

# Biden to skip Papua New Guinea, Australia trip; only to attend G7 summit in Japan

Washington, May 17: US President Joe Biden has cancelled his planned trip to Australia and Papua New Guinea. However, Biden will attend the Group of Seven (G7) Summit scheduled to take place in Hiroshima, Japan this week.

President Biden will return to the United States on Sunday, following the completion of the G7 summit, in order to be back for meetings with Congressional leaders to ensure that Congress takes action by the deadline to avert default. The President spoke to Prime Minister Albanese earlier today to inform him that he will be postponing his trip to Australia. He also invited the Prime Minister for an official state visit at a time to be agreed by the teams. The President's team engaged with the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea's team to inform them as well, a statement by White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre, read.

"We look forward to finding other ways to engage with Australia, the Quad, Papua New Guinea and the leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum in the coming year," the statement added. Earlier, the White House indicated the cancellation of Biden's trip which was reported in US media. John Kirby, the White House national security spokesperson, said that Biden would depart for Japan on Wednesday as scheduled, but a subsequent stop in Australia is being re-evaluated.

"We're working through, thinking through, the rest of the trip right now," Kirby said, as he noted Biden would meet India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australia's Anthony Albanese at the G7 anyway in Hiroshima, Japan. "We're re-evaluating the rest of the trip right now. We will make proper notifications if there are changes made to the rest of the trip. Given where we are right now, it's also incredibly prudent and responsible for the President to take a look at the rest of the trip and evaluate whether it makes sense going forward," said Kirby.



"We'll see where it goes... We are going to re-evaluate the rest of the week after the G7, and we'll see where it goes. If the trip gets truncated or changed or modified in any way, it should be nothing more than a statement of the President putting his priorities where he believes they need to be," said Kirby. Kirby stressed that Biden would be meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida at the G-7 Summit in Hiroshima. He will also engage with the prime ministers of India -- Narendra Modi -- and

Australia -- Anthony Albanese -- while he is at the economic gathering, Kirby said. "We're re-evaluating the rest of the trip right now," Kirby added. Biden was to attend a three-day summit of G7 leaders starting on Friday. Afterwards, he was to make a brief, historic stop in Papua New Guinea, then travel to Australia for a meeting of Japan, Australia, India, and the US grouping known as the Quad countries. He was also scheduled to attend a summit in Sydney alongside the leaders of India, Japan and Australia, collectively known as the Quad.

The development comes amid the United States government's debt ceiling crisis which has not been resolved yet. Republican and Democratic lawmakers have failed to reach an agreement to lift the USD 31.4 trillion debt ceiling, as negotiations continue. Treasury has cautioned the government could default as soon June 1, an outcome that could have dire

consequences for the economy, if no deal is made. The negotiations on raising the nation's borrowing limit in order to avert a historic default is yet to be resolved.

The effects of an American default would reverberate throughout an already unsteady global economy. The White House had made clear that defaulting on US obligations would have damaging effects that stretch well beyond economic concerns. "That would certainly, from a national security perspective, have a detrimental effect," said Kirby earlier on a potential US default. "Certainly in terms of our reputation and standing around the world, it sends a horrible message to nations like Russia and China who would love nothing more than to be able to point at this and say: 'See? The United States is not a reliable partner, the United States is not a stable leader of peace and security around the world,'" he added.

# Afghanistan remains one of world's worst humanitarian disasters: Human Rights Watch

New York, May 17: New York-based non-governmental organization Human Rights Watch (HRW) on Monday said Afghanistan remains one of the world's worst humanitarian disasters, according to Khaama Press. The organization in a statement said two-thirds of Afghanistan's population is food insecure, including 875,000 children facing acute malnutrition and women and girls remain at most risk. The statement also added that the United Nations is fighting at two fronts, "keeping aid flowing to those most in need while also keep-

ing pressure on the Taliban to end its appalling human rights violations."

As per Khaama Press, since the Taliban took control of the country in August 2021, the amount of international aid has abruptly lost on one side, and the introduction of repressive policies, including banning women from working with the UN agencies by the de facto authorities, has worsened the situation. According to the UN, the engagement with the Taliban was proposed by the organization's special envoys in the Doha meeting without

recognition of the regime until there is progress on human rights.

Several Afghan human rights and civil society organizations have, however, criticized the UN and the international community for accepting the current repressive policies of the Taliban and rejecting all engagement with the group until the human and women's fundamental rights were accepted. The UN and aid organizations have faced a shortage of humanitarian funding levels that, without immediate funding, may worsen the humanitarian crisis.

# Pakistan looking towards friendly countries for funding following delay in revival of IMF bailout program

Islamabad, May 17: Pakistan is now looking towards friendly countries for funding following a delay in the revival of USD 6.5 billion International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout program, Pakistan-based ARY News reported. The staff-level agreement between IMF and Pakistan is being delayed from February 9. The current loan programme with the IMF will end on June 30, 2023, and Pakistan is now "considering" a new IMF programme on renewed conditions.

The fund is delaying the ninth review with Islamabad which has 'forced' Pakistan to get rid of the current loan programme and generate more funds from friendly countries, sources said, according to ARY News. As per sources, during the tenure of Imran Khan's government, 'tough' demands of the IMF were also agreed upon for the loan programme. The incumbent government imposed issues of Rs 170 billion through the money budget in February as per the demands agreed upon by Imran's government. Prices of gas and electricity were increased up to 40pc and the rupee further depreciated as the IMF was assured to bring the dollar exchange rate as per open market.

# Iranian pressure mounts on Hamas, Hezbollah for 'Joint Operational Mechanism' against Israel

Tel Aviv, May 17: In an Iranian bid to consolidate power against Israel, Tehran is placing heavy pressure on Hamas, Hezbollah and Palestinian Islamic Jihad to establish a "joint operational mechanism" based in Lebanon to coordinate military activities. This development comes amidst the ongoing confrontation between Israel and Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip and aims to unite Iranian proxies in the region. The alliance of Iranian-backed terror groups known as the "Jerusalem Axis" is Iran's counterweight to the Abraham Accords. This axis finds support in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Yemen.

Reports from Arab and Lebanese sources indicate that Iran has been actively working towards establishing a shared operational headquarters for Hezbollah, Hamas, and Islamic Jihad in southern Lebanon. There are indications of plans to create a joint centre to coordinate rocket attacks on Israel. While the move seeks to strengthen the Jerusalem Axis's military capabilities, the Tazbit Press Service has learned that this is also creating internal divisions and tensions within its various terror groups.

Yahya Sinwar, the leader of Hamas in Gaza, has expressed opposition to the initiative, preferring to maintain a more neutral stance. However, Saleh Aroui, an influential Hamas figure reportedly based in Turkey supports closer ties with Iran and is leading the push for an "Iranian option." Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah prefers to maintain his own "proxy" status rather than fully aligning with Hamas. As for Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Iran provides it with around \$100 million annually. However, Tehran gave PJ freedom of action to pursue the Egyptian-brokered ceasefire which ended a five-day conflict with Israel. The heightened coordination between Iran and its proxies was evidenced by a series of meetings involving high-ranking officials earlier this year.

In one meeting of note, Esmail Qaani, the commander of the Quds Force of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, held discussions with Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas deputy Saleh Aroui, and senior officials from Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah at the Iranian embassy in Lebanon. Shortly after Qaani's visit, a barrage of rockets was fired into Israel from Lebanon on April 6, strongly suggesting a coordinated effort.

Israel responded to the rocket attacks by targeting Hamas-affiliated sites in southern Lebanon. The following day, Hassan Nasrallah held a meeting with Haniyeh, further suggesting Hezbollah's involvement and approval of the rocket fire. These events underscore the close coordination between Iran and its proxies, indicating Iran's aspirations to establish greater coordination among the terror groups, including rocket attacks from Lebanese territory.

# EIB agrees to Euro 350 million loan to IFAD to strengthen food security, reduce poverty

Rome, May 17: The European Investment Bank (EIB) and the UN's International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) have penned two agreements to further strengthen their cooperation in low- and middle-income countries worldwide, with a particular focus on Africa. The agreements were signed in Rome by EIB Vice-President Ambroise Fayolle and IFAD President Alvaro Lario. The agreement signed today for a total of Euro 350 million is the second finance contract under the Framework agreement for the Euro 500 million package announced in November 2022.

This EIB financing, in line with the EU's Global Gateway strategy, will strengthen IFAD's response to help small-scale farmers adapt to climate change and cope with the ongoing global food crisis linked to high food, fertiliser, and fuel prices. In addition to improving food security, the deal will strengthen small-scale farmers' resilience to climate change and preserve natural resources, safeguarding the environment. The initial tranche of Euro 150 million was disbursed in March 2023.

The signature of the Procedural Framework agreement between the EIB and IFAD will further strengthen synergies by facilitating project implementation and procurement monitoring for jointly financed public sector projects in shared countries of operation. This procedural framework supports the growing trend of cooperation and mutual reliance, drawing upon previously established frameworks with other Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) to provide clear, consistent, and resource-efficient procurement structures.

The agreements fall within the EIB's strategy to increase its cooperation with clients, EU Member States, development finance institutions, civil society, and many other partners under its EIB Global branch, launched last year and through which the Bank invested Euro 10.8 billion beyond the European Union in 2022.

# CINEMA DIARY

## Film has suddenly lost its charm: Amitabh Bachchan

Megastar Amitabh Bachchan, who met multiple Oscar-nominated filmmaker Christopher Nolan to talk about celluloid films in the digital era, rues that film has lost its charm due to the growth of digitalisation. "The word film has suddenly lost its charm, for there does not seem to be any need to shoot films on film. It's all digital now," Big B wrote on his blog. He shared his thoughts as he reflected on a roundtable event held to debate and ascertain the importance of film heritage and its preservation. Nolan and visual artist Tacita Dean are here for the fourth edition of Reframing the Future of Film, hosted by Viacom18 in association with the Film Heritage Foundation.

The 75-year-old cine icon pointed out how what was known as the "film industry", where celebrities were "known as 'film stars', has now gone digital. "So, in the complete absence of that medium and that product, it would be quite in order to call ourselves 'robotic genes' or words of similar sound.... 'digi act' or 'digi digi'. Whatever... it would be an issue that would need consideration," he added.



Big B also shared some photographs from the event where he met Nolan, who is here along with visual artist Tacita Dean on an invitation from the Film Heritage Foundation to talk about the virtues of shooting on film. He recounted

how the early years of film were "a bit restrictive" for the artists. "The film stock was the most important and costly product on set, and its most minimum use was the challenge for us. If we made the mistake of asking for another 'take' for the betterment of the film, the director, in most cases would reject the idea of a retake. "He

would simply weigh it with commerce and retort: If you want another take, pay for it." Big B said while shooting his debut film "Saat Hindustani", he was in a "terribly frightful challenge" to give a shot right in the first take as they were working with a limited budget and film stock.

# Style evolves with experimentation: Yami Gautam

Actress Yami Gautam says there were times when she ended up making fashion mistakes, but she feels one's sensibility evolves with more experimentation with style. "In current times, there is no dearth of fashion experts, stylists and clothing brands, but when it comes to fashion the only thing that matters is the comfort factor," Yami told. "One should know their body type well to experiment with trends. When I look back at my past mistakes, I realise that there were times when I wasn't myself and that's why certain styles did not work well for me. It's a learning process, and by experimenting with your style, one keeps evolving it," she added.



The "Vicky Donor" actress walked the ramp here for KALKI, a Mumbai-based fashion house on the final day of Bombay Times Fashion Week 2018 on Sunday. The brand unveiled its exclusive runway collection Spring-Summer 2018. The fashion show saw the presence of

small screen celebrities like Pankhuri Awasthy, Pooja Bannerjee, Tanaz Irani, Tanya Sharma and Mrunal Thakur. On her favourite fashion trends, Yami said she loves feminine soft shades for the summer season. "I like pastels and

bright hues too. I like summer dresses and tank tops. I think they never go out of style. As much as I'm happy with western wear for red carpet and social dos, I also like Indian ethnic wear for special occasions. I am very fond of sports wear and I shop

for it online most of the time since 'I'm always on the move,' she said. What are the must-haves in her daily beauty routine? "When I leave my home, I make sure I have a lip-balm, hand sanitiser and some face tissues in my bag," she said.

# Disha Patani finds it fun to dress up for Indian weddings



Actor Disha Patani says she enjoys playing dress up for traditional Indian weddings and she personally pays a lot of attention to make-up, accessories and hair colour during such occasions. "It is so much fun to dress up for Indian weddings."

Not just the huge list of ceremonies to attend, but these days we also have different wedding themes -- from grand traditional heritage set up to seaside affairs... we have a host


of options. "That also gives us a chance to dress up differently and experiment with our overall look. When it comes to creating a look, I pay a lot of attention to my make-up, accessories and hair colour," said the "Baaghi 2" actress. The actress feels it is imperative to choose the right hair colour that matches your skin tone, features and most importantly, personality. "Dashing hair colour can even

transform a modest look, and can make you look fashionable - that's the power of good hair colour and style," said Disha, whose favourite hair colour

shades are NEW Garnier Color Naturals' Caramel Brown and Wine Burgundy, which she says suit bright-hued Indian outfits as well as with pastel gowns.

# I love political satires: Rajeev Nigam

Actor Rajeev Nigam says he loves political satires, and that was his first attraction towards TV show "Har Shaakh Pe Ulhu Baithaa Hai". Aired on Star Plus, the show is about a corrupt and funny politician in his madcap world. Rajeev plays the politician. "I love political satires. I have always written about the political situation in our country," Rajeev told. "The second thing that attracted me to the show is that this is a show that represents the common man of our nation. Whatever we portray on the show, in each episode, we speak the mind of the public. "The public usually thinks about how a few politicians are busy lining their own wallets, how they fool us, how they rule and control us... These things are spoken about on the show, which ultimately convinced me into doing the show," he added. Rajeev, who has been seen in several comedy reality entertainers on television, says there is no pressure of being the lead actor on the show. "It is important to portray the content in the right way. All my co-actors have their own responsibilities and their characters to play on-screen. All of us try very hard in our individual way to justify the script of the show, so there is no pressure on me particularly as such," he added.



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Unit: Hindustan Bio Sciences Limited (Script Code 532041)

With reference to the subject cited, this is to inform the Exchange that meeting of the Board of Directors of M/s. Hindustan Bio Sciences Limited will be held on Tuesday, the 30th day of May, 2023 at 02.00 p.m. at the registered office of the company situated at Plot No: 31, Sagor Co-Operative Housing Society, Road No: 2, Banjara Hills, Hyderabad -- 500 034 to consider the following:

- 1 Audited financial results of the company for the year ended 31-03-2023.
- 2 Audit report for year ended 31.03.2023.
- 3 Appointment of Secretaria Auditor
- 4 Appointment of internal auditor
- 4 Any other matter with the permission of Chair.

Sd/-  
JVR Mohan Raju  
Managing Director and Compliance Officer  
(DIN: 00068000)

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