

Manipur Observes World Aids Day- 2022

Women should have greater involvement in the fight against HIV/AIDS: Governor



IT News
Imphal, Dec 1:

World AIDS Day - 2022 is being observed today. The State level observation was held at 1st Manipur Rifles Parade Ground in Imphal. Governor of Manipur La. Ganesan, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, Health Minister Dr. S. Ranjan, Ministers, MLAs, officials, NGOs and people from across the State attended the observation.

Speaking as Chief Guest, Governor said, it is the responsibility of the society at large, particularly women, to have a greater involvement in the fight against HIV and AIDS to safeguard the future of Manipur. He said, HIV and AIDS issue is no longer a mere health issue.

It has covered all aspects of life-social, economic, legal, human rights and even political. The all-out and concerted efforts of the health officials and concerned activists of the State will not be sufficient in tackling this issue. The civil societies have to be actively involved. Appreciating the role of Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and agencies during the last more than two decades in providing preventive services and care to the people, Governor said, without the active role of the NGOs, the situation would have been worse.

Governor further said that Manipur was the first and only State in India to have a State AIDS Policy as early as 1996. Experts and intellectuals in this

field shall give their suggestions and it will be of immense help to society in mitigating the menace of HIV and AIDS in the State. Governor also appealed to the young people, particularly women to become more and more aware of HIV and AIDS issues and also to participate actively in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

Governor also launched HIV/Syphilis dual screening in "Chief Minister's Health for All" Scheme and handed over testing kit to the State Nodal Officer.

Chief Minister N. Biren Singh while speaking at the observation said, it is not to celebrate the day, but to raise concern among ourselves of how our future would be. He said, the State has been facing

HIV/AIDS with the support from all quarters. Though, the rate of infection has relatively been down, efforts should be made to aware people of how we can fight the dreaded disease. He further said that we should be very serious in fighting the disease and people living with HIV/AIDS should be taken care with love.

While pointing out the increasing number of injecting drug users especially among the youths, Chief Minister said, it is a matter of serious concern and all should join hands to stop such acts. Expressing concern about the increasing number of drug cases in the State, he said, some anti-social elements are indulging in drug trafficking and government should not tolerate such act. All those who are involved in the act should not be spared, he added.

Chief Minister continued that door to door checking of HIV/AIDS will be conducted under the Chief Minister's Health for All Scheme and appealed people to join hands in the efforts to fight HIV/AIDS.

Health Minister Dr. S. Ranjan also spoke on the importance of greater awareness and coordination among all stakeholders to wipe out HIV/AIDS from the State.

Governor and Chief Minister also visited the stalls opened by the Self Help Groups. Five targeted intervention NGOs were also felicitated in the observation.

Sushmita Sen's event only for VIPs?

When the closing function turned out to be the "Selfies with Ministers, Elites" event



IT News
Imphal, Dec 1:

Though the Chief Minister N Biren Singh-led government claimed to have extinguished the VIP culture in Manipur, the Sangai Festival translated the statement paradoxically.

Arguably Manipur's most prominent cultural-cum-tourism festival, the 10-day-long Sangai Festival, dropped the curtain with much grandeur Wednesday evening with the finale organized at Bhagyachandra Open Air Theatre (BOAT) in Imphal. People rejoiced the festival's myriad events across different locations across the state with much jubilation, braving the dust, and repugnant management of eclectic events and installations in the exhibition. Moreover, the glitzy promotions by the Tourism Department swayed the people like never before.

Adding more savour, the organizers roped in a handful of famed Bollywood stars, among them two former Miss Universe. People rejoiced at the news of their coming to Manipur to be showstoppers even before the festival kicked off. Thousands planned to attend the festival's grand finale

to get a glimpse of the graceful former Miss Universe actor Sushmita Sen. However, a surprising turn of events shattered the dreams of thousands of ordinary people - the event turned out to be for a handful of VIPs, their family, and elites. Organizers turned thousands of people away, claiming that the theatre's capacity was total. It was not unprecedented.

The organizers were well aware that the BOAT could not house everyone who came to witness the grand event in general and the Main Hoon Naa star in particular. How come the government decided to organize the occasion of the world-known Sushmita Sen, where even spectators fought to enter the theatre to watch the Manipuri video film Basantagee Nongallamda as it was overflowing around fifteen years ago? The seating capacity of BOAT is only 5000, according to the Directorate of Art and Culture website. In exhilaration, Mr. Biren, on November 28, even announced a half-holiday on the 29 and 30 November, provoking the people to attend the festival in large numbers. Some individuals even protested outside the BOAT, arguing with security forces

why they were not allowed to enter despite having invitations and passes. Moreover, they claimed that only VIPs were permitted to the event by those police officers while they were manhandled.

When people, including journalists, captured the whole discord on their smartphones, police attempted to snatch the phones. What a misuse of power and authority! This police action submits a question: When have photography and videography in public places become illegal in Manipur? And under whose command the policemen carried out such an act? Or was it because the policemen were trying to shield their misuse of power and authority? And will the government take action against these police officers or protect them? Nonetheless, it came as no surprise since India ranked 150 among 180 nations in the World Press Freedom Index published by Reporters Without Borders in its 2022 report. While civilians, including women holding their children, stand outside helpless, Ministers, VIPs, their relatives, and elites swarm the BOAT stage to take a SELFIE with the Hindi film actor.

CWA Jiribam observes World AIDS Day

IT Correspondent
Jiribam, Dec 1:

The Child Welfare Ashram (CWA), Jiribam observed World AIDS Day today under the sponsored of Manipur State AIDS Control Society.

In connection with the observation, a mass rally was taken out at Jiribam where students of Jiribam Higher Secondary School participated by holding placards which read as "No to drugs, yes to life", "What are you doing in war against AIDS?", "Stop drugs



buyer and seller of No 4 heroin" and so no.

On the sideline of rally H.

Priyananda, Programme Manager, Child Welfare Ashram, TI Jiribam said as like every

years, the World AIDS Day was also observed by Child Welfare Ashram, Jiribam. He added in connection with the observation wall poster campaign, wall painting campaign was held at various places of Jiribam. He also shown his respect who were pass away due to AIDS. He also appealed to the people of Jiribam to take your HIV test and to know your status as well as sought the co-operation of Civil Society Organizations of Jiribam in creating awareness among the people.

60th statehood day: Nagaland CM hopes for early solution to Naga issue

Agency
Kohima, Dec 1:

As Nagaland celebrates the 60th statehood day on Thursday, Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio urged Naga political groups, the Government of India (GoI) and other stakeholders to walk the extra mile as the state is now more hopeful than ever of an early solution to the vexed Naga issue.

"We also remain mindful of the Naga political issue, the final settlement of which we

continue to wait for," Rio said while addressing the people on the statehood day.

The Naga political issue predates statehood and has seen efforts by generations of people for its resolution, he said.

He said the state has seen immense progress in the last few years. "Each one of us is now more hopeful than ever of a solution. I appeal to all the Naga political groups and the Government of India, and all others concerned to seize the moment, walk the extra

mile and reach out to everyone with the spirit of understanding to make the long-cherished dream of our people a reality by bringing in the solution without any further delay," he said.

Owing to the long-running insurgency and unsettled political issue, Rio said the state had a very difficult time in the past. However, with the efforts of the administration, police, and all security agencies, an era of peace and tranquility has been maintained, the Chief Minister said.

While the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) was reduced to 15 police stations, the Chief Minister said the state is now geared to take full responsibility for all areas that were taken out of AFSPA.

With the situation becoming even better, he hoped that the Centre would consider bringing out more areas from the purview of AFSPA. Further, he said the state takes pride in being among the states with the lowest crime rates in the country.

Rs. 1,45,867 crore gross GST revenue collected for November 2022, records increase of 11% Year-on-Year

PIB
New Delhi, Dec 1:

The gross GST revenue collected in the month of November 2022 is **Rs. 1,45,867 crore** of which CGST is **Rs. 25,681 crore**, SGST is **Rs. 32,651 crore**, IGST is **Rs. 77,103 crore** (including Rs. 38,635 crore collected on import of goods) and Cess is **Rs. 10,433 crore** (including Rs. 817 crore collected on import of goods).

The government has settled **Rs. 33,997 crore** to CGST and **Rs. 28,538 crore**

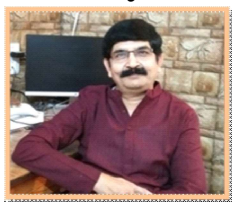
to SGST from IGST as regular settlement. The total revenue of Centre and the States after regular settlements in the month of November 2022 is **Rs. 59,678 crore** for CGST and **1,61,189 crore** for the SGST. In addition, Centre had also released **Rs. 17,000 crore** as GST compensation to States/UTs in November 2022.

The revenues for the month of **November 2022 are 11% higher** than the GST revenues in the same month last year, which itself was **Rs. 1,31,526**

crore. During the month, revenues from import of goods was **20% higher** and the revenues from domestic transaction (including import of services) are **8% higher** than the revenues from these sources during the same month last year.

The chart below shows trends in monthly gross GST revenues during the current year. The table shows the state-wise figures of GST collected in each State during the month of November 2022 as compared to November 2021.

Keep Cyber Criminals At Bay As Hackers Rise



By: Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

Don't we think our lives in the digital age is alternate between cyber dangers and cyber security? Hacking is one of the most dangerous cybercrimes that has emerged in the internet age. Recently the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi's server was down for the sixth day in a row as hackers have hacked the official website of the hospital and allegedly demanded an estimated Rs 200 crore in crypto currencies. The AIIMS server has stored data of several VIPs, including former prime ministers, ministers, bureaucrats and judges. India's hacking ecosystem has seen manifold growth over the past few years. And, today, there are thousands of hackers that are carrying out clandestine operations but have escaped the glare of cyber security experts. Whenever the word 'Hacking' or 'Hacker' comes to our mind, the picture or the image which is created is that of an intelligent being who is criminal by nature, who attacks other computer systems, damages it, break codes and passwords, send viruses etc. Their mindset are as if the 'hackers' are the computer criminals. They have a very wrong notion in this regard and have a completely negative attitude and utter dislike for the 'Hackers'. Hackers' are very intelligent people who use their skill in a constructive and positive manner. They help the government to protect national documents of strategic importance, help organizations to protect documents and company secrets, and even sometimes help justice to meet its end by extracting out electronic evidence. Rather, these are people who help to keep computer criminals on the run. Hacking is a method of identifying weak links or holes in a computer network and then gaining unauthorised access to change the settings of the targeted network or computer system. Hacking is a derogatory phrase that is frequently associated with criminal activity.

In a recent study, it was revealed that out of 15 Indian cities, Mumbai, New Delhi, and Bengaluru have faced the maximum number of cyber attacks. India has faced a rise of 7.9% in data breaches since 2017.

In 2018, India's state-run health portal - which allows users to book online appointments at government hospitals - left exposed a part of its website.

This meant that the personal details and health information of nearly two million users could have leaked.

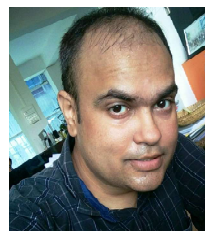
When people hear about hacking, they usually think of it as something illegal. However, that is not entirely true because, like everything else, hacking has pros and cons. For example, through ethical hacking, one can get the authorization of some system, but it is done to create a shield against the odds. Hence, ethical hackers are known as the "white hats" as well. In any organization, ethical hackers are hired to keep the organization safe from malicious hackers. Top ethical hackers in India are making the most of this demand.

Indian-based healthcare websites became a victim of cyber attack recently in 2019. As stated by US-based cyber security firms, hackers broke in and invaded a leading India-based healthcare website. The hacker stole 68 lakh records of patients as well as doctors.

Security researchers had been trying to pin down the group of hackers operating under the shadow of Belltrox for years. The earliest identified victim goes back to 2017. Before the Delhi-based firm was identified, security researchers even had code words to describe what seemed to be eerily similar hacking attempts: Dark Basin hackers, mercenary armada.

Cyber hacking has stolen millions from people worldwide, and not just money. People's personal information has been leaked. Hacking violates Article 21, which deals with the right to life and personal liberty, which includes the right to live in dignity, according to constitutional norms. Furthermore, hacking infringes on an individual's right to privacy, which is now a basic right. What we need is to educate employees on the emerging cyber attacks with security awareness training and keep all software and systems updated from time to time with the latest security patches. It is essential to follow basic online rules to ensure the safety of self and the organization.

A Flight of the Hornbill - Educate, Agitate, Organize



By: Dr. Aniruddha Babar

"There is in this world, no such force as the force of a person determined to rise. The human soul cannot be permanently chained". - W.E.B Du Bois.

Today's Nagaland is no longer a Nagaland of the past. Since its formation it has undergone great transformation. The pioneering western tribes of Naga society greatly benefited due to the formation of the state and those in the houses of whom even the 'sunshine' could not entered remained there they were.

Historically Ignored during British Raj by London since 1832. Disregarded by Delhi since 1947. Oppressed by Kohima since 1963, our Eastern people left to be rotten in the slush of the systematically imposed misery and suffering for at least close to two centuries. Eastern Naga people have never had any political savior in the political history of Nagaland. Congress ruled New Delhi for more than seventy years. Kohima was ruled by Nagaland Nationalist Organization, United Democratic Front, Naga National Democratic Party, United Democratic Front-Progressive, Indian National Congress, Nagaland People's council, Naga People's Front, Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party throughout the last sixty years. Nothing changed in the life of Eastern Naga People. Central Government of the past never bothered to take a look at the events then were unfolding in the Nagaland nor did the ruling party and its government ever have any real interest in addressing the issues of 'FORGOTTEN' people of the Eastern region of the state. Kohima's administrative apparatus continuously developed and implemented 'discriminatory policies' against Eastern Naga people, Central Government in those days sitting mute at the center remained just a spectator. WHY? Only the wise men know.

Roads, Bridges, Smart city, Hospitals, Shopping complexes, Trade centers, Restaurants, University, Quality communication network, sys-

tematic transportation system etc. have been built in West but East remained as thirsty and deprived as ever. Financial assistance that comes from the center to address the infrastructural issues and economic disparity in the eastern region never reached to them. MLAs representing the region of Eastern Nagaland have perpetually been thrown at the mercy of their forty strong counterparts from western region due to tactfully played number game (20/40 legislative assembly seat formula) that is blatantly biased in favor of the western Nagas. Reservation policy that was introduced in 1977 for backward tribes in the eastern region failed to address the core of the principles of social justice. Major towns like Tuensang which once was a center of the power have been systematically thrown in the corner without giving any due 'Policy Attention'. Despite suffering from the long list of systematically 'politically imposed odds', discriminatory practices and discriminatory policy initiatives Tikhri, Khiamnuingan, Chang, Yimkhung, Phom, Sangtam, Konyak continued to participate in HORN-BILL FESTIVAL since its beginning in the year 2000 without fail. They never said NO.

The direction of wind in Nagaland has now been changed. Eastern Naga people have become educated. They started reading 'Constitution of India', they started learning about their rights as 'people', they started discovering that nobody bothers about them-the mainstream Naga intelligentsia, academicians/researchers (Kohima), Dimapur, Mokokchung fame), poets, writers, armchair Naga theorists, people from creative circles, Naga nationalist ideologues/thinkers/activists; nobody is interested in them, they started discovering as to how unjust and brutally their kids- who are being used as domestic servants in the houses of rich people in the western region are being treated, they started discovering their insufficient representation in the legislative assembly as well as government service sector, they started realizing as to how their rights as the free citizens of free India has been systematically violated by the state machinery, they reached to the realization as to how Kohima has been continuously using them as nothing else but just a 'CASH COW' and 'POLITICAL PAWNS'.

The naked truth of modern day politics of Nagaland which Eastern people courageously allowed themselves to witness with naked eyes-made them severely agitated and

through that burning agitation, helplessness, cold anger and iron determination born the great organized, democratic, constitutional revolt in the modern political history of the state of Nagaland-the historic movement for "Frontier Nagaland"-a constituent state in the Union of India which is of the people, by the people, for the people.

The epic boycott of Hornbill Festival is nothing but a democratic protest of all the Eastern people through their organizations to claim their constitutional rights which have been violated in the last sixty years; through the separate State of Frontier Nagaland. The constitution of India gives right to the people and their organizations to initiate peaceful protest through democratic means to achieve political victory.

It is truly surprising to see as to how the state government of Nagaland has been continuously trying direct-indirect methods to get the Eastern Tribes participate in the Hornbill Festival. In India right to make a choice do exist. Individuals and their organizations have a valid right to choose to say 'NO' to the request for participation in the Hornbill Festival.

Boycott of internationally acclaimed, highly prestigious 'event' like Hornbill Festival has created a history. It has become a national and international news. The generations of the Nagas and also the entire India will remember the 'courageous stand' of the awakened Eastern Nagas. What can be more important than restoration of human values, claiming the lost rights and resurrecting the dead human hopes to live in the better, humane world?

Hornbill Festival instantly loses its meaning for the Eastern Naga people in the context of the resurrection of the 'Frontier Nagaland'. Let us not forget, the state of Nagaland was possible only because of Eastern region (erstwhile 'Tuensang Frontier Division', a distinct, independent administrative entity)-which in the passage of time became 'Backyard' of the state.

As I am writing this piece at 02.00 HRS in the morning, ENPO leaders and the convener of the talk team must be eagerly waiting for the morning to catch their flight to the New Delhi to argue the historic case of 'Frontier Nagaland' before Hon'ble Home Ministerji.

ENPO is holding a historic responsibility. The heavy burden of history is on their shoulders. The outcome of their stand and actions will be permanently recorded in the history. The

men fighting for the cause of 'broken, forgotten world' will forever be evaluated by the time and the history.

As a regular traveler (Road farer) to the East, I have witnessed the suffering of the Eastern Nagas with my own eyes. I have lived in the region. I suffered myself too during my 'travels' to the east and the 'stay' there on different occasions and circumstances. I have climbed Mt. Saramati (multiple times) and almost unknown Mt. Khelia king as well, explored dense forests and the dangerous mountain ranges of Indo-Myanmar Border that one can seldom imagine, I think, hopefully, I understand Eastern Nagaland and Eastern Nagas much better than any non-Naga or a western Naga (except may be handful of government officials, who knows).

I believe I have discovered my own 'truth' in the 'suffering' of Eastern Nagaland which helped me discover the aims of my life as well.

Nagas are one, there is nothing that can really separate the Nagas, however let the Eastern people have their breathing space-they have been suffocating since ages due to now pathetic, irreparable Nagaland state machinery, perpetual apathy of Kohima and the unhealed damage it caused to them. Naga unity is not based on false ideas of political/geographical boundaries but founded on the rock solid foundation of 'Divine principle', how can that divine principle be shattered? We all are one, shall remain one, our destiny is one-our real strength lies in our diversity and also the differences that we freely share. Frontier Nagaland, once become a reality, will strengthen Naga Unity.

Frontier Nagaland Movement is not just a movement of Eastern Nagas but I think it is a movement of all those who believe in 'Justice, Equality, Liberty and Fraternity'. In this dead world, where man is forever condemned to run behind hollow ideals of sex, money, power and wealth-let us, for a change, have a courage to stop-and stand for human values too.

I often imagine Eastern Nagaland as a Hornbill Bird which have been kept caged in amnesia for ages. Now the Hornbill has awakened. He is still weak but very much alive and kicking. He is ready to take his maiden flight- waiting eagerly to break open the 'prison' and fly in the 'Blue' 'Sky' freely, unafraid-right under the 'beak' of evil 'Hawks'.

(The author is a Dept of Political Science, Tetso College, Nagaland)

Worshipping Lachit Barphukan's valour and patriotism

By: Nava Thakuria

It was a crowded Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi with a large number of distinguished personalities from Assam as participants on 25 November, where Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the closing ceremony of the year-long celebration of 400th birth anniversary of 17th century Ahom army general Lachit Barphukan. Terming the extraordinary Ahom warrior as the greatest patriot of his era, PM Modi stated that Lachit's policy of Nation First is exactly the motto on which the Naya Bharat is being administered. For Vir Lachit his motherland was his first priority and that's why he could pronounce 'Deshatko Momi Dangor Nahay' (maternal uncle cannot be superior to the country), asserted Modi.

Congratulating Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for successful conduct of the three-day celebration in the national capital, Modi exuded confidence

this would prove decisive in ensuring Lachit saga of courage, valour and patriotism don't remain limited to the boundaries of north-east India alone, but spread across lengths and breadths of the nation. For ages, there has been a conscious attempt from certain quarters at portraying the history of Bharat as that of defeat and surrender, stated Modi adding that attempts at celebrating the saga of unsung heroes such as Lachit are going to prove fruitful in undoing the harm the distorted history-telling has caused to the pride of the Indian citizens.

Suppressing the self-esteem of the Indians was an agenda of the colonial British regime and distortion of history was one of the means to further it, Modi pointed out adding, all must now come together to ensure history is presented in its truest sense. Modi also mentioned about legendary Assamese singer

Bharat Ratna Bhupen Hazarika, who composed a number of songs praising the bravery of Lachit, and termed the Ahom general as a symbol of India's Atmanirbhar military might.

Lachit Barphukan (24 November 1622-25 April 1672) was born at Charaideo, the first capital of Ahom kingdom, to Momai Tamuli Barbaruah (who was an army chief under Ahom king Pratap Singha) and Kunti Moran. Grown up as Lachit Dea, the warrior received formal education in military training & strategies and soon got an appointment as Soladhara Barua to the Ahom monarch. He worked as a security personal to Ahom king Jayadhwaj Singha. Later he was promoted as a top army officer and emerged as Lachit Barphukan (Barphukan was a post with judicial and executive power).

After the demise of Jayadhwaj Singha, Chakradhwaj Singha took over the charge of Ahom kingdom and appointed Lachit Barphukan as the commander-in-chief of Royal Ahom army. Presenting him a Hengdang (sacred sword), the king

ordered Lachit Barphukan to lead the indigenous forces for liberating Guwahati from the occupation of Mughals. Lachit raised an army out of civilians who were mostly farmers from different ethnic communities and initiated guerrilla warfare before the final assault. Chakradhwaj Singha died in 1670 and Udayaditya Singha became the king during whose tenure the Saraighat battle was won by Lachit Barphukan with valuable suggestions from minister Aton Burha Gohain.

In the naval battle of Saraighat, Lachit Barphukan crushed the huge Mughal forces, which came under the leadership of Ram Singh and Rashid Khan following the order of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in Delhi. Even though the Ahom forces were inferior to the invading Mughals, Lachit succeeded in the battle over mighty Brahmaputra river with a perfect war strategy, a dedicated navy force and proper uses of the hill-river-valley terrain. After the extraordinary naval battle in 1671 (where the moment of counter attack was calculated by

the Royal astrologer). Mughals forces retreated from Guwahati and they could not reorganize to invade the kingdom again. Lachit died at his Kaliabor headquarters in 1672.

CM Sarma in his speech exuded confidence Lachit Barphukan would be accorded his rightful place in historical discourses in days to come, as more and more people are introduced to the valour of the great warrior. He stated that had it not been for Mahanayak Lachit, the present geo-political and cultural identity of not Assam alone but that of the entire southeast Asia would have been different from what they are today. Sarma expressed hope that the 400th birth anniversary celebration of the great mediaeval era warrior in New Delhi would be a significant step towards drawing the attention of the current generation intellectuals and historians towards Lachit.

Assam Governor Jagdish Mukhi, Union minister Sarbananda Sonowal, State legislative assembly speaker Biswajit Daimary, State minister Pijush Hazarika, Rajya Sabha member Ranjan Gogoi, Parliamentary Tapan Gogoi, State

chief secretary Pawan Barthakur also graced the occasion, where Sarma expressed his gratitude towards the people of Assam for their support and cooperation to the celebration, which was launched by the then President Ram Nath Kovind during his visit to Assam on 25 February 2022. President Kovind also laid the foundation stone for the Alaboi war memorial as a tribute to soldiers who fought against the Mughals.

Earlier on previous day, Union home minister Amit Shah attended the celebration and commented that Lachit prevented Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's expansionist ambition towards the southeast Asian nations and thus the Ahom warrior was a central force to stop the Islamisation of a large swathe of land spanning several nations, cultural identities and ethnicities. He also lauded Vir Lachit's skillful negotiations with various ethnic leaders to form a united front against the invaders and clever use of diplomacy against the militarily stronger Mughal forces.

contd. on page 3

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India's G20 agenda will be inclusive, ambitious, action-oriented, decisive: PM

Agency
New Delhi, Dec 1:

As India began its G-20 presidency from Thursday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said it will work to further promote oneness, inspired by the theme of "One Earth, One Family, One Future", and listed terror, climate change, pandemic as the greatest challenges that can be best fought together.

India's G20 priorities will be shaped in consultation with not just our G20 partners, but also our fellow-travellers in the global South, whose voice often goes unheard, he said.

India's G20 agenda will be inclusive, ambitious, action-oriented, and decisive, he added.

"Let us join together to make India's G20 Presidency a Presidency of healing, harmony and hope. Let us work together to shape a new para-

digm of human-centric globalisation," he said in an article which appeared in several newspapers and was posted on his website too.

The country looks forward to working on encouraging sustainable lifestyles, depoliticising the global supply of food, fertilizers and medical products among other subjects, the prime minister said in a series of tweets.

He said, "I firmly believe now is the best time to go further still and catalyse a fundamental mindset shift, to benefit humanity as a whole."

Gone is the time to remain trapped in the same old zero-sum mindset, which has led to both scarcity and conflict, the prime minister said.

"It is time to get inspired by our spiritual traditions which advocate oneness and work together to solve global challenges," he added.



"As India assumes this important mantle, I ask myself can the G20 go further still? Can we catalyse a fundamental mindset shift, to benefit humanity as a whole? I believe we can," he said in the write-up to share his thoughts on the significant milestone for Indian diplomacy.

"Our mindsets are shaped by our circumstances as through the history, humanity lived in scarcity. People fought for limited resources because their survival depended on denying them to others. Confrontation and competition between ideas, ideologies and identities be-

came the norm," he said.

"Unfortunately, we remain trapped in the same zero-sum mindset even today. We see it when countries fight over territory or resources. We see it when supplies of essential goods are weaponised. We see it when vaccines are hoarded by a few, even as billions remain vulnerable," he said.

If humans were inherently selfish, what would explain the lasting appeal of so many spiritual traditions that advocate the fundamental one-ness of us all, he asked.

Modi said, "One such tradition, popular in India, sees all living beings, and even inanimate things, as composed of the same five basic elements – the panch tatva of earth, water, fire, air and space. Harmony among these elements – within us and between us – is essential for our physical, social and environ-

mental well-being."

He added, "India's G20 Presidency will work to promote this universal sense of one-ness. Hence our theme 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'."

Today, the world has the means to produce enough to meet the basic needs of all people. "Today, we do not need to fight for our survival our era need not be one of war. Indeed, it must not be one," he said.

Fortunately, today's technology also gives us the means to address problems on a humanity-wide scale, he said, adding that India with one-sixth of humanity and with its immense diversity of languages, religions, customs and beliefs is a microcosm of the world, he added.

For imbuing hope in our future generations, India will encourage an honest conver-

sation among the most powerful countries on mitigating risks posed by weapons of mass destruction and enhancing global security, he said.

As the "mother of democracy," India's national consensus is forged not by dictat but by blending millions of free voices into one harmonious melody, he said.

India is now the fastest growing large economy and its "citizen-centric governance model" takes care of even its most marginalised citizens, while nurturing the creative genius of its talented youth, he said.

"We have leveraged technology to create digital public goods that are open, inclusive and inter-operable. These have delivered revolutionary progress in fields as varied as social protection, financial inclusion, and electronic payments," he said.

Professor (Dr.) Rajinder Kumar Uppal's, "Sweet-Sweet Beautiful Journey of Life"

By: RK. Uppal

Dr. Rajinder Kumar Uppal, a prolific writer, a Man of Letters, an acclaimed academician, research stalwart, and the more ingenious guide has won accolades not only in the academic field but also in the genre of research. Presently, he is serving in the most exalted institution, Baba Farid College of Management and Technology (Punjab), as a Professor-cum-Principal. He is also visiting Professor in Indus International University, Himachal Pradesh. This doyen of economics hails from a very small town near Bhatinda District in Punjab. Belonging to a poor and modest joint-family, his entire childhood was full of struggles even for bare necessities, yet he rose to a very high and eminent position in his life because of his eternal passion for knowledge and learning.

Dr. Uppal commenced his teaching career by joining D.A.V. College, Malout in 1987 as a part-time lecturer and rose to the present-day position of Professor-cum-Principal. Dr. Uppal is an accomplished academician, a distinguished author, a collaborative researcher, and an effective mentor to young scholars. He is also a frequent reviewer, discussant, and on session chair for several professional organizations. Truly, he is a visionary in the field of banking and finance, with exceptional theoretical and applied contributions in the subject. Little did he know that this inclination towards a subject could ignite his passion in ways that would lead him to

make global records. Completing the Maximum Number of Major Post-Doctoral Research Projects on Banking and Finance, he has registered his name in the India Book of Records, Asia Book of Records, International Book of Records, and World Book of Records. He completed his post graduation and Ph.D from Punjabi University, Patiala. He is considered as master of professional academic work.

Dr. Uppal observed that information technology (IT) is playing a key role in the development and modernization of banks in India. The information technology was also attaining new peaks every year in our country and all these developments were in conformation with the liberalization and globalization wave. As a matter of fact, his research fervor and academic zeal primarily focuses upon banking and finance. He heralded a new era of globally competitive Indian banking system. He authored/edited seventy two books and amongst his prominent books Indian Banking in the Globalized World-2013, Information Technology in Banks- A New Gateway for Success-2018, E-Age Banking - A Future Outlook-2018, Banking with Technology- A New Vision 2020, Managing Transformation in Indian Banks Through E-Delivery Channels-2021 have won an array of laurels. Many of his books are serving as text and reference books in many professional programmes being run by Indian colleges and universities. Through his books, he envisaged the challenges

and opportunities regarding the use of e-banking particularly in public sector banks. He was instrumental in suggesting the reforms in banking and financial sector through e-technology. His prodigious research talent gave him leverage to write as many as two fifty five research papers on banking and finance and since 2017 some of his research papers earned global recognition with Google scholar citation such as 779, h-index 15, and i10 index is 23. He presented ninety five research papers in different national and international conferences. His claim as a researcher was never unfounded as eight of his research papers were lauded at different international conferences held at Hawaii, Indonesia, Finland, Costa-Rica, Australia, London and Pakistan respectively. His insatiable craving for research got stimulus under the aegis of UGC and HRD.

As many as seven major post-doctorate research projects were funded by UGC, ICSSR and HRD, New Delhi. He reciprocated successfully and harnessed his research skill with incredible finesse and ease. His able guidance inspired even many young teachers to wade into the ocean of research and He has guided several Ph.Ds and over five dozen M.Phil candidates. Although, it is not possible to circumscribe his comprehensive achievements into a finite space, yet the pile of his degrees and awards speaks volumes of his marvelous eruditeness. His services were acknowledged at different forums from time to

time. He was even awarded Honorary D.Litt by reputed Business University, Costa Rica in 2014. Orville University awarded D.Litt. International Peace University awarded honorary D.Litt 2019 and Nelson Mandela University, USA also awarded Doctor of Letters to Dr. Uppal. University of South America also awarded honorary D.Litt. International Journal; Pune conferred the Best Reviewer Award on him. His monumental work encouraged various national organizations to honor such an inclusive academic and research stalwart with Jewel of India Award, Best Educationist Award, Shatiji Shiromani Purskar, Pride of India Award and Excellent Research Award by Punjab Commerce and Management Association respectively.

This colossal figure earned Life Time Achievement Award from Dashmesh Girls College, Badal for his exemplarily service to the cause of education. Deputy speaker, Punjab assembly, S. Ajab Singh Bhatti also awarded Life Time Achievement award. Malout administration honored Dr. Uppal during 71th R-Public Day celebration due to unparalleled contribution in the field of higher education and quality research. Nelson Mandela University awarded International Dr. Abdul Kalam Best Economist Innovative Award for the year 2019. He was also awarded Eminence Social Scientist Award by Deshmeh Girls College, Badal. He was also honored during jagat guru shri Guru Nanak Dev Ji birth-day (550) Celebration. His name is also selected for Amity

Excellence Award for the Best Academic Author in the area of Banking and conferred during INBUSH ERA 2020, Best Outstanding Researcher Award-2020, Outstanding Researcher-2021 Award and MTC Global Life Time Achievement Award-2022., Top 10 Thinkers Award-2022., Punjab Rattan Award-2022 and Best Researcher Award-2021. An Excellent Academician Award-2022, Pre-eminent Professor Award-2022, Indian Institute of Finance Professor Award-2021. He is a nominee for Shri Padma Award-2023. Dr Uppal's contributions to the societal benefits of mankind are beyond speculations. His zeal to bring about change is an inspiration to every young student and researcher to work in a way that helps the world and brings us closer to the idea of global peace. He is an embodiment of passion, perseverance, excellence, critical thinking, and professionalism. His work and publications is a true asset to the world of economics. His thorough research in the field and several years of experience has contributed vastly to the Indian Banking and Finance Sector. His research papers have compared the thesis and studies of different researchers across the globe over time.

This has helped the Indian economy to understand and take considerable measures into improving the current conditions. Furthermore, Dr Uppal's studies have brought out numerous new and fresh perspectives of looking at the system and transforming it for the better and the growth of the In-

dian economy. Additionally, his years of experience in teaching and his in-born zeal to educate have revamped his students' lives. He is presently working in advisory board of editors in national and international reputed research journals. While serving as chief-in- editor of reputed research journal he explored his worth in other areas as well. He wrote as many as fifty articles for leading Indian Newspapers on current social and economic issues. He was invited for expert talks on the relevant issues by various govt. and private TV Channels and All India Radio, Jalandhar. He designed syllabi of UGC job oriented courses such as e-banking and e-commerce from Certificate level upto advance Diploma. He also mentors young teachers to yield quality research under faculty development programme. He has signed a MOU with Desh Bhagat University to organize seminars/conferences on burning issues. His academic and research works holds promise for his society as his plea of merger of banks eight years back has been implemented by the present Indian dispensation. He has also successfully defended his D.Litt thesis on the very burning topic, "Managing Transformation in Indian Banks Through E-Delivery Channels- Challenges and Opportunities" in Utkal University, Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India in 2021. He desires to restructure and revolutionize Indian banking industry by linking it with e-technology thereby ushering a new era of competitive banking system not only at home but also abroad.

For him, research is a never-ending process. The loss of human resources due to cancer has again caused a stir in his indefatigable research mind and he has embarked on a new project i.e An empirical Study of "Loss of Human Resources with the Extensive Penetration

of Cancer in the Malwa Belt of Punjab and its Future Perspectives." Infact, he is an asset for the society. Dr. Uppal is also actively engaged in leadership tasks that correspond with the breadth of his academic vision and energy. He has independently organized National conferences and seminars on issues catering to the current financial milieu. Being an excellent orator, he also chairs, quite frequently, technical sessions in various seminars and conferences across the whole nation. Indeed, Dr. Uppal is an academician, author and scholar, who has been one of the most productive and influential contributors to the field of Banking and Finance that our country has seen in recent times. In brief, the outstanding educational and research achievements of Dr. Uppal are simply too many to recount within the space of a short citation.

Today, the echelon he has attained academically, intellectually, socially and spiritually is even beyond the dreams of majority of the achievers. This erudite scholar's research work and academic excellence promoted various national and international organizations to honor such an inclusive academician. He, truly, is the embodiment of mission and vision of critical thinking, professionalism, excellence and innovation. Dr. Uppal through his research wishes to implement center- state govt. Policies to modernize the Indian Economy or see New India. Moreover, his research will benefit policymakers, planners, researchers, the Indian banking industry, and others interested in banking studies. May god give him more energy and strength in the times to come to achieve new heights!

[The author is a Principal, Baba Farid College of Management and Technology, Bathinda (Punjab)]

Contd. from Page 2

Worshipping Lachit Barphukan's valour....

The celebration in Delhi was inaugurated by Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on 23 November, where she also opened two exhibitions, one on various Assamese traditional houses (designed by Nuruddin Ahmed) and another with artefacts from the Ahom and pre-Ahom era starting from the reign of Kamrup king Kumar Bhaskar Varma and also some handwritten letters of Vir Lachit. A panel discussion on 'Ahom saga of hope, skills and courage' was organised at the same venue which participated by Lt. General Rana Pratap Kalita,

former State police chief Prakash Singh along with Kapil Kapoor, Kuldeep Patowary, Chandan Kumar Sarma and Samundra Gupta Kashyap, which was moderated by former State chief secretary Jishnu Barua. Another discussion on 'Ignored historiography of Assam's assertion' was participated by Gauhati University professor Rajib Handique, author Vikram Sampath, Mangaldai College teacher Sangeeta Gogoi, filmmaker Rajesh Kumar Singh and actor Chandraprakash Dwivedi, which was moderated by State education advisor Nani Gopal Mahanta. Deliberations

included the heroic saga of Kamrupa king Prithu, who overpowered Muslim invader Bhakhtiyar Khilji, glorious days of Bhaskar Varma, laudable effort of Assamese historian Suryya Kumar Bhuyan, who picked up the inspiring story of Lachit Barphukan and common residents, be ready for battles to fight and safeguard the motherland.

The tale of Bagh Hazarika was raised in the discussion, where it was profoundly declared that the Ahom history pages do not include any such warrior in association with Lachit Barphukan. History

teacher Ms Gogoi firmly stated that she did not have any authentic information about the presence of Bagh Hazarika. Earlier, a recognized Assamese historian Jogen Phukan also termed Bagh Hazarika or Ismail Siddiqui as an imaginary character. Mentionable is that a section of Assamese intellectuals claimed in various forums that Lachit emerged victorious in the Saraghat battle only because of Bagh Hazarika. Even the statue of Lachit Barphukan in Guwahati accompanies a soldier looked like a Muslim.

On the first day itself, a cultural function was inaugurated

by CM Sarma and Union law & justice minister Kiren Rijiju at Sunder nursery, in presence of Union minister Rameswar Teli and State minister Bimal Bora, where various artists showcased splendid items including a traditional prayer of Tai-Ahom community, a Sattriya dance program by Mridusmita Das Bora and her team, a medley of folk dances of Assam presented by maestro Ranjit Gogoi, a drama depicting the illustrious life of Vir Lachit and solo an enchanting performance by popular Assamese singer Angarag Papon Mahanta.

Bank Pass Book Lost

I, the undersigned, have lost my Saving Bank Pass Book of State Bank of India (SBI), Ima Market Branch, bearing account No. 37540011785 on the way between Nambol to Leimaram on September 10, 2022.

Finders are requested to kindly hand over it to the undersigned.

Sd/-

Warepam Ango Singh
Nambol Leimapokpam,
Khunpham Mamang Leikai
Contact No. 9615694136

UFC Gym India opens newest club in Imphal

Courtesy: Times of India
Imphal, Dec 1:

UFC Gym India today announced the opening of its newest location, UFC GYM Imphal in Manipur.

This training facility is the first UFC GYM in Northeast India. Imphal is a part of the Smart Cities Mission under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. It is home to the 6-time World Amateur Boxing Champion, Mary Kom.

With a signature UFC-style Octagon, boxing bag rack and premium equipment from Life Fitness, the gym provides a complete setup for MMA and fitness training.

Members will be able to train in a premium facility with all the necessary equipment required to train like a UFC athlete.

Additionally, the gym provides training programs for all ages and athletic abilities through access to a large variety of group fitness classes and functional training. Members interested in fitness will have access to a one-stop shop for their fitness needs through the functional fitness area, strength and cardio equipment and group fitness classes such as yoga, Zumba, spinning, and more.

Located at Kwakeithel Rd, Ningthemkol, Imphal, the fa-

cility will also offer youth programming for children above 5 years.

Master Licensees of UFC GYM India, Farzad Palia and Istayak Ansari, stated, "The craze for MMA in the northeast is unparalleled with a number of MMA fighters hailing from this region. We're hopeful of grooming this talent further at our UFC GYM Imphal location and helping them reach the international stage and hopefully, the UFC."

Sub-Licensees of UFC GYM Imphal, Rinkhui Shimray, Deepak Singh and Thongam Leo stated, "Manipur has been the epitome in producing world-class athletes for our country. However, there is no world-class training facility here and that is what we want to provide at UFC GYM to support the current and future talent here. UFC GYM programming is designed to cater to the training styles of every sport as well as for people who are just looking to get fit and that is what's amazing about it."

Since debuting in 2009, UFC GYM has opened 150+ locations throughout the United States, Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Mexico, Oman, Philippines, South America, Taiwan, the United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and more.

In 2018, the fitness franchise expanded its global brand presence to India, which is comprised of the world's second-largest population, in partnership with Artaxerxes Fitness & Lifestyle Pvt. Ltd, led by Master Licensees Istayak Ansari and Farzad Palia. The Master Licensees have an unprecedented partnership agreement with UFC GYM to open more than 100 gym locations throughout India through 2032.

UFC GYM will also be launching the UFC FIT and CLASS models in India this year. UFC GYM programming has been developed through exclusive access to the training regimens of internationally-acclaimed UFC athletes and world-class Fitness Directors. The company's unique Train Different approach provides members with everything they need for the entire family to move, to get fit and to live a healthy life regardless of their age or current athletic ability.

UFC GYM is the first major brand extension of UFC, the world's premier MMA organization, created in alliance with New Evolution Ventures (NeV), developers of many of the world's most successful fitness brands. As the first to unite the benefits of MMA with fitness, the brand is not what you expect, and more

than you can imagine. UFC GYM's TRAIN DIFFERENT approach provides members with the ultimate fitness experience and programming that secures results for all ages and training levels.

With over 150 locations opened and 700 additional locations currently in development globally, UFC GYM has revolutionized the fitness industry and positively impacted countless lives worldwide. UFC GYM offers the opportunity to own and operate a franchise domestically and internationally.

UFC is the world's premier mixed martial arts organization (MMA), with more than 688 million fans and 198 million social media followers. The organization produces more than 40 live events annually in some of the most prestigious arenas around the world, while broadcasting to nearly 900 million TV households across more than 170 countries.

UFC's athlete roster features the world's best MMA athletes representing more than 75 countries. The organization's digital offerings include UFC FIGHT PASS, one of the world's leading streaming services for combat sports.

UFC is owned by global entertainment, sports and content company Endeavor, and is headquartered in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Active Covid cases in country decline to 4,767

Agency
New Delhi, Dec 1:

India logged 291 new coronavirus infections taking the total tally of Covid cases to 4,46,72,638, while the active cases declined to 4,767, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Thursday.

The death toll climbed to 5,30,622 with two fatalities reconciled by Kerala, the data updated at 8 am stated.

The active cases comprise 0.01 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate increased to 98.80 per

cent, according to the ministry website.

A decrease of 88 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 4,41,37,249, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.19 per cent. According to the ministry's website, 219.92 crore doses of Covid vaccine have been administered in the country so far under the nationwide vaccination drive. India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August

7, 2020, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19.

The country crossed the grim milestone of two crore on May 4, three crore on June 23 last year and four crore on January 25 this year.

The three deaths reported in a span of 24 hours are one each from Himachal Pradesh, Kerala and Maharashtra.

2022 Gujarat elections: Voter turnout of 48.48% recorded till 3 pm in first phase

Agency
Gandhinagar, Dec 1:

A voter turnout of 48.48% was recorded till 3 pm on Thursday in the first phase of Gujarat Assembly elections, Election Commission data showed. The voting began at 8 am in 89 seats, and will continue till 5 pm, reported ANI.

The elections are being held in two phases. Voting for the second phase will take place on December 5. The results will be declared on December 8 along with the Himachal Pradesh Assembly elections.

In the first phase, 788 candidates, including 70 women, are contesting the polls on 89 of 182 seats of the state Assembly.

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party is looking to re-

tain its 27-year-long rule in the state, while the Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party are looking to wrest control on matters such as inflation and unemployment. Meanwhile, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said he was expecting record levels of voting in the state, reported *The Times of India*.

"Preparations are complete, now is the time to call upon the voters to come out of their homes and vote," he said. "Participate in the festival of democracy, enjoy it and vote. Forces are deployed everywhere. A lot of monitoring is being done to ensure that the election is free from inducement. No other incident should happen."

Prominent candidates in the first phase include in-

cumbent Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel contesting the Ghatlodia constituency, AAP chief ministerial candidate Isudan Gadhvi from Khambhaliya and former Congress leader and BJP candidate Hardik Patel from Viramgam.

AAP state chief Gopal Italia is contesting the Katargam constituency, Home Minister Harsh Sanghavi from Majura, cricketer Ravindra Jadeja's wife Rivaba Jadeja from Jamnagar North, former minister and BJP leader Parshottam Solanki from Bhavnagar Rural and BJP's Kantilal Amrutia from Morbi.

In this phase, 2,39,76,670 voters, including 1,24,33,362 males, 1,15,42,811 females and 497 members of the transgender community are eligible to vote.

1 dead, 12 injured as supporters of BJP, CPI(M) clash in Tripura: Police

Agency
Agartala, Dec 1:

One person was killed and 12 were injured during clashes between supporters of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and opposition Communist Party of India (Marxist) in

Tripura on Wednesday, officials said.

The clashes took place at Charilam, home turf of deputy chief minister Jishnu Devvarma, barely 27 kilometres away from Agartala. While no police complaint was registered at the time of filing this report, both par-

ties blamed each other for the attack.

CPI(M) state secretary Jitendra Chaudhury alleged "Devvarma was behind the attack".

Information and cultural affairs minister Sushanta Chowdhury said the clashes

were part of a "deep rooted conspiracy" hatched by the CPI(M) to malign the BJP-led government ahead of the elections next year.

A duty officer from the state police headquarters said: "Several people were injured and one was killed in the incident."

Sports

Argentina, Poland, France and Australia advances to World Cup last 16

Agency
Doha, Dec 1:

Day 11 of the World Cup in Doha saw wild celebrations as Australia made it to the tournament's knockout stage for the first time since 2006, while Argentina cruised into the knockout round with a comfortable win over Poland.

Argentina coast past Poland 2-0 to top World Cup Group C

It was a comfortable win for Argentina over Poland as the South American giants topped Group C and confirmed their place in the knockout stage.

Helped by a relentless Lionel Messi, Argentina notched up a 2-0 victory at Stadium 974, with both goals coming in the second half.

Alexis Mac Allister and Julian Alvarez's goals capped a dominant display by coach Lionel Scaloni's players with tens of thousands of raucous supporters packing the stadium to cheer on their team.

Messi never stopped surging forward and posed a menace to Poland throughout the game with his dribbling ability and vision.

His glittering performance stood in stark contrast to that of Poland's star striker Robert Lewandowski who failed to

Group C									
Team	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	
1 Argentina	3	2	0	1	5	2	3	6	
2 Poland	3	1	1	1	2	2	0	4	
3 Mexico	3	1	1	1	2	3	-1	4	
4 Saudi Arabia	3	1	0	2	3	5	-2	3	

Group D									
Team	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	
1 France	3	2	0	1	6	3	3	6	
2 Australia	3	2	0	1	3	4	-1	6	
3 Tunisia	3	1	1	1	1	1	0	4	
4 Denmark	3	0	1	2	1	3	-2	1	

make an impact.

Messi, 35, has admitted that Qatar will probably be his last World Cup while Lewandowski, who is a year younger, has said he is unsure if he will make it to the next tournament, which is being held in North America in 2026.

Despite Poland's lacklustre performance they still managed to make it through to the knockout phase on goal difference. They will

take on France in the last 16 on Sunday.

Australia upset Denmark 1-0 to earn World Cup last 16 spot

A goal by Mathew Leckie gave Australia a 1-0 victory over Denmark and sent the Socceroos through to the last 16 of the World Cup for the first time since 2006.

Denmark, ranked 10th in the world by football's governing body FIFA, needed to

win the match at the Al Janoub Stadium to progress.

There were no goals in the first half as Australia frustrated Denmark's attempts to move forward and mounted a few counterattacks of their own.

It was about the one-hour mark when Leckie broke the deadlock with a moment of magic, outsmarting Danish full-back Joakim Maehle before powering the ball past Kasper Schmeichel and into the far corner of the net.

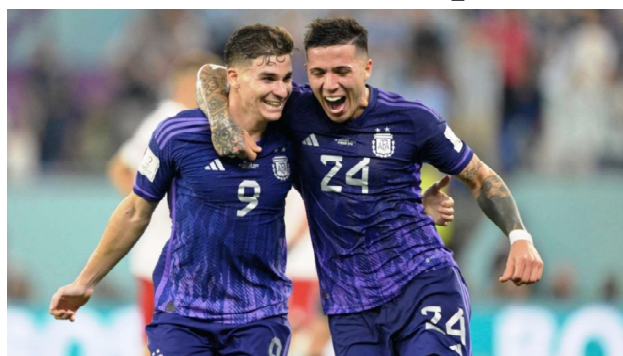
"I'm proud, exhausted, everything really. It's hard to describe the emotions right now," Leckie told Australian broadcaster SBS after the game.

"We always knew we could do it as a group. We had our doubts but our spirit, our belief, our work ethic and how close we are as a group shows on the pitch. The last 15, 20 minutes, we battled until the end."

There were celebrations in Australia and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese hailed what he called a "magnificent win".

Tunisia stun holders France but crash out of the World Cup

France, the defending champions who had already booked their place in the knockout stage, fell to Tunisia



Julian Alvarez, left, celebrates scoring Argentina's second goal with Enzo Fernandez

in a shock 1-0 defeat at the Education City stadium.

France-born Wahbi Khazri scored the only goal of the game in the 58th minute as Tunisia had caused a serious upset.

It was only the third victory in six World Cup tournaments for Tunisia. They were eliminated when Australia beat Denmark in the other group match.

France, who won their first two matches, finished top of Group D on goal difference from runners-up Australia. Mexico defeat Saudi

Arabia but fail to make World Cup last 16

It was a night of celebration and sadness for Mexico as they beat Saudi Arabia 2-1 in a thrilling match but failed to make the knockout stage.

Henry Martin and Luis Chavez both scored in a thrilling Group C match, with the two goals coming in quick succession early in the second half.

The Mexicans needed one more goal to overtake Poland on goal difference and get through the group but it was the Saudis who scored in the

dying moments of the game, making it 2-1.

"It's a hard blow, there are no words," said Mexico midfielder Edson Alvarez. "The team went out looking for it from the start and we had a lot of chances. But we couldn't score and that leaves a bitter taste."

The loss was a further disappointment for Saudi Arabia who started the tournament on a high, beating Argentina 2-1.

The loss to Mexico followed a 2-0 defeat to Poland and means Saudi Arabia finish bottom of the group.