity to Xinjiang.

However, the reality is exceedingly harsh. Uighurs are enduring pain and untold misery. China is vehemently suppressing the Uighurs in Xinjiang Province, solely aiming to curb separatist tendencies among the people in this volatile region. This is Beijing's official explanation for the extensive security and surveillance measures imposed throughout Xinjiang. Beijing has been incarcerating millions of Uighurs in these re-education camps, subjecting them to systematic brainwashing, torture, and other degrading treatments. In 2021, Agnes Callamard, the Secretary-General of Amnesty International, accused Chinese authorities of creating "a dystopian hellscape on a staggering scale".

The Uighurs find themselves at a cultural and historical crossroad, facing a severe test for survival under the Communist rule from Beijing. Nearly 12 million Uighurs reside in the Xinjiang

Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR), as it is officially known in China, located in the northwest and serving as a crossroads between Central Asia and East Asia.

Last year, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited the far-western province and emphasised the need to maintain "hard-earned social stability" in the region. He conveyed to officials in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR) that Beijing intends to persist with its counterterrorism policies there. It serves as a litmus test for China, requiring a delicate balance between its global expansion agenda and the need to ensure domestic stability throughout the mainland and its overseas territories, including Hong Kong, Macau, and the South China Sea (SCS).

The UN has already accused China of serious human rights violations in Xinjiang. A long-awaited report, published in 2022 by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the XUAR, rightly pointed out that China is engaged in "serious human rights violations against the Uighurs" and other predominantly Muslim communities in the province. Beijing vigorously attempted to prevent the release of the Xinjiang report, but it was eventually made public by the UN human rights body just before the retirement of Human Rights Commissioner Michelle Bachelet. She visited Xinjiang in May of that year, and only after her visit was the highly sensitive report brought to the public's attention.

However, for the Communist Party apparatchiks and its top leaders, this report was dismissed as nothing more than a "farce" orchestrated by Western powers. Global human rights agencies, such as Human Rights Watch (HRW), assert that China is committing crimes against humanity in Xinjiang. Following the



release of the report, Chinese officials maintained their abusive "strike hard policies", resulting in the suppression of fundamental freedoms for Uighurs and other Turkic Muslims. HRW strongly argues that UN member states should not remain silent in the face of such crimes against humanity. Additionally, HRW urges concerned governments to:

A. Work toward the successful adoption of a UN Resolution to investigate instances of crimes against humanity and hold those responsible accountable.
B. Improve efforts to document individuals who are detained, imprisoned, and forcibly disappeared, and make attempts to reunite families.
C. Impose targeted sanctions on Chinese officials implicated in serious abuses in Xinjiang.
D. Consider pursuing criminal cases under the concept of "universal jurisdiction," allowing a country's domestic judicial system to investigate and prosecute certain grave

crimes, such as torture, even if they were not committed on its territory.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) also contends that the current Human Rights Commissioner, Volker Turk, should act on the recommendations of the report from his office, previously provided by his predecessor. It is time to hold accountable those responsible for committing heinous crimes against the Uighurs and other minorities in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR).

The pivotal question is whether the UN, in general, and the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), in particular, have the mandate to hold China accountable for massive human rights abuses in Xinjiang over the years. It is deemed impractical for any international agency, including the International Court of Justice (ICJ), to compel an authoritative regime like Xi's to cease human rights violations in Xinjiang. While sanctions have already been imposed by various nations, including the

US, the UK, Canada, and the European Union (EU), on Chinese officials alleged to be involved in rights violations against the Uighurs and other Muslim minority groups in EU, it is essential to note that this marked the first coordinated sanctions by EU Members against China since the historic Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989. In response, China retaliated with almost equivalent sanctions against some EU politicians and officials.

Back in 2020, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) joined over 300 other NGOs in urging the UN to establish a specific mechanism for systematically monitoring and reporting on instances of human rights abuses by China. Notably, this collective call was followed by a similar appeal from 50 UN experts. Both groups emphasised China's systematic human rights abuses in Hong Kong, Tibet, and particularly in Xinjiang. They also highlighted the Communist nation's efforts to conceal information about the deadly

COVID-19 pandemic and its continued attacks on those defending human rights. The joint letter expressed deep concern about China's global network of censorship, threats, surveillance, and blatant violations of UN processes.

Beijing, leveraging its newfound power status driven by economic clout, wolf warrior diplomacy, and growing military strength, employs tactics to deny NGOs accreditation, attack UN experts, and undermine country resolutions at the UN Human Rights Council. These actions signal the authoritative Communist regime's attempt to establish its own system within the current West-led global governance paradigm, potentially shifting it to a China-led one in the future. This has prompted the West, especially the US, to initiate multiple confrontations with China, ranging from trade to information wars in recent times.

China perceives these sanctions as a threat to its sovereignty. Beijing dismisses

such sanctions as based on lies, disinformation, disregard for facts, and distortions. Consequently, China uses these sanctions to tighten its policing and surveillance tactics, particularly in controlling the Uighur Muslims.

For the Uighurs, changing the status quo is an uphill task. The only plausible solution lies in generating global awareness through the efforts of human rights agencies, rights activists, the UN and its special organs, and concerned nations, shedding light on the atrocities committed against the Uighurs and other small Muslim groups in the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (XUAR).

China must adhere to all international norms, allowing UN agencies to investigate the atrocities against the Uighurs. Beijing should not forget that it is an integral part of the international system and community.

Its scant regard for international norms, coupled with attempts to impose an authoritarian system over its people and allies, is disturbing.

This approach is not how China can counter the US and other emerging powers. President Xi must first set his own house in order before pointing fingers at others. Denying basic freedoms to the Uighurs and other Muslim minority groups is unacceptable. They are Chinese people and deserve the same rights as other Chinese citizens.

Their religion should not be treated as a barrier to enjoying the universal human rights enshrined in the UN Human Rights Charter. While it is crucial to contain radical and separatist tendencies among the Uighurs, punishing the entire Uighur and Muslim groups collectively is not the solution.

(The writer is currently president of the Global Research Foundation)



MAKHAN SAINIK



ARIES March 21-April 19

This week brings opportunities for financial gain, yet expect a busy schedule, possibly involving work-related travel. Midweek, unforeseen changes may occur, urging you to release unhelpful attachments and open up to more meaningful experiences. Be cautious, as a strong inclination towards acquiring material possessions might overshadow your judgment. This period isn't favorable for initiating new ventures; hasty decisions could lead to setbacks. Strive to maintain a positive outlook, as negativity might seem enticing. Emphasize inner growth and resilience to navigate through these challenges. Remember, the key to this week is balancing the pursuit of material success with personal well-being and emotional stability. Stay grounded and focused on what truly matters for a fulfilling journey ahead.

Lucky number 6 | Lucky colour Mauve
Lucky day Monday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

This period will be marked by a sense of divine favor, casting you as the protagonist in a narrative filled with joy and healing. You'll experience a harmonious balance of mind, spirit, and body, enhancing your reputation. Brimming with courage, hope, and inspiration, you'll celebrate the conclusion of past challenges and embrace a transformation in your beliefs and ideas, signaling a brighter future. Expect significant changes like adopting a new routine, job, or even acquiring a new vehicle, opening doors to fresh experiences. The week's end promises joy within your family, possibly heralding commitments in personal or professional relationships. This time will be characterized by a flow of positive energy, bringing deep emotional and spiritual contentment.

Lucky number 10 | Lucky colour Lavender
Lucky day Sunday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

This week, your focus should be on harnessing your inner resilience. This isn't about physical prowess, but rather the strength that comes from a deep sense of self-control and emotional stability. Your ability to navigate through challenging situations with a clear mind and a calm heart is key. You'll find inspiration and guidance from a wise and insightful individual, likely a woman, whose advice or example could significantly influence your decisions and life direction. It's a time for awakening and introspection. Engage in activities that foster spiritual growth, such as meditation or quiet reflection, connecting with a source of personal inspiration or guidance. Let go of idle fantasies and distractions; they won't serve you well in your current journey. Focus on clarity and purpose to guide your path forward.

Lucky number 9 | Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Wednesday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

This week, your creative abilities will play a key role in generating income. Harness the innate talents you possess to turn your aspirations into reality. The choices you make are likely to lead to positive outcomes. You have a unique gift for communication, allowing you to articulate your thoughts effectively and captivate your audience. This week promises to be fruitful, with success in various endeavors. Midweek, you may encounter some obstacles and delays in your plans. However, your patience and strong will are your greatest assets, guiding you towards achieving your objectives. Expect some encouraging news from distant places. This period is not just about financial gains but also about finding emotional satisfaction. Your efforts will lead to a sense of security and fulfillment, marking this time as particularly rewarding.

Lucky number 14 | Lucky colour Coral
Lucky day Friday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week begins with you taking firm control over both personal and work-related matters. Your resilience shines as you navigate life's challenges with bravery. Expect to encounter some disagreements and pride-related issues, which call for thoughtful resolution. Embracing new perspectives and letting go of outdated beliefs will be beneficial. Changes might be on the horizon in areas like your career, living situation, and personal relationships. Be aware of potential health concerns or moments of intense stress. Initially, you might feel a strong urge for personal development and introspection. As the week progresses, a wave of positive vibes is likely to uplift you. You'll find yourself in a more comfortable, healthier state, with a sense of financial satisfaction. This period could also spark a desire for a more opulent lifestyle.

Lucky number 2 | Lucky colour Turquoise
Lucky day Thursday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week is set to be a whirlwind of activity, touching every facet of your life. It begins with a focus on home matters, and for those seeking lifelong connections, significant developments may arise. Midweek brings a change of scenery with some travel. Professionally, you'll find yourself striving for excellence, dedicating extra hours to hone your skills and achieve your ambitions. This period could also herald the joyous news of a new family member. As the week wraps up, the results of your hard work will become apparent. Expect a positive shift in your financial situation, a testament to your efforts. For job seekers, the possibility of an enticing offer from a prestigious organization is high. This is a time to revel in your accomplishments and enjoy the sense of fulfillment that comes with them.

Lucky number 20 | Lucky colour Olive
Lucky day Tuesday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week, you'll find numerous reasons to feel joyful. With a sense of optimism and vitality guiding you, your journey through life seems brighter. Your positive energy not only uplifts you but also attracts others, as you have a knack for seeing the silver lining and spreading cheer. Midweek, you might face some challenging moments that could momentarily unsettle you. Remember, this is just a brief phase, and soon enough, a wave of positive changes will bring a sense of fulfillment. You'll likely be pleasantly surprised by the progress you've made, reflecting your efforts toward achieving your goals. Expect recognition for your work, possibly even connections or opportunities from beyond your current horizons. This period marks a significant step in your journey toward success and personal growth.

Lucky number 3 | Lucky colour Amber
Lucky day Wednesday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week brims with opportunities and a surge of creative energy. Those who seek balance and harmony are particularly poised to embrace the world with renewed vigor. You may find yourself inspired by a fresh idea or a sudden urge to achieve something significant. Your ability to juggle personal and professional responsibilities shines, indicating you're on a fruitful journey. Midweek brings moments of joy and familial bonding, marked by significant personal achievements and auspicious beginnings in both personal and professional spheres. These events bring a sense of accomplishment and happiness. As the week draws to a close, your resilience and unwavering determination stand out, serving as an inspiration to those around you. Your success is a testament to your steadfastness and inner strength.

Lucky number 4 | Lucky colour Teal
Lucky day Monday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

This week, you're set to experience a surge in professional success, leading to substantial financial gains. This prosperity allows you to generously fulfill your family's wishes and enjoy spending. Your inherent kindness extends to those around you, enhancing your connections. Your relationship with your partner is marked by heartfelt generosity, strengthening your bond. Children in your family bring joy, possibly through significant achievements in their careers or academics. However, it's crucial to be attentive to your well-being. You might encounter some emotional or physical fluctuations, requiring extra self-care. Staying aware of these changes will help you maintain balance and fully embrace this prosperous period.

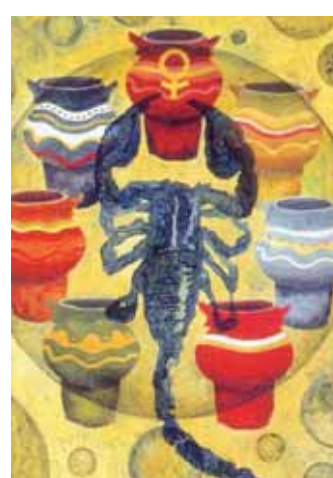
Lucky number 5 | Lucky colour Indigo
Lucky day Thursday



CANCER June 21-July 22

This period marks a significant phase where your actions lay the groundwork for future outcomes. Progress might be gradual, but your resilience will enable you to achieve much. Channel your energy effectively to accomplish your goals, and your efforts are likely to be acknowledged and appreciated. Utilize your diverse skills optimally this week, as your determination and perseverance will leave a lasting impression on those around you. You'll serve as an inspiration to others. Your communication skills will play a crucial role in building positive relationships with both superiors and colleagues. As the week concludes, a fresh wave of creativity will enhance your ideas, boosting your productivity in your chosen field. This is a time to relish and make the most of, creating joyful and memorable experiences.

Lucky number 1 | Lucky colour Grey
Lucky day Friday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

Despite your diligent efforts across various fields, it seems that the success you're striving for in your career hasn't materialized yet. Your dedication and enthusiasm are commendable, yet it appears that financial rewards might be elusive in the immediate future. However, don't lose heart. As time progresses, the landscape looks set to improve, with promising opportunities on the horizon. Expect to receive encouragement and support from elder family members or mentors, who are keen to see you excel. Remember, what you truly deserve is bound to come your way. This period calls for patience; enduring efforts often lead to lasting and significant achievements. Visualize yourself on the verge of a breakthrough, as the fruits of your labor are close at hand, promising to bring not just transient success, but long-lasting fulfillment and growth.

Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour Magenta
Lucky day Saturday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

This week, you'll experience a blend of material success and a pursuit of inner calm. You'll be inclined towards activities that foster serenity, like deep reflection and home-based peaceful rituals. These practices will help balance your well-being. Midweek, however, may bring challenges in personal relationships, particularly with a significant other. Misunderstandings could lead to frustration or a sense of disconnection. This period calls for introspection and clarity about your life's direction. Be aware of a tendency to view situations more negatively, which could lead to unnecessary gloom. It's important to shift towards a more positive outlook. Remember, difficult times are not a cue to surrender but an opportunity to show resilience. Embrace these challenges as chances for personal growth and strengthening your resolve.

Lucky number 12 | Lucky colour Ivory
Lucky day Sunday

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ASTROTURF

BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

Redefine thought process for a better tomorrow

Fun time is now over, and it is time to get into serious business. It is a common wish to expect that the year ahead proves rewarding and fulfilling. That, however, will depend on how well geared up and mentally alert we are to intelligently negotiate the callings of emerging times - take on challenges in strength and promptly grab opportunities coming our way and put in one's best into it. The exercise evidently must begin in mind. For, that is what drives a being. All happenings out in open originate in mind by way of arousal of desire and thereby related thoughts, ideation, articulation, and the will to act upon. Also, how we engage with the world around, or the way we react or respond to external stimuli, is directed by the mind. It is again our mind, which carries forward the legacy carried over from the past. That makes a deep imprint on our mind and psyche, which sets the terms of the way we perceive issues in hand, and accordingly act upon. It will, therefore, be fair to surmise that mind defines the functional mandate of a being and then steers through the journey of life.

Coming as it may with Karmic carry-over from the past, every being is born unique, each reflecting varying mental traits - desire, habits, attitudes, likes, dislikes, passions, and prejudices. We, thus, are born with a preconditioned mind. Accordingly, we develop our individualistic beliefs which drives our thought process. Also, it lays down the ground on which our perceptive and comprehensible abilities work. With such a restrictive vision, we fail to look at things in the right perspective due, and with obvious consequences. What further plays spoil sport with the thought process is our ahankara. That doesn't let us look beyond for reality check. It is believed that ordinary mortals could hardly access



5 to 7 percent of the landscape of mind. Even that, if judiciously used, could help us negotiate with the usual callings of life with ease. More than that is subject to conscious efforts. The irony, however, is that we dissipate our energy and clutter

the thought process unnecessarily brooding and contemplating on sense of fear of future, unfulfilled desires, and unpleasant encounters we had. Consequently, we are not left with the space and energy necessary to objectively visualise the issues in hand. We then act, react, and respond on instinctive judgment without applying proper forethought, and with obvious consequences.

The other day when someone came for guidance, I asked: "What makes you so hopeless?" "Sir, my career is stagnant for quite some time. The work atmosphere is uncomfortable. Fresh job opportunities are not in sight. Domestic atmosphere is also inhospitable. I don't know how to go about." Informed the guy, Well, your astrological chart reveals that you have been a victim of your own thought process. "Sir, you don't know what I am going through. Please explain what makes you take such a view." He coun-

tered. Self-reflect on your thought trends, and you will find the answer.

The Sun is conjunct mischievous Neptune. Both are placed adverse to Jupiter and Mars. In the first place, it implies that you are stuck to illusionary beliefs and perceptions, distanced from ground realities. You are inherently an escapist who won't acknowledge truth on its first appearance and remain stuck to own line of thinking on hope against hope till pushed to the wall. Second, you have a swaggering ego, which binds you to self-defined dos and don'ts and not open to look beyond for reality check. It is difficult for you to digest things happening on unexpected lines. Third, mind signifying Moon tenanted in Gemini sign is ill-disposed off to erratic Rahu. That makes you wish to live on own exclusive terms in a demanding mode, not bothered about other's sensibilities and concerns. You lack focus. Although, you have

a fertile mind, continuously breeding random thoughts, but carry vacillating tendency. You, thus, get caught up in self-invited logic and counter logic. You, therefore, fail to take timely initiatives. Moon opposite Venus makes you emotionally volatile. You get overexerted even on trivial issues and keep unnecessarily mulling over them beyond due. Consequently, your sense of reasons takes a back seat. In the process, your indwelling potential, which though is immense, gets compromised under the shadow of heavily loaded negatives. "What's the way forward sir?" He asked. Well follow the process suggested in right earnest. That will help you redefine the thought process and tomorrow will be yours.

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