

**WORLD 5**  
INDONESIA'S SEMERU  
VOLCANO ERUPTS

**MONEY 6**  
LOT OF UNHEALTHY SPECULATION  
ON CRYPTO TAKING PLACE: FM

**SPORT 8**  
SINDHU ENTERS FINAL OF  
BWF WORLD TOUR FINALS



# sunday pioneer

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## CAPSULE

**GIRL GETS 'SEX' ON NO. PLATE, DCW STEPS IN**  
New Delhi: The Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) has issued a notice to the Transport Department seeking that the registration number for a girl's two-wheeler comprising the letters 'SEX' be changed as she has been facing "severe harassment" due to it. The DCW has also asked the department to mention in its reply the total number of vehicles that have been registered under the new series.

**COURT GRANTS BAIL TO PETER IN INX MEDIA CASE**  
New Delhi: A Delhi court on Saturday granted bail to former media baron Peter Mukerjee in the INX Media money laundering case linked to former Union minister P Chidambaram and his son Karti. Special Judge M K Nagpal granted relief to Mukerjee, the erstwhile director and COO of INX Media.

**49 KIDS TAKE ILL AFTER EATING FRUIT IN SEONI**  
Seoni: At least 49 children studying in a Government-run primary and middle school took ill after allegedly consuming a poisonous fruit in Madhya Pradesh's Seoni district, an official said on Saturday.

**VINOD DUA, VETERAN JOURNALIST, DIES AT 67**  
New Delhi: Veteran journalist Vinod Dua, who started his career with Doordarshan in the black and white era and went on to make his mark in the digital space in the decades that followed, died in Delhi's Apollo hospital on Saturday. He was 67.

# 2 more Omicron cases detected

## One each flier from S Africa, Zimbabwe found positive in Maha, Gujarat

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Two more new cases of Omicron infection, SARS-CoV-2 variant of Covid-19 were reported on Saturday in India, one each from Maharashtra and Gujarat. With this, the number of infections from Omicron has gone to four in two days. Two cases of the new variant of Covid-19 were reported from Karnataka on Friday. On Saturday, one case was reported from Jamnagar in Gujarat, another one from Mumbai.

A 72-year-old man from Zimbabwe, who reached Jamnagar last week, was found infected with the Omicron variant of the coronavirus dis-

ease becoming the first case in the State, the State health department confirmed.

Dr S Chatterjee, the nodal officer for Covid-19 at the State-run Guru Gobind Singh Hospital in Jamnagar told reporters, "The man's samples were sent to the Biotechnological Research Laboratory in Ahmedabad which found him positive for the Omicron variant. He has been kept in isolation ever since his admission to the hospital. We had traced all his contacts, screened them and they tested negative."

He added, "We will test all his contacts once again after the reports confirmed that he carried the Omicron variant of the



People wait on the premises of Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Narayan Hospital (LNJP) in New Delhi on Saturday. 12 patients suspected to be infected with the Covid-19 'Omicron' variant have been admitted in the hospital. PTI

virus."

Gujarat's additional chief secretary (health) Manoj Aggarwal said, "A micro containment zone has been made where he is living. In the area, we will do the tracing, testing of people."

He landed in Jamnagar on November 28. Soon after, he was running a fever and his doctor asked him to go for an RT-PCR test and he was found Covid-19 infected. The officials are also tracing 87 people who could have come in contact with him in the Jamnagar district.

The man was visiting his in-laws at his native Morakda village near Jamnagar city and has been living in Mumbai, which has been classified as an

"at-risk" country, for many years. In the second instance, a 33-year-old man, who arrived in Mumbai from South Africa via New Delhi, tested positive for the latest variant on Saturday. The passenger, who is exhibiting mild symptoms, including fever, is currently under treatment at a Covid centre in Kalyan-Dombivli.

The infected person arrived from Capetown on November 24 and complained of mild fever, but no other symptoms were noticed.

Meanwhile, 30 other passengers coming from Dubai to Ahmedabad and a woman who reached Vadodara from London have tested positive for Covid-19.

## Delta derivatives hit Covishield efficacy, booster needed: ICMR

### Their study reveals Delta variants can escape vax-induced immune response

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Derivatives of the Covid-19 Delta variant have the potential to reduce the neutralisation ability of the Covishield vaccine, especially among those who have never been infected with the virus, said ICMR researchers calling for booster doses.

They, however, added that even with reduced neutralisation ability, Covishield will protect against severe disease and fatalities.

"Delta variant has slowly dominated other variants of concern. Subsequently, Delta has further mutated to Delta AY.1 to Delta AY.126. Of these, Delta AY.1 has been reported from several countries, including India. It's considered highly infectious and probable escape mutant," researchers said in the latest study posted on bioRxiv (a repository of pre-print studies).

An escape mutant is one



that can escape human immune response or vaccine-induced immune response. Researchers had previously evaluated the efficacy of Covaxin against Delta AY.1 (because it is an escape mutant) and found the vaccine to be effective.

The study is yet to be peer-reviewed. Researchers evaluated the neutralising potential of blood samples from people who had received two doses of the Covishield vaccine.

They studied three types of blood samples.

The first was from people who have been fully vaccinated with Covishield and have never been infected with Covid.

The second was from people who have been fully vaccinated after recovering from

Covid infection in the past. The third was from people who got infected with Covid after being fully vaccinated, that is people who suffered breakthrough infections.

They observed the highest reduction in the level of neutralising antibodies against the Delta — a reduction of 27.3-fold — among fully vaccinated individuals who had never been infected with Covid, compared to other groups and variants.

Neutralisation was reduced against Delta and AY.1 in all three groups.

However, the team said vaccines will continue to provide sufficient protection against the severity of the disease and fatality, based on breakthrough infections data they analysed.

## Test, track, treat, give shots to stem Covid spread: Govt to States

### K'taka, Kerala, J&K, TN, Odisha, Mizoram asked to monitor int'l fliers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid concerns about rising Omicron variant, the Centre on Friday cautioned Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Jammu & Kashmir, Odisha and Mizoram to take necessary steps under the "Test-Track-Treat-Vaccinate-Covid Appropriate Behaviour" strategy to curb the spread of Covid-19 and fatality. These States have been reporting surge in infections, weekly positivity rates and weekly deaths.

In a letter to these States, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan on Saturday advised them to undertake enhanced surveillance of international travellers, monitor emerging hotspots, prompt contact-tracing of positive people, and send all positive samples for genome sequencing. He also asked them to undertake early identification of cases and review of health infrastructure preparedness, and most importantly, to focus on IEC and community sensitisation.

He pointed out that Karnataka has reported 8,073 new cases in the month ending December 3 (30 days) and



A health worker collects swab sample of a woman for Covid-19 test, in wake of recent surge in coronavirus cases, in Jammu on Saturday. PTI

witnessed a slight increase in weekly new cases to 2,272 cases (week ending December 3) from 1,664 cases (week ending November 26), along with an increase in weekly new deaths from 22 to 29 over the same period.

An increase in weekly new deaths has been noted in Bengaluru Urban, from eight new deaths reported in the week ending November 25 to 14 deaths in the week ending December 2, he said.

Rise in weekly cases have also been noted in Tumakuru, Dharwad and Mysuru in the southern State.

Similarly, Kerala has reported 1,71,521 new cases in the month ending December 3, with a contribution of 55.8 per cent to the country's new cases from over the past month.

## Sena raps Mamata for bid to damage Cong

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Slamming the Trinamool Chief and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's move to sideline the Congress and emerge as the key Opposition's face against the BJP, the Shiv Sena on Saturday said that Mamata's bid to push the grand-old party away from national politics and create a new Opposition front along lines of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was tantamount to strengthening the "fascist" ruling party at the Centre.

"Mamata's politics does not augur well for the Congress. Though it is true that TMC finished the Congress, the BJP and the Left in West Bengal, Mamata's effort to push the grand-old party away from national politics and create a new Opposition front along lines of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was tantamount to strengthening the fascist forces in the country," the

Shiv Sena said. In an editorial published in its official mouth-piece "Saamana", the Shiv Sena said, "We can understand Prime Minister Modi saying the BJP would wipe out the Congress from the political map of the country, because that is a part of the current ruling party's agenda. But, any thought of finishing the Congress which is fighting Modi and his fascist

tendencies poses a serious danger to the country."

"There are no two opinions about the fact that the weakening of the Congress during the last ten years is a serious cause for concern. But, the attempt to prevent the derailed Congress from getting back onto the tracks reflects the destructive mindset of some people," the editorial said.

## Akhilesh backs Mamata to sideline Cong to take on BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After West Bengal Chief minister Mamata Banerjee questioned the existence of Congress-led UPA, Samajwadi party chief Akhilesh Yadav has sought to write the obituary of the grand old party in Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls.

Backing Mamata call for forming an alternative to the UPA, Akhilesh has said he might be open to joining such a political front led by the Trinamool Congress supremo.

## Mumbai-born Ajaz Patel takes 10 in an innings

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Mumbai-born left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel on Saturday entered the record books as he became only the third bowler in the 144-year-old history of Test cricket to take all 10 wickets in an innings on the second day of the second match against India here.

Patel, who had migrated to New Zealand with his parents back in 1996, ended the Indian innings with figures of 47.5-12-119-10 to equal England great Jim Laker and Indian legend Anil Kumble, who had achieved the rarest of rare feat in Test cricket.

The 33-year-old Patel, who is playing in his 11th Test, had only two five wicket hauls and a best match haul of seven wickets before Saturday's feat.

## Amethi factory to make AK-203 as Govt OK's deal

### Nod ahead of Modi, Putin meeting

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Setting the stage for Vladimir Putin-Narendra Modi summit here next week, the Indian Government has cleared the much-awaited AK-203 rifle deal. A factory in Korwa in Amethi will manufacture more than six lakh rifles of the latest variant of the AK-47 in a joint venture between India and Russia.

In the first phase, the armed forces will get the AK-203 rifles, and in the second phase the Central paramilitary

forces and State police will acquire them as reported in *The Pioneer* on November 24.

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), headed by the Prime Minister, cleared the AK-203 deal earlier this week, sources said here on Saturday. The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) headed Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had approved the contract on November 24. The deal may be inked during the summit.

The CCS nod came days before Putin will hold talks with Modi here on Monday. The high-profile summit will be preceded by the first ever two-plus-two dialogue between

the respective defence and foreign minister of India and Russia the same day. India has such a two-plus-two format with the US, Japan and Australia.

As regards the AK-203 deal, Government sources said here on Saturday it will provide a big boost to self-reliance in defence manufacturing in India.

It reflects the increasing paradigm shift in defence acquisition from buy (global) to Make in India. This endeavour will be done in partnership with Russia and reflects the deepening partnership between the two countries in the defence sector.

## Modi launches multi-crore projects, sets poll agenda in U'khand

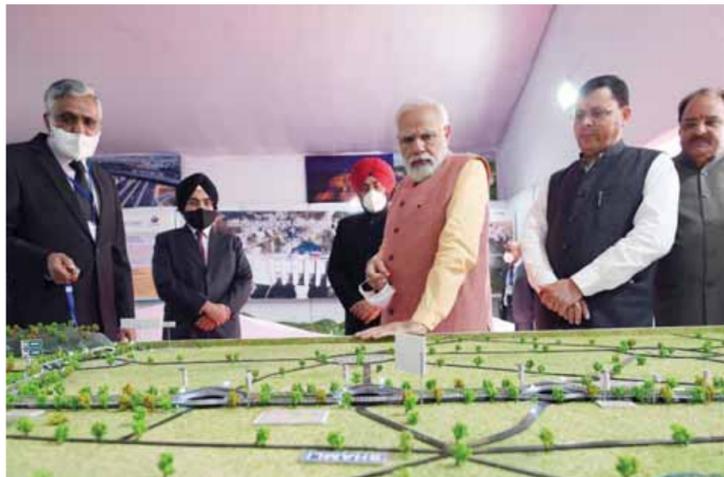
PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and unveiled the foundation for various infrastructural and development projects amounting to about ₹18,000 crore in poll-bound Uttarakhand on Saturday.

The Delhi-Dehradun economic corridor to be built at a cost of ₹8,300 crore was one of the projects for which the foundation stones were unveiled. The PM inaugurated seven projects and unveiled the foundation stones for 11 projects on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering at the Parade Ground in provisional State capital Dehradun, Modi kept the main focus of his speech on development works.

He compared the development facilitated in Uttarakhand during the term of the UPA Government at the centre with the works done here since the NDA came to power. The PM listed the various infrastructural and other development works executed in Uttarakhand apart



from the major issues resolved and steps taken since 2014.

He opined that the development projects launched in Dehradun on Saturday would ensure that this decade will be that of Uttarakhand. He said

that the Delhi-Dehradun expressway — for which the foundation stone was unveiled — is a model of environmental protection and development. This project will include an industrial corridor and Asia's

longest wildlife protection corridor which will enable the safe movement of wild animals. Modi also appreciated the work done by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on the occasion.

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CHANDIGARH MUNICIPAL CORPORATION ELECTION

# Leaders of BJP, Cong get tickets for their families

MANOJ KUMAR ■ CHANDIGARH

Chandigarh Congress president Subhash Chawla's son Sumit Chawla has filed nomination from ward number 14 for the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation election.

Similarly, wife (Harpreet Kaur) and sister (Balwinder Kaur) of leader of the Opposition and Congress councillor Devinder Singh Babla, whose ward has been reserved for a woman candidate, also filed nominations from ward number 10 and 22, respectively.

In BJP, tickets have been given to the wife of councillor and former deputy mayor Anil Kumar Dubey; councillor Chandrawati Shukla's husband Pappu Shukla; councillor Jagtar Singh Jagg's wife Sarbjett Kaur and councillor Vinod Aggarwal's wife Savita Gupta.

These are the relatives of politicians of both the parties—Congress and BJP who have filed nomination for the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation elections. The filing of nominations for MC Polls which began on November 27, concluded on Saturday.

Moreover, the party list of candidates of main political parties—BJP and Congress for MC polls in Chandigarh feature many husbands, wives, sons and daughters triggering rebellion from other ticket-holders. This year, the reservation of the wards has made many councillors and officer-bearers of BJP and Congress bring their spouses to contest from their seats in the municipal corporation elections. This time around, of the 35 wards, 16 are reserved in MC elections.

As many leaders of these parties were not ready to give up their ward to any other can-

didate; they have chosen their wives or daughters as the candidate. Many BJP and Congress rebels are contesting the civic polls as Independent candidates. As the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is contesting its maiden election this time, so most tickets have gone to long-time party workers. Some of the new entrants to the party, who came from Congress along with Pardeep Chhabra have also been accommodated in the list.

A City based political analyst says that central leadership of the parties may have asked their leaders to desist from nepotism, but, while releasing the list of candidates, they

seem to have done otherwise. Fearing loss of tickets from their wards, some leaders had joined the Aam Aadmi Party earlier. Many BJP and Congress rebels are contesting the civic polls as Independent candidates. "Whichever party you look at, nepotism is rampant. Other aspects are irrelevant. If you have the right surname, you will get a ticket. Politics is not a vocation, but a family business. If daddy is a councillor or Mayor, then his son or daughter, regard the ward as their heirloom," he added.

The most high-profile name on the Congress party's

list is that of Sumit Chawla, son of Congress president Subhash Chawla who is contesting election from ward 14. Chawla is not the only one from a political family to get a ticket. Atinder Singh Robby, son of former Congress councillor Bhupinder Singh Badheri, has got the party ticket from ward number 30. Davinder Kumar Gupta, son of former city Congress president Kulbhushan Gupta, and Jagjit Singh Kang, brother of former Punjab minister Jahmohan Singh Kang, have been named as candidates. In BJP, tickets have been given to the wife of councillor and former deputy

mayor Anil Kumar Dubey. Chandigarh Congress chief Subhash Chawla said, "The shortlisting of the candidates has been done based on merit and survey of the wards."

Another Congress leader said that the party's state in-charge Harish Chaudhary approved the list of candidates prepared by the state election committee comprising Chandigarh state president Subhash Chawla and former MP Pawan Kumar Bansal among others.

The committee scrutinised all applications in detail and after discussion, finalised candidates as party's official can-

didates.

Congress, which has faced criticism for promoting nepotism in politics, wasted no time in hitting back at the BJP. A congress leader said, "BJP has given tickets to family members of their senior leaders. This has made it clear that there is a huge difference between the Kathni (words) and Karni (deeds) of the BJP"

The BJP, however, maintained that the family of a potential candidate can be "neither a qualification nor a disqualification". Chandigarh BJP president Arun Sood said, "As wards of many councillors had changed to women and became

reserved seats, tickets were distributed accordingly. "Winnability is the key criterion for the selection of candidates. The family members of some sitting councillors have been given tickets based on the survey and winnability factor."

Traditionally, MC elections in Chandigarh were a two-cornered fight between the Congress and the BJP. But this time around, AAP is also in the fray. Chandigarh has a total of 6.3 lakh voters, comprising 3.3 lakh male, 2.99 lakh female and 17 third gender. The voting will be conducted from 7.30 am to 5 pm on December 24. The result will be declared on December 27.

## ECI reviews poll preparedness for Punjab Assembly Election

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Ahead of the Assembly elections of Punjab in early 2022, ECI on Saturday reviewed the poll preparedness in the State.

The virtual review meeting was chaired by Deputy Election Commissioner (DEC) Nitesh Kumar Vyas, in the presence of Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Punjab S Karuna Raju. All the

Deputy Commissioners-cum-District Election Officers (DEOs) and Commissioner of Police (CPs)/SSPs of Punjab also attended the meeting.

In wake of the Omicron, the new variant of Covid-19, Vyas stressed on the need to vaccinate the entire staff and volunteers to be deputed for election duties and directed all the DEOs to organise special camps for Covid vaccination of the staff. He also

asked DEOs to clear the pending of adding new voters and cases of deletion or shifting of existing voters. He directed to intensify the SVEEP activities including sending text messages or roping in celebrities or sports persons to encourage voters to exercise their franchise and maximum promote '1950' voter helpline.

Vyas asked DEOs to ensure certified training of all the

ROs/AROs and also directed them to visit maximum polling stations especially at the remote areas. He asked them to ensure hassle-free voting experience for PwD voters and old age voters by ensuring proper ramps and wheelchairs at all the polling booths, besides asking the officers to ensure 100% webcasting of all the polling stations. He also asked the officers concerned to expedite the process of deposi-

tion of firearms in their respective districts and to expedite the process of identification of vulnerable polling stations and expenditure sensitive constituencies. During the meeting, DEOs and CPs/SSPs briefed DEC about the status of poll preparedness in their respective districts. Status of distribution of EPICs, distribution of voter information slips, publishing of Criminal Antecedents by con-

testing candidates, provisions made at polling stations for voters above 80 years of age along with PwD voters, SVEEP activities being carried out to increase voter turnout, postal ballot status for absentee voters, cash seizures, drive against illicit liquor as also preparations put in place for Covid19 suspects, among others were elaborated upon. Issues relating to inter-district coordination, deploy-

ment of security forces, management plan for remotely located polling stations, communication plan for shadow areas, provisions for webcasting and monitoring, resolution of complaints received over voter helplines and cVIGIL app, availability of Assured Minimum Facilities in auxiliary Polling Stations, training of security forces, etc. were also specifically reviewed.

## Preparations for Khelo India Youth Games to be completed by Dec 31: Khattar

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

After inspecting the preparations being made for the Khelo India Youth Games at Tau Devi Lal Stadium in Panchkula, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Saturday said that all preparations would be completed by December 31 for the successful conduct of the fourth edition of the Khelo India Youth Games in Panchkula which is scheduled to be held from February 5 to 14, 2022.

As many as 25 different types of sports will be organised in this sports event, in which about 10000 players from across the country will participate. This opening ceremony will be held on February 5 at Tau Devi Lal Stadium, Sector-3, Panchkula, he added. Talking to reporters, Khattar informed that 25 different sports would be organized under Khelo India Games. Besides this, five regional games have also been added this time, which include Gorkha, Thang-Ta of Manipur, Kalaripayattu of Kerala, Malkhamb of Maharashtra and Yogasan.

An amount of ₹250 crore will be spent on the development of necessary infrastructure for these games, of which ₹150 crore will be spent for infrastructure development and ₹100 crore will be spent on other equipment and facilities.

As many as 25 different types of sports will be organised in this sports event, in which about 10000 players from across the country will participate

This opening ceremony will be held on February 5 at Tau Devi Lal Stadium, Sector-3, Panchkula, he added. Talking to reporters, Khattar informed that 25 different sports would be organized under Khelo India Games

The CM said that along with Panchkula, these games would be organised in Ambala, Shahabad, Chandigarh and Delhi. He said that the final matches of most of the games will start from February 8, which will be telecast live through Star Sports channel

In addition, 500 more sports nurseries will be developed

He said that all the preparations for the infrastructure being developed as per the requirement of all the sports would be completed by December 31. Entire arrangements are being made for the lodging and boarding, and transportation of the players. The CM said that along with Panchkula, these games would be organised in Ambala, Shahabad, Chandigarh and Delhi. He said that the final matches of most of the games will start from February 8, which will be telecast live through Star Sports channel.

Khattar said that Haryana is continuously progressing in sports and the state Government is increasing the budget of sports every year. Where the budget of sports was ₹151 crore in the year 2014-15, it has now increased to ₹94 crore in 2021-22, which is more than double.

He said that 500 sports nurseries, which were closed due to Covid-19, have been revived to nurture sports talent among the budding sports persons since childhood under the State Government's 'Catch them Young' Policy. In addition, 500 more sports nurseries will be developed.

The Chief Minister said that sports stadiums are being renovated at the village level. Besides this, mapping is also being done by the government and where the number of sports stadiums is less, sports

stadiums will be built as per the requirement. He said that the players have also appreciated the initiative of the State Government to give an amount of Rs 5 lakh in advance for the preparation of Olympic players. Besides this, Haryana is the only state that not only in the country but also in the world, is known for giving the highest amount to the Olympic winners as a reward. He said that a Scientific Training and Rehabilitation Center is being set up in Panchkula to prepare the players mentally and physically for sports. Apart from this, such centres will also be set up in Karnal, Hisar, Rohtak and Gurugram. The Chief Minister said that on the occasion of Divyangjan Diwas, he has announced to set up a Divyang Sports Corner in one stadium in every district.

### OMICRON VARIANT: HARYANA HEALTH DEPTT ON ALERT

In response to a question regarding compliance with the guidelines of Covid-19 during the Games, the Chief Minister said that compliance with the Pandemic guidelines would be ensured. He said that two cases of the new variant of the Covid-19 have just been detected in the country. The health department and all other departments are on alert and the health department is fully prepared to deal with any situation.

PNS ■ RANCHI

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren chaired a meeting with Additional Secretary, Ministry of Mines, M Nagaraju at Chief Minister's Residential Office, regarding commissioning of 29 coal blocks located in Jharkhand.

In the meeting, the Chief Minister was apprised that excavation work has already started in 3 out of 29 coal blocks of the State and in the coming few months with the joint efforts of the Central and State Government, excavation

work will start in Keredari, Chatti Bariatu, Badam, Tubed, Tokisud and Lohari coal blocks.

Information was laid before the Chief Minister by the Additional Secretary, Ministry of Mines that positive efforts are being made by the officials of the Central and State Governments to start the mining work in these 6 coal blocks. It should be the priority of all of us that excavation work can start in these 6 coal blocks soon, he said.

The CM directed the Additional Secretary, Union Ministry of Mines, to ensure

that the allottees of various coal mining companies comply with the Jharkhand Act.

According to the rules of the State government, it should be ensured on a priority basis that 75 per cent of the manpower working in the mining companies should be from Jharkhand. The Additional Secretary of the Union Ministry of Mines assured the Chief Minister that 75 per cent of the manpower of the State would be used after meeting with the allottees of various coal mining companies.

The Additional Secretary of

the Union Ministry of Mines placed it before the Chief Minister that the State Government should undertake the work of constructing a new road from Pachwara coal block in Pakur district to Dumka.

With this, the transport facility will be available. In this regard, the Chief Minister said that the construction of the road will adversely affect the environment there.

It may be better that the Central government should work to build a dedicated railway line on that route so that the people living in the sur-

rounding area can get a clean environment. In the meeting, a special discussion was held on the positive steps being taken by the officials of the Central and State Government to start many more coal blocks.

State Chief Secretary Sukhdev Singh, Additional Chief Secretary L.Khiyangate, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Rajiv Arun Ekka, Secretary to Chief Minister Vinay Kumar Choubey, Secretary Mines Pooja Singhal, Director of Mines Jitendra Kumar Singh were present on the occasion.

## Mining to begin soon in 6 coal blocks of State J'khand CM chairs meeting with Union Addl Secy Mines

### Cold day in Odisha as max temp plummets

**Bhubaneswar:** It was a chilly day in several parts of Odisha on Saturday as the maximum temperature dropped by several notches due to rain, cold wind and overcast skies due to the impact of Cyclone Jawad.

The mercury in Bhubaneswar nosedived to 20.8 degrees Celsius as compared to 26.3 degrees on Friday. The minimum was 18.4 degrees Celsius, according to a weather bulletin.

The maximum in Cuttack plunged by over 5 degrees Celsius to 21.5, while it was 21.4 degrees Celsius in Puri, down by more than 4 degrees Celsius, the Meteorological Centre said.

Nayagarh saw the maximum plummet by eight notches to 21 degrees Celsius. The temperature went south by over six notches in Balasore to reach 21 degrees Celsius, the Met office said. Chhatrapur in Ganjam, Chanbali in Bhadrak and Talcher in Angul districts had the maximum crash by 6 degrees Celsius as compared to the previous day, it added.

PTI

## Vinod Dua, veteran journalist, dies at 67

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Veteran journalist Vinod Dua, who started his career with Doordarshan in the black and white era and went on to make his mark in the digital space in the decades that followed, died in Delhi's Apollo hospital on Saturday. He was 67.

The last rites of the pioneering television journalist, who was hospitalised with Covid earlier this year and lost his wife, radiologist Padmavati Chinnna Dua, to the virus in June, will be performed at the Lodhi crematorium here on Sunday, his daughter and actor-comic Mallika Dua said.

Vinod Dua breathed his last at 5 pm at the Indraprastha Apollo Hospital where he was battling chronic liver disease, the hospital said in a statement.

"He was admitted in the intensive care unit in a critical condition, and was monitored by a team of senior doctors. In this tragic time, our prayers are with his family and dear ones," it said.

Mallika Dua announced the death of her "irreverent, fearless and extraordinary father" on Instagram.

"He lived an inimitable life, rising from the refugee colonies of Delhi to the peak of journalistic excellence for over 42 years, always, always speaking truth to power."

"He is now with our mom, his beloved wife Chinnna in



VINOD DUA  
\*11 March 1954 - 4 Dec 2021\*

heaven where they will continue to sing, cook, travel and drive each other up the wall," she wrote on her Instagram Stories.

The couple, admitted in a hospital in Gurgaon when the second Covid wave was at its peak, is also parents to elder daughter Bakul Dua, a clinical psychologist.

Vinod Dua's health had suffered ever since he contracted Covid and he had been in and out of hospitals.

He was a pioneer in Hindi broadcast journalism who started his career with "Yuva Manchi", a programme for the youth on Doordarshan. But it was the election analysis he co-anchored with Pranoy Roy on Doordarshan in 1984 that brought him real acclaim.

Much later, the journalist with eclectic interests ranging from politics to cooking hosted the popular food programme "Zaika India Ka" for

NDTV that saw him exploring distinct food cultures of different cities and towns in India.

He also anchored "Jan Gan Man Ki Baat" for The Wire Hindi. "Deeply mourning the loss of Vinod. He was not just one of the greatest, he was THE greatest of his time. I have always said that: THE greatest An amazing talent I admired and respected-and from whom I learnt a lot in the many years we worked closely together Rest in peace my friend," Roy, his long-time friend and NDTV co-founder, wrote on Twitter.

Dua, who had a degree in English literature from Hans Raj College and later obtained his master's degree in literature from the University of Delhi, had won many laurels over the years. In 2008, he was honoured with the Padma Shri for journalism. He was also the first electronic media journalist to receive the Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Award.

Condolences poured in from all quarters. Congress leader Shashi Tharoor described Dua's death as a great loss to Indian journalism and our national discourse.

Historian S Irfan Habib said he was one of India's most credible media veterans. "Among few journalists with a spine, a dear friend and hugely accomplished in talking about politics, food, music and Urdu poetry. Had a brief hello on phone last month," he tweet-

ed. Many in the media world expressed their shock.

The Press Club of India said on Twitter that Dua was a fearless symbol of the fourth pillar of democracy, a journalist who could hold forth on food, politics and culture equally. "We are poorer in his passing. The PCI stands by his family, especially his daughters who also lost their mother Chinnna Dua earlier this year."

"Mourning Vinod Dua the pioneer of news television in India & probably the greatest TV presenter of our times. One of the first times I ever appeared on TV Vinod was the anchor & i admired his natural, easy style which none of us could match in the decades to come. A great loss," added journalist Vir Sanghvi.

Senior journalist Ashutosh termed Dua a legend of TV journalism who never compromised with his values. "Always said what had to be said. Always unafraid. Will miss u sir."

Earlier this week, on Monday, Mallika Dua said her father's condition was "beyond critical".

"... He was moved to the Apollo Hospital ICU last night where he can be cared for better. He remains extremely critical and fragile. He has been a fighter his entire life. Uncompromising and relentless. His family is the same when it comes to him," she added in her Instagram post on Tuesday.

## Protesting farmers form 5-member panel for talks with Govt on 6 issues

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Protesting farmers' groups on Saturday formed a five-member committee for dialogue to talk with the Government on their six issues, including a legal backing of the minimum support price (MSP) after Union Home Minister Amit Shah spoke to two farmers leaders on Friday late evening and assured them that the Government was serious about their demands.

After a meeting under the aegis of the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), farmer groups have decided to continue their protests till a formal and satisfactory response from the Government was received. The next meeting of farmers' groups would be held on December 7.

After the meeting, farmer leader and Bharatiya Kisan Union spokesperson Rakesh Tikait said the committee will consist of Balbir Singh Rajewal, Shriv Kumar Kakka, Gurnam Singh Charuni, Yudhvir

Singh and Ashok Dhawale.

"Farmers' Morchas will hold its next meeting on December 7 at 11 am to finalise the agenda for talks with the Government. The committee will decide on who will hold talks in various States from the farmers' side. Farmers would not end their protests until get confirmation from the Government on their demands," he said.

On Tuesday, the Government had sought five names from Kisan Morcha to discuss the pending demands.

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE			
Senior Divisional Commercial Manager, Northern Railway, Moradabad, acting for and on behalf of The President of India, invites E-Tenders. Information regarding this tender is available on website <a href="http://www.gem.gov.in">www.gem.gov.in</a> (GeM Portal) on internet & can be seen/downloaded.			
Name of Work	TENDER FOR COMPREHENSIVE MECHANIZED CLEANING WORK (Mechanized Cleaning of Designated area, Rag Picking of Coaching Yard, Pest & rodent Control and Conservancy Work) of following Railway Station of Moradabad Division, Northern Railway, for a period of Four (04) years (1460 days).		
	1. Dehradun Railway station	2. Bareilly Railway station	3. Rampur Railway station
Bid Type	Open	Open	Open
Date & Time of Closing of Bid	27.12.2021, 15:00 Hrs	27.12.2021, 15:00 Hrs	27.12.2021, 15:00 Hrs
Advertised Value	Rs. 5,14,41,412.00 with GST	Rs. 8,49,19,690.50 with GST	Rs. 1,67,78,203.75 with GST
EMD	Exempted (Bid declaration for EMD as per Annexure-11)	Exempted (Bid declaration for EMD as per Annexure-11)	Exempted (Bid declaration for EMD as per Annexure-11)
Bidding Style	Two Packet System	Two Packet System	Two Packet System
Uploading Date	03.12.2021	03.12.2021	03.12.2021
Tendering Section	Commercial	Commercial	Commercial
Bidding Unit	Rs. (INR)	Rs. (INR)	Rs. (INR)
Offer Validity	60 days	60 days	60 days
Time Period	04 years (1460 days)	04 years (1460 days)	04 years (1460 days)
No.-9-Sanitation-MC-RP-MB-2021,C Dated -04.12.2021		2853/2021	
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE			

### THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

In My Army Pension Patta No. S/057011/B9 my name has been wrongly mentioned as URMILA KUMARI, while the correct name is URMILA DEVI; Mrs. Urmila Devi w/o Late Subhash Chandra, Address-10/6 Special Wig Premnagar Dehradun

On July 29, 2012, by registered sales letter, Mrs. Suman Gupta, wife of Kedarnath Gupta resident of Sahaspur district, Dehradun, Mrs. Anita, wife of Akbar, resident of Rampur Kala district Dehradun, registered with the Registrar's first Tehsil office, Vikas Nagar district Dehradun, the same Book No 1, Vol 2068 page 275 to 292 at number 3560 is duly recorded and marked on 29th July 2012, whose original copy of the registry has been lost somewhere from the oath-taker, Mohammad Wasim, son of Yasin, resident of Rampur Kala Tehsil Vikasnagar District Dehradun Uttarakhand

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# Sanctioned projects worth ₹1L cr for U'khand in 5 yrs: Modi

## PM SETS BJP'S AGENDA AROUND DEVELOPMENT FOR UPCOMING ELECTIONS

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi started his campaign in support of ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for the upcoming Assembly elections by addressing a well attended rally at Parade Ground here on Saturday.

The PM made development the central point of his 46 minute long speech and claimed that in the last five years the Union Government has given projects worth ₹1 lakh crore to Uttarakhand.

He emphatically asserted that it is very hard for the politicians to remind the people about the past promises made by them but he does it regularly. Modi recalled that five years ago he had said the 'Pahad Ka Pani and Pahad Ki Jawani Pahad Ke Kaam Nahi Aate' but in the last five years he has worked to remove this conception.

Launching an attack on the Congress party without naming it the PM said that a total of 288 kilometres of National Highways (NH) was constructed in Uttarakhand in a period of seven years of UPA rule and

in the last seven years more than 2,000 kilometres of NH was constructed in Uttarakhand.

He added the UPA Government spent a sum of ₹600 crore in NH construction in Uttarakhand while in the last seven years a sum of ₹12,000 crore was spent on NH in Uttarakhand. Modi that two years ago only 1.25 lakh households had water connection but under the Jal Jeevan Mission this number has increased to 7.5 lakh.

He said it is the power of the double engine government that three new medical colleges are coming up in a small State like Uttarakhand. Modi said there was the time when the ruling party engaged in the politics of vote bank and tried to divide people on the basis of religion, caste and areas but the BJP Government has adopted a motto of "Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas" and has dedicated itself for strengthening and empowering the people of the country.

Sticking to the development agenda, Modi said he is either inaugurating or laying foundation stones of projects worth ₹18,000 crore which



includes connectivity, health, culture, tourism, power and other sectors. "Take my word these projects will make this decade the decade of Uttarakhand," he said.

The PM asserted his Government has focussed on developing infrastructure in the border areas, given benefit of One Rank One Pension (OROP) and modernised the armed forces.

In his address, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said after assuming the charge of the CM of the State he has taken 500 decisions in the last five months. He asked people not to get swayed by the propaganda of those who earned the title of 'corruption king' for rampant corruption during their tenure. In an oblique reference to the former Chief Minister Harish Rawat, Dhami

said those who had insulted the Sanatan Dharma and culture are now making rounds of temples.

BJP State president Madan Kaushik said a decision like abolition of article 370 can be taken by a strong leader such as Narendra Modi.

He said the PM has kept development of Uttarakhand in his highest priority. former Chief Ministers Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', Trivendra

## PM pats back of Dhami; says team BJP full of experienced leaders

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Part from patting the back of young Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tried to hammer home the point of unity in the party during his speech in Parade Ground on Saturday.

In an attempt to take the prominent leaders of ruling BJP along, the PM stated that

the party has many senior leaders and it has a very experienced team and the people of the State should give their blessing to BJP.

Terming Dhami as a young and energetic leader, the PM said the State Government is implementing the projects of the Central Government on the ground at a fast pace.

He also praised the State

Government for a successful vaccination programme and said that 50 new oxygen plants were set up in the State during the pandemic.

The PM met former Chief Ministers Trivendra Singh Rawat, Tirath Singh Rawat, Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank and Vijay Bahuguna and senior cabinet ministers Satpal Maharaj and Harak Singh Rawat warmly on the stage.

## MODI DEVELOPS CONNECT USING LOCAL TONGUE

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi tried to make an emotional connection with the people of the State by starting his speech in Garhwali.

Amid huge applause from the people the PM said he has come to Uttarakhand to seek

blessings of the people here. He said Uttarakhand is a centre of faith and Karma and vowed that the double engine Government has kept development of the State in its highest priority.

The PM also ended his speech by stating a poem which highlighted the local culture, cuisine and his devotion to the Dev Bhoomi.

Singh Rawat, Tirath Singh Rawat, Vijay Bahuguna, Cabinet Ministers Harak Singh

Rawat, Satpal Maharaj, Subodh Uniyal, Banshidhar Bhagat, Bishan Singh Chufal, Ganesh

Joshi, Rekha Arya and Yatishwaranand also addressed the gathering on the occasion.

# Projects worth ₹18,000 crore launched by PM

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and unveiled the foundation stones for various infrastructural and development works costing about ₹18,000 crore in Uttarakhand.

The projects he inaugurated include the 120 MW Vyasi hydro electric project costing ₹1,777 crore, 38 kilometre stretch of NH-58 widened from Devprayag to Srikot at a cost of ₹257 crore, 33 kilometre road widening and duct construction on NH 58 from Brahmपुरi to Kaudiyala costing ₹248 crore, landslide treatment on 500 metre stretch of NH-58 at Lambagad costing ₹108 crore, chronic landslide treatment on NH-58 at Sakanidhar, Srinagar and

Projects for which the PM unveiled foundation stones include 175 kilometre Delhi-Dehradun economic corridor to be built at a cost of ₹8,500 crore, 51 km stretch from Delhi-Dehradun expressway to Haridwar costing ₹2,100 crore

expressway to Haridwar costing ₹2,100 crore, 50 kilometre Dehradun-Paonta Sahib road costing ₹1,695 crore, 15 kilometre Haridwar Ring Road from Manoharpur to Kangdi costing ₹1,560 crore, development of water supply, road and water drainage system costing ₹724 crore in Dehradun, Haridwar medical college costing ₹538 crore, development works in Badrinath costing ₹220 crore, widening of 15 kilometre stretch of NH-119 between Najibabad and Kotdwar costing ₹108 crore, construction of 132 metre bridge across the Ganga near Lakshmanjehula costing ₹69 crore, child friendly city project costing ₹58 crore in Dehradun and development works costing ₹54 crore in Gangotri and Yamunotri.



## Cong questions Modi's claims on development

Guv sharing stage with PM in election rally not good: Dasauni

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Uttarakhand Congress spokesperson of state Congress Garima Dasauni said the fact is that the BJP Government has pushed the State 10 years back on the path of development.

She said no leader of the BJP is in position to answer as

to why it was forced to change two Chief Ministers despite enjoying an overwhelming mandate in the State Assembly.

Dasauni also objected to the presence of Governor, Lieutenant General (ret'd) Gurmit Singh in the PM's rally and said the person sitting on constitutional posts should not share stage with leaders in a political rally.

Dasauni said the BJP which was making tall claims that more than one lakh people will attend the rally of PM Modi could not muster 25,000 people in spite of throwing all its might in the rally.

# Two-day int'l conference begins at FRI

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

As part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, a two-day international conference on advances in chemistry and biology of carbohydrates (CARBO XXXV) being organised in virtual mode was inaugurated at the Forest Research Institute (FRI) here on Saturday.

More than 250 participants including scientists from laboratories of FRI, CSIR, IIT, IISER and academic institutions of India, and USA, Germany, UK, The Netherlands and Portugal are participating in the Conference.

The conference was inaugurated today by the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education director general AS Rawat.

Speaking on the occasion, he emphasised the role of carbohydrates in various facets of medicine and their industrial importance. Rawat also stressed upon



developing new technologies for value added utilisation of weeds so as to protect the forests and generate source of livelihood for the people.

Speaking about the challenges being identified in the field, he further called upon the scientists and technologists not

only to develop innovative tools and techniques for advancement of carbohydrates but also to foster cross-disciplinary scientific interactions and collaborations to create infinite opportunities for serendipitous ideas and gain inspiration for innovations for welfare of the

society and economic development of the nation.

The first day of the event witnessed two technical sessions wherein 10 invited lectures and four short lectures were delivered by the speakers from India, USA, Germany, The Netherlands and Portugal.



Governor, Lieutenant General (ret'd) Gurmit Singh and Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami along with chief hydrographer, Vice-Admiral Adhir Arora at a programme held at National Hydrographic Office to mark Navy Day on Saturday

## 1 death, 10 new Covid cases in State

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Death of one patient due to the Covid-19 was reported by the State health department on Saturday.

However, two deaths which had occurred in the month of April in Haridwar were also added in the death toll on the day which increased the death tally from the disease to 7,411 in the State.

The State health department reported 10 new cases and 21 recoveries from the disease on Saturday. The cumulative count of Covid-19 patients in the State is now at 3,44,345 while a total of 3,30,592 patients have recovered from the disease so far. The recovery percentage from the disease is at 96.01 per cent while the sample positivity rate on Saturday was 0.08 per cent.

The State health department reported five new patients from Nainital, two each from Dehradun and Haridwar and one from Udhm Singh Nagar on Saturday. No new cases of



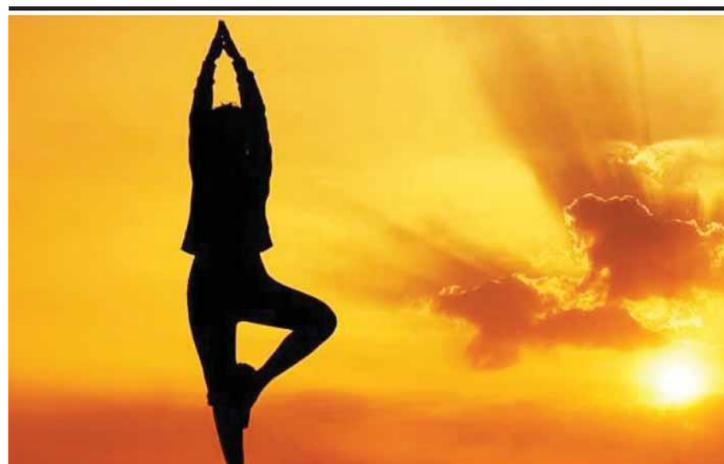
Covid-19 were reported from the remaining nine districts on the day.

The State now has 173 active cases of Covid-19. Nainital with 54 cases is at the top of the table of active cases while Dehradun has 48 new cases of the disease. Rudrapur has no active cases of the disease now. In the ongoing vaccination drive 69,246 people were vaccinated in 921 sessions in the state held on Saturday.

## Effort aims to complete 75 cr Surya Namaskar

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

AS PART OF THE CELEBRATION OF INDIA'S 75TH YEAR OF INDEPENDENCE, SWAMI RAMDEV, MADHYA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN AND ACHARYA PATAKRISHNA JOINTLY LAUNCHED A WORLD RECORD ATTEMPT AT 75 CRORE SURYA NAMASKAR IN PATANJALI YOGPEETH IN HARIDWAR



As part of the celebration of India's 75th year of independence, Swami Ramdev, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Acharya Balkrishna jointly launched a world record attempt at 75 crore Surya Namaskar in Patanjali Yogpeeth in Haridwar.

Thousands of students participated enthusiastically in the initiative. Chouhan and performed Surya Namaskar with Ramdev and Balkrishna on the occasion. Speaking about the benefits of Yoga, Chouhan said that as part of Yogic exercises Surya Namaskar is already being practiced in Madhya Pradesh.

It is pertinent to mention that Geeta Parivar, Kreedha Bharti, Patanjali Yogpeeth, Heartfulness institute and National Yogasan Sports Federation have together decided to conduct 75 crore Surya Namaskar as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

The AYUSH and Sports ministries have also expressed interest in becoming involved

in this attempt. Attempts are being made to connect Education Ministry, Culture Ministry and Defence Ministry in this effort.

Speaking on the occasion, Ramdev exhorted all organisations to become a part of this initiative.

He said that various problems of the world can be resolved with work done with the feeling of oneness.

Yoga and spiritualism can play a major role in resolving the problems being faced by the world, he said.

Those interested in becoming involved can visit [www.75suryanamaskar.com](http://www.75suryanamaskar.com).

## Attack on Yashpal Arya, son

CONG TO HOLD PROTEST TODAY

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

In protest against the attack on Yashpal Arya and his son Sanjeev Arya in Bajpur on Friday, the Uttarakhand Congress will hold a Dharna at Chief Minister's residence on Sunday.

The party has claimed that the attack on the father son duo who had recently left the BJP and joined the Congress was done at the behest of the BJP.

In-charge of the Uttarakhand Congress and the member of Congress Working Committee (CWC) Devendra Yadav said the attack on Yashpal Arya and his son shows the real character of the BJP.

He said the Congress party strongly condemns the attack and demands that an independent enquiry should be done to nab the culprits.

Yadav said the BJP, which takes support of politics of polarisation is now frightened by the prospects of a defeat.

He added politics of crowd and anarchy are associated with the BJP.

The Congress in-charge said Sanjeev Arya informed him that 20 goons who were BJP supporters attacked them with sticks in presence of police. Arya also claimed that the attack was an attempt to murder him and his father.

To register it's strong protest on the attack, the Uttarakhand Congress has decided to hold a Dharna outside the residence of CM Dhami on Sunday.

The protest would be attended by party in charge Devendra Yadav, former Chief Minister and head of the campaign committee of the Congress party Harish Rawat, Leader of Opposition (LoP) in State Assembly Pritam Singh and other leaders.

# Ranks upgraded in RAF, CoBRA by Centre

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has accorded sanction to upgrade the post of one deputy commandant (operations) to second-in-command (operations) in each of the 15 battalions of the Rapid Action Force (RAF), 10 CoBRA battalions and six Mahila battalions of the CRPF to temporarily stem stagnation at the level of deputy commandants.

The proposal was pending for over two years when a cadre review was undertaken in 2016-17 and one deputy commandant (operations) in each of the General Duty battalions was upgraded to second-in-command (II-I/C). GD battalions refer to operational battalions of the Force.

While the purpose of the cadre review was to undertake a thorough cadre management, the CRPF opted for ad hoc promotion of the deputy commandants to II-I/C. This led to stagnation at the level of the deputy commandants which was affecting operational profile, CRPF veterans said.

The move will lead to promotion of 31 deputy commandants in the RAF, specialized anti-Naxal unit Combat

Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) and Mahila Battalions.

While officials welcomed the move to promote the deputy commandants in the RAF, CoBRA and Mahila Battalions, they termed it as a temporary measure which will not alleviate the long term problem of stagnation at the junior and middle level hierarchy of the cadre officers.

While the rank of the deputy commandants have been upgraded to II-I/C but the number of the posts of the deputy commandants has been simultaneously reduced, they said, adding the cadre review conducted in 2016-17 was an eyewitness.

An Assistant Commandant rank officer in the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) as well as the Border Security Force (BSF) takes 11 to 12 years to get the first promotion to the rank of deputy commandant as against the army officers getting their first promotion in just four years. A deputy commandant is promoted to the next level of II-I/C in six to seven years. "This leads to an increased age profile of the junior and middle level leadership in the armed

forces under the Union Home Ministry which is alarming and detrimental for both the morale of the officers and operational efficiency," officials said.

While yet another cadre review is underway but the same has not been finalized. A scientific career progression management of the cadre officers is required to improve the bleak promotion prospects of the officers who are recruited by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), they added.

"The undersigned is directed to refer to CRPF's (note on the subject) and to convey approval of the competent authority for upgradation of one post each of Deputy Commandant (Ops) to the rank of Second-in-Command (Ops) in 10 CoBRA Bns, 15 RAF Battalions and 06 Mahila Battalions of CRPF at par with male GD (General Duty) Battalions subject to the filling up of these posts by the officers who are already drawing NFFU (non-functional financial upgradation) or higher ranks," reads an order issued on Tuesday by Under Secretary Ashutosh Kumar of PF III desk of the Union Home Ministry.

# Govt working to ensure healthcare, housing for CAPF jawans: Shah

Jaisalmer (Rajasthan): The Narendra Modi government is working to ensure better healthcare facilities and increased housing satisfaction and family time for personnel of the Central Armed Police Forces, who are guarding India's fronts under very difficult conditions, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday.

Addressing Border Security Force (BSF) personnel at the 'Rohitash' post along the India-Pakistan border here in Rajasthan, the Minister said the Government will do "everything for the welfare of troops who spend the golden days of their life in protecting the motherland".

Shah, who is on a two-day visit to Jaisalmer in the desert state, is spending the first night of his trip at the 'Rohitash' border post, where he will share meals with jawans during the 'bada khana' (feast).

"I am going to stay here tonight with you at this post and this is an attempt to understand your difficulties and to find ways to ease problems," Shah told troopers during an evening address at a 'Sainik Sammelan'.

He said the 'Rohitash' post

was witness to the glory and bravery of BSF and army personnel during wars with Pakistan.

Shah said his government has made it a point to ensure healthcare of jawans and their families and that is why the 'Ayushman CAPF' scheme has been launched.

"You can get all the health benefits for your families by just swiping a card... This new scheme will lessen the administrative burden on forces like the BSF, unlike earlier where they had to clear a number of health bills," the minister said.

Quoting official data, Shah said 25 lakh 'Ayushman CAPF' health cards have been distributed among personnel of various central armed police forces (CAPFs) till December 2.

In the BSF, 4.5 lakh cards have been distributed, he said.

"We want to distribute these cards, which will ensure easy healthcare facilities to jawans and their families, to each and every personnel and their kin by February next year," he said.

"We are also working to improve the housing satisfaction level for CAPF personnel," he said.

# Congress begins online drive for families of those who died of Covid

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Saturday launched the party's online campaign demanding compensation for the families of those who died of Covid and accused the government of sleeping while people coped with pain and loss.

The Congress said the aim of the "#SpeakUpforCovidNyay" campaign was to demand that the central government disclose the actual number of Covid deaths in the country and "properly compensate all families of the victims with Rs 4 lakh".

"When it comes to people's pain and loss, Government of India is sleeping. Let's wake them up," Rahul tweeted while launching the campaign.

The party alleged the Narendra Modi government has very tactfully tried to cover up its failures in managing the Covid-19 pandemic by distorting the number of Covid deaths, the party alleged.

"#SpeakUpforCovidNyay so the govt is forced to disclose the correct number of Covid deaths," it said on its official Twitter handle.

The party alleged that the government lacked the intention to support the distressed



families.

"If the government doesn't have data of Covid deaths, the entire country is willing to share it with the government. There is no dearth of fund... The real issue is the government is lacking in the intention to help Covid-hit families. We demand Rs 4 lakh each for the kin of those who died of the pandemic," AICC spokesperson Pawan Khera said.

"By making up false numbers, the Modi government is not only withholding compensation for lakhs of families, but it is simply trying to cover up its failure in managing and controlling the pandemic," the party said in a statement.

The Congress said that

under the disaster management guidelines, the government is required to compensate the families of COVID-19 victims with Rs 4 lakh.

"The Modi government has carefully tried to wriggle its way out of compensating the fair amount and is trying to settle for compensation of a meagre amount of Rs 50,000," it alleged.

Several state Congress units and leaders across the country put out videos in support of the online campaign and to press the government for providing compensation of Rs 4 lakh each to the families of the COVID-19 deceased. The party has raised the demand in Parliament too.

# Relief for Andhra, Odisha, WB as storm Jawad weakens

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a relief for Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Saturday said that cyclonic storm 'Jawad' weakened into a deep depression on Saturday and is likely to weaken further into a depression by the time it reaches Puri on Sunday.

The cyclonic storm weakened into a deep depression and lay centered over west-central Bay of Bengal, about 180 km east-southeast of Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, and 330 km south-southwest of Puri, Odisha at 5:30 pm, the IMD said in a statement.

"It is likely to move north-northeastwards and weaken further into a depression by tomorrow morning. It is likely to reach near Puri around Sunday noon. Subsequently, it is likely to continue to move

north-northeastwards along the coast of Odisha towards the coast of West Bengal and weaken into a well marked low pressure area during the subsequent 24 hours," it said. Saudi Arabia has given the cyclone its name 'Jawad' -- the liberal or merciful.

A low-pressure area had developed over the Andaman Sea on November 30. It intensified into a depression on December 2 and further into a deep depression on Friday morning. It turned into a cyclone on Friday noon, the IMD said.

The IMD has forecast heavy to very heavy rainfall at isolated places over Gangetic West Bengal and north Odisha on Sunday, and heavy rainfall at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura on Sunday and Monday. Sea conditions will remain unsafe for shipping and fishermen in the central and north Bay of Bengal till Sunday.

# Focusing on improving passenger experience through world-class stations: Railways Min



New Delhi: The Railway Ministry's focus is on improving passenger experience through world-class railway stations, Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Saturday.

Speaking at an event of the Confederation of Indian Industries, he maintained that spending on new railway lines, doubling of tracks and electrification among others is on track. With the stations at Bhopal and Gandhinagar now with world-class features in terms of city integration and passenger flow, 40 more stations will be tendered shortly, he said.

The Minister also said that tourism is being created as a new growth segment for the railways and invited the industry to participate in this objective. Modern train sets with air cushions are being designed and will be rolled out at the end of the next year, he said.

For reducing cargo costs, Vaishnaw noted that it is important to raise the share of freight carried by the railways. For this, the ministry is working on stepping up investment in new tracks, capacity and other infrastructure, he said.

"The customer interface must be made simple with not more than three months for clearances on cargo terminals and other facilities. Wagon designs are being changed to cater to different commodities and products. The railways is working on a hybrid BOT model for greater private participation," he added.

In telecom, the railway minister said India is developing its own 5G system. The Postal Life Insurance (PLI) scheme for telecom manufacturing has been very encouraging with 35 applications.

In the electronics and

information technology sector, Vaishnaw said electronics manufacturing is likely to exceed the expectation of USD 250 billion of production by FY-26. Similarly, Startup India had targeted 100 unicorns by 2025, but more than 70 are already in place, he noted, adding that a user-centric and trust-based regime is being developed.

He also said the bulk of government's revenues is going on capital investment in areas such as healthcare infrastructure.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called for changing the government's operating systems under the Atmanirbhar Bharat package. Capacity utilisation is now rising as a result of this strategy. If the capital investment by the government rises, private investment will also pick up," Vaishnaw added.

# NEW CORONAVIRUS VARIANT No need to panic, follow Covid appropriate behaviour: VP

New Delhi: Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Saturday urged people not to panic about the emergence of new Covid-19 strain Omicron and advised them to remain vigilant and keep following Covid-appropriate behaviour till the pandemic is over.

Addressing a gathering at a book launch event at the Upa Rashtrapati Nivas here, he also urged people to shed hesitancy and get themselves vaccinated against coronavirus at the earliest.

The vice president said the coronavirus pandemic has come as a big challenge for the entire human race, and appreciated the world's largest vaccination drive currently underway in India, an official statement of the Vice President Secretariat said.

Naidu also referred to the transformational changes brought in governance over the past seven years.

These changes are both empowering and enabling 1.3 billion people to deliver on their potential, he said. "Be it life expectancy, financial inclusion, access to healthcare, employment, owning a house, or honouring entrepreneurial ability, the quality of Indian lives is getting better with each passing day," Naidu said.

Quoting the prime minister's three word mantra - 'reform, perform and transform', the vice president praised the tremendous progress made by the nation over the past few years in various fields such as financial inclusion, insurance coverage, number of LPG connections for poor women and tap water connection to households.

He said following the principle of 'minimum government and maximum governance', the government is leveraging technologies to bring transformation in every sector, and expressed satisfaction over India becoming the third



largest startup ecosystem in the world.

"It is a testimony to the government's resolute commitment to improve the business environment in the country that India's ranking rose to 63rd place in World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index 2020," he said. Naidu noted that India's strategic partnerships are based on mutual respect and the nation has given a resolute response to inimical forces who dared to challenge its integrity and sovereignty.

"We are guided by our unwavering self-belief and our dedication to becoming 'atmanirbhar' (self-reliant) in every possible way," he noted.

# PAC upholds prudence, wisdom in Parl system: Prez



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On the occasion of the 100th year of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), President Ram Nath Kovind on Saturday said that the PAC upholds prudence, wisdom and propriety in the Parliamentary system.

Kovind said Gandhiji considered account keeping as essential for clean public life. He underlined that the philosophy of public accounts has not been changed from the time of Kautilya.

accounts showing the appropriation of the sums granted by Parliament to meet the expenditure of the central government, the Annual Finance Accounts of the Government of India and such other accounts laid before the House as the Committee may think fit.

Several high dignitaries along with central ministers and members of Parliament of both the houses attended the function in the Parliament.

Vice President Venkaiah Naidu said, PAC reports always strive for improvement in the system. PAC has detected many financial lapses in its glorious work traditions. Naidu also suggested that Parliament should meet 100 days in a year. Lok Sabha Speaker Om

Birla said this is one of the most important Committees of Parliament and complimented the PAC members for their dedication to the cause.

In his first address in the function, PAC Chairman Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said, the PAC is committed to uphold transparency and accountability of the government money. He said the committee always acts in an impartial manner.

The President released a special souvenir depicting the 100 glorious years of PAC's journey and 67 special articles including 15 from Commonwealth countries. Mr Kovind also inaugurated an exhibition depicting the milestone moments of PAC from 1921 to 2021.

# Kovid felicitates individuals, organisations for contribution towards PwDs empowerment

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

President Ram Nath Kovind on Friday conferred the National Awards on individuals, institutions, organisations and state/district etc. for their outstanding achievements and work done towards empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (PwDs).

The President was the Chief Guest at a function to celebrate "International Day of Persons with Disabilities" organized by the DEPwD, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment on Friday.

Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment Dr. Virendra Kumar, Ministers of State for Social Justice & Empowerment Ramdas Athawale, Pratima Bhaumik were also present in the function.

In his address, Dr. Virendra Kumar expressed his gratitude to the President for his presence and guidance from time to time towards empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.

Dr. Kumar said that the Divyangjans are valuable human resources and the Prime Minister gives priority to the issues of persons with disabilities in the National Development Agenda. His motto is "Inclusive growth, development of all and confidence of all". The Government has enacted the Right to Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 which came into effect from 19.04.2017. The Act provides for 4% reservation in government jobs for persons with disabilities. In January 2021,



the Ministry has identified 3566 posts suitable for persons with disabilities, he said.

He also said that the Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan (Accessible India Campaign) was launched by the Government on 03.12.2015 to provide universal accessibility to persons with disabilities so that they can live a meaningful life with dignity. Public buildings, transport system and information and communication technology have been included under this campaign. Keeping in view the problems related to accessibility faced by the masses, the Department has developed a Mobile APP to address those problems in a quick and systematic manner as possible.

The Government has set up Indian Sign Language Research and Training Centre to promote the empowerment of hearing-impaired persons and to create sign language in India. The Institute, among other functions, is continuously preparing sign language dictionaries that have so far included more than 10,000 words.

# Going to courts should be last resort: CJI

Only after exploring arbitration, mediation, conciliation

Hyderabad: Chief Justice of India N V Ramana on Saturday said that the option of going to courts for dispute resolution should be used as the 'last resort', only after exploring Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms like arbitration and mediation.

"My advice, after practicing in the legal profession for over 40 years in different capacities, is that you must keep the option of going to courts as a last resort. Use this last resort only after exploring the option of ADR- arbitration, mediation and conciliation," he said.

Justice Ramana, who was speaking at the Curtain Raiser and Stakeholders' Conclave of International Arbitration and Mediation Centre (IAMC) here, recalled Lord Krishna's attempt to mediate between the Pandavas and Kauravas in the epic Mahabharata.

"It may be worthwhile to recall that the failure of mediation led to disastrous consequences," he said.

The reasons for conflicts are many, including misunderstandings, ego issues, trust and greed. Ultimately, small differences of opinion can lead to a big conflict and even big conflicts can be resolved with some effort in understanding one another, he said.

If conflicts arise in personal life, they can be resolved by avoiding

the people we do not like or by sacrificing some money to get mental peace, among others, the CJI said.

A prudent person tries to find ways to resolve conflicts amicably, he said.

But in a business, money, honour or reputation cannot be lost and the interests of business or industry cannot be sacrificed. In such a situation also, an easy way of settling disputes without wasting much time or money or losing peace of mind can be thought of, he said.

"Now to come back to the reality, in business you might have a difference of opinion and disagreements. One would usually start by initiating a dialogue to clarify issues. If it doesn't happen, you may still look for people who can help you resolve such issues by negotiating. If this also doesn't work, then the only option people consider is to go to courts," he said, advising that going to courts should be the last option.

Observing that arbitration and mediation are efforts at restoring a relationship, he said the most important factor behind the resolution of any dispute is having the right attitude of leaving aside ego, emotions and embracing practicality.

Once the conflicts enter a Court, much gets lost in the practice and procedure, he said.

PTI

GLOBE TROTTER

SHAKESPEAREAN ACTOR ANTONY SHER DIES AT 72 London: The award-winning theatre and film actor Antony Sher has died aged 72 after suffering from cancer, the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) announced on Friday.

Merkel: Virus death toll 'so bitter because it is avoidable'

AP ■ BERLIN Outgoing Chancellor Angela Merkel on Saturday made what is likely her final appeal before leaving office next week for Germans to get vaccinated against Covid-19.



imum 75 per cent vaccination rate. The number of unvaccinated residents has been blamed as a key factor in a surge of new virus cases in recent weeks.

hours brought Germany's total in the pandemic to 102,946. "Every one of them leaves behind families or friends, stunned, speechless and helpless," Merkel said in her video message.

Saturday that his Government's "most important first task" is to "fight the corona pandemic with all the strength that we have."

Lanka's Parl condemns lynching in Pakistan

PM Rajapaksa seeks justice

PTI ■ COLOMBO Sri Lanka's Parliament and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa on Saturday condemned the brutal lynching of a Sri Lankan national in Pakistan and hoped that Prime Minister Imran Khan will keep his commitment to bring all those involved to justice and ensure the safety of the rest of the island nation's expat workers.

man's legs, the Dawn newspaper reported. The workers had later overpowered the colleague and dragged Diyawadana out on the road and tortured him with kicks, stones and iron rods, killing him on the spot.

people of Sri Lanka at the vigilante killing of Priyantha Diyawadana in Sialkot. "Spoke to Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa today in UAE to convey our nation's anger & shame to people of Sri Lanka at vigilante killing of Priyantha Diyawadana in Sialkot. I informed him 100+ ppl arrested & assured him they would be prosecuted with full severity of the law," he said in a tweet on Saturday.

3 INDIANS HELD IN US FOR ILLEGAL ENTRY

Washington: Three Indian nationals, who were earlier deported to India, have been arrested once again in the US Virgin Islands for illegally entering into the country an American attorney has said.

Zambia detects 3 cases of Omicron

Zambia: Zambia has detected its first cases of the Omicron coronavirus variant in three people who tested positive for Covid-19 in the past week, the health ministry said.

Chibombo District who also travelled abroad recently but is asymptomatic, and a woman in Lusaka District who had not travelled abroad recently and had mild symptoms.

S Korea sets daily records for new Covid cases, deaths

Seoul: South Korea again broke its daily records for coronavirus infections and deaths and confirmed three more cases of the new omicron variant as officials scramble to tighten social distancing and border controls.

country's death toll was at 3,809 after a record 70 virus patients died in the past 24 hours, while the 752 patients in serious or critical conditions were also an all-time high.

210 MIGRANTS FOUND PACKED INTO TRUCK

Mexico City: Mexican immigration authorities say they discovered 210 migrants packed into a truck trailer in the central part of the country. The National Migration Institute said the truck failed to stop as directed at a checkpoint in Puebla state on Friday and it was pulled over after a pursuit near the city of Tecamachalco.

NSO Group spyware used to hack US Govt employees: Sources

AP ■ WASHINGTON The phones of 11 US State Department employees were hacked with spyware from Israel's NSO Group, the world's most infamous hacker-for-hire company, a person familiar with the matter said on Friday.

Group's trademark Pegasus spyware being used against US Government personnel. It was not known what individual or entity used the NSO technology to hack into the accounts, or what information was sought.

infections for years, called the discovery a giant wake-up call for the US Government about diplomatic security.

US intelligence finds Russia planning Ukraine offensive

AP ■ WASHINGTON President Joe Biden has pledged to make it "very, very difficult" for Russia's Vladimir Putin to take military action in Ukraine as US intelligence officials determined that Russian planning is underway for a possible military offensive that could begin as soon as early 2022.



official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the finding. It comes as Russia has picked up its demands on Biden to guarantee that

Ukraine will not be allowed to join the NATO alliance. The official added that the plans call for the movement of 100 Russian battalion tactical groups along with armor, artillery and equipment.

Pakistan receives \$3 bn from Saudi to help stabilise economy: Official

Islamabad: Pakistan on Saturday received \$3 billion from Saudi Arabia as part of a financial assistance sought from the Kingdom to stabilise the country's economy, according to a senior Government official.

GAMBIANS VOTE IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Banjul (Gambia): Lines of voters snaked around corners outside polling stations in Gambia's capital Saturday as the nation holds a presidential election that for the first time in decades does not include former dictator Yahya Jammeh as a candidate. Polls opened to high turnout, with many people lining up at the capital's Independence Stadium before sunrise.

Indonesia's volcano spews ash, gas, killing 1, dozens hurt

Lumajang: The highest volcano on Indonesia's most densely populated island of Java spewed thick columns of ash, searing gas and lava down its slopes in a sudden eruption triggered by heavy rains on Saturday. At least one villager died from burns and dozens were hospitalised.

A thunderstorm and days of rain, which had eroded and finally collapsed the lava dome atop the 3,676-meter Semeru, triggered an eruption, said Eku Budi Lelono, who heads the geological survey center.

POLICE SHOOT PALESTINIAN ATTACKER

Jerusalem: Israeli police shot a Palestinian after he stabbed and wounded an ultra-Orthodox Jew on Saturday near Damascus Gate just outside Jerusalem's Old City. Video circulated online appeared to show an Israeli Border Police officer shooting a Palestinian man who was lying on the ground. Another video appeared to show police with guns drawn keeping medics from reaching the man. The Magen David Adom emergency service said it treated an ultra-Orthodox man in his 20s who was stabbed in the area, saying he was in moderate condition.

Public Notice: NOTICE is hereby given that Mr. Shiron Grover (hereinafter referred to as the said Mortgagor) is intending to purchase the Entire Second Floor, with roof rights 'said floor' built on Property Bearing No. 35-A, in Block 'A', measuring 249 sq. yds., situated in residential colony known as Rajouri Garden, Area of Village Basai, (hereinafter referred to as 'said property') from Mrs. Swarnlata Bai, who is the owner of above the said property by way of Relinquishment Deed dated 16.09.2021 and Now, Mr. Shiron Grover has agreed to create mortgage in respect of the said property in favour of my Client IFC FIRST Bank Limited. Further, if any person, body, individual, institution having any claim, title, interest and/or objection in respect of or against or relating to or touching upon said property or part of the property by way of sale, exchange, lease, lien, mortgage, charge, encumbrance, gift, trust, easement, maintenance, inheritance, testamentary disposition or otherwise or having in their custody any title, documents pertaining to the said property shall communicate the same to the undersigned at below mentioned address within 10 days from the publication of this notice with documentary evidence in support thereof, failing which all the claim, of such person shall be considered to have been waived and abandoned. Any objections raised after the completion of the 10 days shall not be binding upon the said property or my Client & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 10 days of this publication to Mr. Muneesh Dhaswar Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Vertices, Unit no 907, 9th Floor, 6D-TL Tower, (B-08), Rajouri Subhash Place, Delhi-110094 or contact at 906670712/9818228636 (M).

PUBLIC NOTICE: This is for notice of the general public that a political party is proposed to be registered by the name of Samrat Mihir Bhoj Samaj Party. The office of the party located at F-64/C9/197, Sec.-40, Noida, (Near Sai Nath Mandir), Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, Pin Code-201303. This Party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951 - Names/address of the office - bearers of the Party are as follows: President/Chairman: Harender Kumar Gurjar, (Guruj), F-197, Sec.-40, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P.-201303 General Secretary / Secretary : Anil Kumar Vashisht, 29, Nithari, Sec.-31, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P.-201303 Treasurer : Anita Devi, F-64/C9/197 Sec.-40, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P.-201303. If any one has any objection to the registration of Samrat Mihir Bhoj Samaj Party they may send their Objection with reasons thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party) Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice.

CH. CHARAN SINGH UNIVERSITY, MEERUT SIR CHHOTU RAM INSTITUTE OF ENGG. & TECH. (SCRIET) INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS STUDIES (IBS) Notice for Registration/Admission Through open merit, Session 2021-22 on vacant seat Applications are invited for admission to B. Tech. 1st year Branch (ITE, ECE, CHE, ME & AGE), B. Tech 2nd year lateral entry (ME, CHE, ECE, AGE, EIE), MBA, through the open merit, against seats which are vacant after UPCEET-2021 counseling. To get registration log in at http://ccsuforms.in/ Last date for registration 13-12-2021. For more details visit: Official web portal www.ccsuuniversity.ac.in/scriet Contact: (0121)2770083, 2774974, 7579685826, 7579685820, 7579685819 REGISTRAR

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, CONSTRUCTION WING, UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM DURGAPAL GARDEN NEAR SINTHIYA SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL, PILLIKOTHI ROAD, BARI MUKHANI HAL DWANA, DISTT - NAINITAL (PIN 263139) Letter no. 1721/Nivda/Anubandh-Ranikhet/40 Dated: 02-12-2021 E-Tender Notice 1. Name of the work:- REPAIRING OF NON RESIDENTIAL AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDING FOR TEHSIL OFFICE AT KHUMAD SULT, DISTT-ALMORA 2. Estimated Cost: -Rs. 145.20 Lakh 3. Period of Completion:- 08 Month 4. Date and Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal:- 03-12-2021 (17.00 hrs) 5. Last date/Time of receipt of bids in the portal:- 24-12-2021 (17.00 hrs) 6. Date & Time of Technical bid Opening :- 28.12.2021 (11.00hrs) 7. Name and Address of the Officer inviting bid:- General Manager (Kumaon), Nirman Wing, Uttarakhand Pey Jal Nigam, Laxmi Niwas, Durgapal Garden, Pillikothi, Haldwani. 8. Pre-bid meeting details (if required) Date & Place:- 07.12.2021 (11.00 hrs) Project Manager, Construction Unit, Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam, Ranikhet. 9. For further details, details of subsequent Amendment / correction documentation etc. may be obtained from the e-Procurement portal www.uktenders.gov.in GENERAL MANAGER

Office of the Superintending Engineer 1st Circle, Public Works Department, Almora Phone/Fax: 05962-230295 Email: sepwdalm@rediffmail.com Letter No. : 8370/ Nivda-01/2021 Dated : 03/12/2021 NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (E-Tendering) E-TENDER NOTICE The superintending Engineer, 1st Circle, Public Works Department, Almora invites tender through E-Tendering (Two Bid System) on behalf of Honourable Governor of Uttarakhand for following works. All other information will be available from dated 06/12/2021 & onwards on website http://www.uktenders.gov.in

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Cost of Tender Form	Earnest Money (Rupee in lakh)	Validity of Tender	Time of Completion	Contractor's Category of Registration for tendering
1	C/O 36M. Span Steel Girder Bridge Over Sai River in Village Dalmori near Dwarahat Someshwar Motor Road in Someshwar Constituency under C.M. Ghoshna 149/2020	Rs. 5000.00 + 18% GST	6.95 Lakh	60 Days	18 Months	Class "A" & Higher in Bridge work
2	Upgradation of Heliport at Heliport at Falsima Tatrck Near District Head Quarter Almora.	Rs. 5000.00 + 18% GST	4.44 Lakh	60 Days	15 Months	Category "B" & above in Building works

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005 Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below- mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Captain Deepak Kumar LBDEL00004221662/ LBDEL00004221672	DDA MIG, Flat No-86C, Block- GG- 1, 110018/ December 02, 2021	June 25, 2021 Rs. 88,76,626/-	Delhi/ NCR
2.	Charanjeet Dhanjal/Sandeep Dhanjal/ LBDEL00004207004/ LBDEL00005032728	MIG Flat No- 139-D, Third Floor Pocket-AG-1 Vikas Puri, Delhi/ December 02, 2021	June 23, 2021 Rs. 68,34,332/-	Delhi/ NCR

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. Date : December 04, 2021 Place : Delhi/ NCR Authorized Officer ICICI Bank Limited

URBAN IMPROVEMENT TRUST ALWAR S.No. 13102/11/21 Date : 26/11/2021 NOTICE INVITING BID-18/2021-22 Bids for Electrician and helper, Computers with operators and Civil guards/Chaukidar Providing of service invited from interest bidders upto 20.12.2021, 4.00 PM. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in, http://sppp.ra.jnic.in) of the state and www.uitalwar.in.

उत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मण्डल पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.) // सर्व संबंधित को सूचना // भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय की ई.आई.ए. अधिसूचना दिनांक 14/09/2006 (यथा संशोधित) के अंतर्गत सर्व संबंधित को सूचित किया जाता है कि मेसर्स नीरोग इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर्स प्राइवेट लिमिटेड, ग्राम-बोरिया, तहसील-बेरला, जिला-बेमेतरा (छ.ग.) में Proposed Greenfield project for installation of manufacturing facilities for production of Sponge Iron - 2,31,000 TPA, Mild Steel Billet - 2,32,848 TPA, rerolled Steel Products through Hot Charging and through Reheating Furnace - 2,25,863 TPA, Captive Power Plant - 25 MW (16 MW through WHRB and 9 MW through AFBC) and Fly Ash Bricks - 34,600 TPA के पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति हेतु लोक सुनवाई बाबत उत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, नवा रायपुर में आवेदन प्रस्तुत किया गया है। उक्त परियोजना के संबंध में आपत्ति/सुझाव/विचार/टीका टिप्पणी, इस सूचना के जारी होने के दिनांक से 30 दिवस के अंदर क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी, उत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, 5/32 बंगला, भिलाई, जिला-दुर्ग के कार्यालय में मौखिक अथवा लिखित रूप से कार्यालयीन समय में प्रस्तुत की जा सकती है। इस परियोजना के लिए लोक सुनवाई दिनांक 10/01/2022 को समय प्रातः 11:00 बजे स्थान-शामकीय हाईस्कूल, ग्राम-बोरिया, तहसील-बेरला, जिला-बेमेतरा (छ.ग.) में नियत की गई है। यह भी सूचित है कि: 1. लोक सुनवाई के दौरान सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों को फिचिकल/सोशल डिस्टेंसिंग का पालन करना अनिवार्य होगा। 2. लोक सुनवाई में सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों द्वारा मास्क का उपयोग किया जायेगा तथा समय-समय पर सेनेटाइजर का उपयोग किया जाना अनिवार्य होगा। 3. लोक सुनवाई स्थल पर सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों की बैठक व्यवस्था कम से कम 02 मीटर की दूरी रखना अनिवार्य होगा। 4. कोरोना वायरस के नियंत्रण एवं रोकथाम हेतु शासन द्वारा जारी समस्त दिशा-निर्देशों का अक्षरशः पालन किया जाना अनिवार्य होगा। ई.आई.ए. नोटिफिकेशन 14 सितम्बर 2006 (यथा-संशोधित) के अनुसार संबंधित व्यक्तियों के अवलोकन/पहन हेतु ड्राफ्ट ई.आई.ए. रिपोर्ट, कार्यपालक सार हिन्दी एवं अंग्रेजी भाषा तथा सी.डी. (साफ्ट कॉपी) डायरेक्टर, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, इंदिरा पर्यावरण भवन, जोर बाग रोड, नई दिल्ली, भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, एकीकृत क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, अरुण भवन, नार्थ ब्लॉक, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, उत्तीसगढ़, कलेक्टर, कार्यालय कलेक्टर, जिला-बेमेतरा, मुख्य कार्यपालन अधिकारी, जिला पंचायत, जिला-बेमेतरा, महाप्रबंधक, जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केंद्र, जिला-बेमेतरा, सरपंच/सचिव, ग्राम पंचायत बोरिया, जिला-बेमेतरा, क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, उत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, 5/32 बंगला, भिलाई, जिला-दुर्ग एवं मुख्यालय, उत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला-रायपुर में रखी गई है। हस्ता/- सदस्य सचिव छ.ग. पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.)

# Lot of unhealthy speculation on crypto taking place: FM

New Delhi: Asserting that a lot of speculation is taking place on cryptocurrencies, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday said these speculations are not "healthy at all."

Her comments come against the backdrop of the government preparing to come out with legislation to regulate cryptocurrencies.

Speaking at the HT Leadership Summit, the Finance Minister said there is certainly a well consulted bill which is coming in Parliament after the Cabinet nod.

"There is a lot of speculation... That's not healthy at all," she said in a reply to a question if she thinks that a lot of unregulated speculation is taking place on crypto.

The Cryptocurrency and Regulation of Official Digital Currency Bill, 2021, has been included in the Lok Sabha Bulletin-Part II for the introduction in the ongoing Winter Session.

The bill seeks to create a facilitative framework for the creation of the official digital currency to be issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Bulletin said.

It also seeks to prohibit all private cryptocurrencies in India, however, it allows for certain exceptions to promote the underlying technology of cryptocurrency and its uses. Earlier this week, Sitharaman in the Rajya Sabha while replying to a series of questions had



said the new bill takes into account the rapidly changing dimensions in virtual currency space, and incorporates features of the earlier bill that could not be taken up.

Asked if the government proposes to ban misleading advertisements in media, she had said the guidelines of Advertising Standards Council of India are being studied and their regulations are also being looked into "so that we can take, if necessary, some kind of a position or a decision to see how we are going to handle it".

She had said the government, RBI and Sebi have been cautioning people about the cryptocurrencies that could be a "high risk" area and "more can be done" to create awareness.

On the economic growth, Sitharaman at the HT Leadership Summit said, the GDP number this year would be very encouraging and India would emerge as the fastest

growing large economy in the world.

With regard to food inflation, she said, there are supply constraints because of floods in some parts of the country leading to price rise of perishable products.

She, however, expressed hope that prices of those commodities in short supply would cool down by January.

On edible oil, she said, enough and more imports have been allowed and that should take care of the spike in prices. With a fresh harvest of mustard seeds, she said prices of that would also moderate soon.

Asked about meeting the disinvestment target of Rs 1.75 lakh crore during the current financial year, she said, "we are progressing with each one of them (BPCL strategic sale, LIC IPO). The detailing requires a lot of time."

Air India handing over to Tata Group would be done by December 31, she added. **PTI**

# India exemplary in publishing its foreign exchange market intervention: US Treasury

Washington: India has been exemplary in publishing its foreign exchange market intervention, the US Treasury Department said on Friday adding that New Delhi should allow the exchange rate to move flexibly to reflect economic fundamentals.

"The (Indian) authorities should allow the exchange rate to move flexibly to reflect economic fundamentals, limit foreign exchange intervention to circumstances of disorderly market conditions, and refrain from further significant reserve accumulation," it said.

"As the economic recovery progresses, the authorities should continue to pursue structural reforms that can help lift productivity and living standards, while supporting an inclusive and green recovery," the Treasury said.

In its semi-annual Report to Congress on Macroeconomic and Foreign Exchange Policies of Major Trading Partners of the United States, the Treasury reviewed and assessed the policies of its major trading partners, comprising more than 80 per cent of its foreign trade in goods and services, during the four quarters through June 2021.

In accordance with the

Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 (the 1988 Act), the Report concludes that no major US trading partner manipulated the rate of exchange between its currency and the US dollar for purposes of preventing effective balance of payments adjustments or gaining unfair competitive advantage in international trade.

However, it found that 12 economies warrant placement on the Treasury's "Monitoring List" of major trading partners that merit close attention to their currency practices: China, Japan, Korea, Germany, Ireland, Italy, India, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Mexico, and Switzerland. All except Switzerland were on the Monitoring List in the April 2021 Report.

"India has been exemplary in publishing its foreign exchange market intervention, both monthly spot purchases and sales and net forward activity, with a two-month lag. While the RBI frequently intervenes in both directions, the RBI purchased foreign exchange on net in 10 of the 12 months through June 2021, with net intervention reaching USD 131 billion, or 4.6 per cent of GDP," it said.

# Automotive R&D body ARAI working on developing fast chargers for EVs: Minister

Canacona (Goa): Automotive research and development body Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) is working on developing fast chargers for e-vehicles, Heavy Industries Minister Mahendra Nath Pandey said on Saturday.

The Pune-based autonomous institution has already developed a prototype of the product, he told PTI on the sidelines of the "Round Table To Promote Electric Mobility" event organised by the Ministry of Heavy Industries here.

When asked about the challenges related to the usage of e-vehicles, he said, "This (issue) is being talked about that it consumes more time (to charge an e-vehicle battery). ARAI has been directed to work on it. In fact they have developed a prototype of a fast charger and the product is expected to be ready by December 2022."

The ARAI has been asked for completion of the project by October 2022, so by December, it can be made available to the users for use, he informed.

The launch of fast chargers will address the issue of charging and boost demand for the battery vehicles, the Minister said adding the research is still underway and after its completion, the specific charging time of a two-wheeler e-vehicle,



three-wheeler and four-wheeler e-vehicle will be known.

Pandey further said his ministry is also in talks with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for installation of chargers at 22,000 petrol pumps across the country.

Without sharing any timeline, he said there are about 70,000 petrol pumps across the country, and as per the plan a charging station would be at an interval of 25 km on highways and with a radius of 3 km in cities.

The minister also said that at the round table he has asked the industry stakeholders to apprise his ministry of their issues. "I have asked the players to discuss and inform about their concerns. I assure them of full support in addressing the

issues brought to my notice." Transport ministers of eight states, top officials from 19 states and industry leaders from the automotive sector attended the round table deliberate about ways to promote electric vehicles in the country and attract investments.

Meanwhile in a statement issued by the Ministry of Heavy Industries, quoted Pandey as saying, "India's transition to Electric Mobility System can save ₹20 lakh crore by 2030 on avoided oil imports alone."

The statement said that the minister directed the Indian automakers to look for major share of global electric vehicle market.

Growth of the auto industry will also help India achieve the commitments given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in COP26, he said.

# Cases should be taken to logical conclusion expeditiously: FM to DRI



inputs and act on time.

"You get a lot of intelligence input, but sometimes and many times it is difficult to identify if it is really actionable, sometimes they're so generic. To act on it becomes difficult...Capacity to be built within these institutions to make sure you're able to see which of these intelligence inputs are so quickly actionable," she said.

Agencies like DRI based on their experience can give ideas on the methods through those illegal acts can be prevented, she said.

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday urged officials of intelligence wings to take every case to logical conclusion expeditiously, so that it can deter perpetrators of economic crime like smuggling.

Speaking at the 64th DRI Foundation Day, the Finance Minister said logical conclusion is important but speedier conclusion is what will keep the heat on people who are promoting these kinds of activities.

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), under the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), is an intelligence and enforcement agency of the Government of India on anti-smuggling matters.

She stressed on capacity building so that the officials are quick to pick up right intelligence

venting will also have to be undertaken by us while deterrence and detection will always have to be on the high," she said.

She exhorted the DRI to be vigilant with regard to toxic waste being dumped into the country.

In emerging economies "because of the way in which we have built over the decades capacity to recycle materials, I'm afraid quite a large attempt and frequent attempt is being made on bringing in toxic waste to our shores and leave them there. So I would think that is an area on which I would like to see DRI more active", she said.

She also observed that greater media coverage of success of DRI's would also deter the perpetrators of illegal activities. **PTI**

# Coal production from captive mines likely to touch 85 MT in current fiscal



New Delhi: The Government on Saturday said that coal production from captive mines is likely to touch 85 million tonnes (MT) during the ongoing fiscal, which is significantly higher than last year's 62 MT.

The coal production from captive mines during this year till November has already reached around 50 million tonnes, the coal Ministry said in a statement.

In order to further enhance coal production, Coal Secretary Anil Kumar Jain

reviewed the issues related to environment and forest clearances impacting development of new coal blocks, with senior officers of the Ministry in view of high demand for domestic coal.

Coal production from captive mines is expected to reach 120 MT during the next financial year.

"This achievement will further fulfil the vision of Aatmanirbhar Bharat in domestic coal production," the Ministry said. **PTI**

# Labour Minister launches annual health check-up programme for ESIC members aged above 40

New Delhi: Union Labour Minister Bhupender Yadav on Saturday launched annual preventive health check-up programme for Employees' State Insurance Corporation's insured members aged 40 years and above in pilot mode at ESIC hospitals in Ahmedabad, Faridabad, Hyderabad and Kolkata.

Besides, in the ESIC's 186th meeting here chaired by Yadav, a proposal was also cleared for construction of 500-bed ESIC Hospital at Gurugram (Manesar) for expansion of services of existing 100-bed hospital.

Talking to the media after the meeting, Yadav said, "We have started a pilot project under which we are providing for free medical check for insured persons (IPs) of ESIC who are of 40 years or above age every year. We have a dream of 'swasth Bharat'. We have around 3.5 crore IPs. So if we also run preventive care moment in ESIC along with curative, then we can achieve that vision."

The minister also informed that this pilot would be further expanded in coming days with the increase in number of IPs to five crore with implementation of Social Security Code.

The minister said the ESIC also wants to improve its hospitals to super speciality ones so that referral to others can be reduced in coming days.

The minister also talked about roll out of a mobile app 'Santush' for ESIC beneficiaries for improving delivery of services. Yadav further said that the construction of two ESIC hospitals at Bihta in Patna and Alwar in Rajasthan has been completed and soon these would be inaugurated.

Informing about approving the proposal for construction of 500-bed ESIC Hospital at Gurugram (Manesar), Yadav said that ESIC has approved deposit of funds required for the purpose. On ESIC's request, the Haryana government has identified 8.7 acres of land for allotment. The ESIC on Saturday approved the proposal to

set up 500-bed ESIC Hospital at HSI-IDC, Manesar and of acquisition of this plot for the purpose.

He also informed that a 100-bed ESIC hospital would be built. The Uttar Pradesh Government has identified a piece of land measuring 2 hectares and conveyed approval for free of cost transfer of the land for 90 years. The ESIC on Saturday approved proposal and process of acquisition of identified land for construction of 100-bed ESIC Hospital at Meerut.

It also approved taking over of the state government-run ESIC Hospital, Tinsukia, Assam by the ESIC. Its subsequent running as a 100-bed ESIC-hospital state government of Assam has consented for handing over the state run hospital at Tinsukia to ESIC.

The ESIC also approved acquisition of land for proposed 30-bed ESIC Hospital at Atchutapuram, Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh. Land measuring 2 acres or 8,089.07 sqm has been allotted in Atchutapuram, Vishakhapatnam free of cost.

ESIC also approved setting up of a Sub-Regional Office (SRO) of ESIC at Jharsuguda in Odisha. The ESIC Scheme is implemented in 24 districts of the State.

The ESIC also relaxed the contributory condition in the ESIC COVID-19 Relief Scheme.

In order to provide help and succour to the families of the IPs who died due to COVID-19, the ESIC COVID-19 Relief Scheme was introduced.

This contributory condition of payment of 70 days contribution is proposed to be relaxed to an extent that contributions for at least 35 days should have been paid instead of 70 days. The ESIC also adopted the Audited Annual Accounts of the ESIC for the Financial year 2020-2021 together with the report of the C&AG of India. It also adopted annual report of the ESIC for the year 2020-2021 and Analysis thereof. **PTI**

# Over 550 applicants for BEE energy conservation awards

New Delhi: More than 550 applicants are in fray for the BEE energy conservation awards that have been instituted to push industries and sectors to develop innovative energy efficiency efforts in their units as well as reduce power consumption, the Power Ministry said on Saturday.

Under the National Energy Efficiency Innovation Awards (NEEIA), a total of 149 applicants participated by the due date. Online applications were invited from Category A (industry, transport, building) and Category B (students & research scholars) under the NEEIA awards.

The Ministry said that 408 applicants participated in the National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA), which have been instituted to promote industrial units, institutions and establishments to reduce energy consumption.

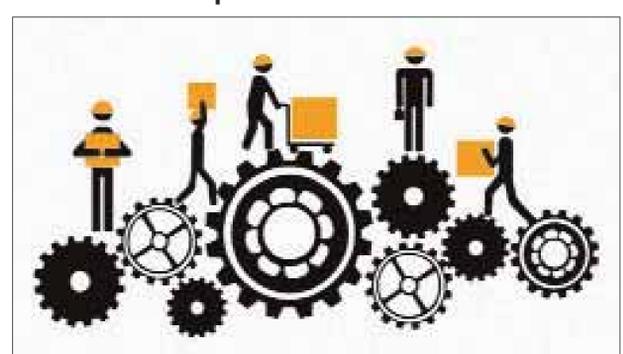
The Ministry explained that the National Energy Efficiency Innovation Award is the need of the hour to promote newer technologies, ideas, and pave way for the

adoption of these innovations by larger groups. As promotion of energy efficiency and Renewable energy are major pillars for low carbon energy transition, recognition of such efforts undertaken by various participants stimulate further action in accelerating the transition. Outcomes of which eventually contribute towards meeting India's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and broader climate goals, it stated.

The BEE recognises and encourages endeavors of industrial units, institutions and establishments in reducing energy consumption by felicitating them with National Energy Conservation Awards (NECA).

This year, the NECA and the NEEIA awards are being organized as part of the "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav". The awardees of the National Energy Conservation Awards and National Energy Efficiency Innovation Awards would be felicitated on 14th December 2021, on the occasion of National Energy Conservation Day, by high-level dignitaries, the Ministry said.

# MSME Min urges entrepreneurs to grab opportunity created by closure of plants in China



Ahmedabad: Union Minister of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Narayan Rane on Saturday urged Indian entrepreneurs to take advantage of closure of factories in China.

Indian industrialists should start manufacturing the products which are no longer produced in China, he said, speaking at an event at the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII) here.

"China is number one in the world in terms of production. China is leading with 64 per cent share in global manufacturing. However, many companies are shutting down (in that country)," Rane said.

"I have urged large and medium industrialists to capture this opportunity and start manufacturing these products in India," he said. "We should also take up marketing and export of these products. At present,

India's manufacturing share is nearly six per cent. If we add another 10 per cent, our GDP would increase significantly. This will help the country become a super power," the Minister added. Rane had been invited by the EDII to address students and entrepreneurs on the "Role of MSMEs in Enhancing Growth and Competitiveness". He also said the latest machinery should be used for manufacturing the

"China is number one in the world in terms of production. China is leading with 64 per cent share in global manufacturing. However, many companies are shutting down (in that country)," Rane said

products which are no longer made in China, so that India can capture global markets by maintaining quality.

The Minister also emphasized the importance of having an "industrial environment".

"A flourishing industrial environment brings stability to society by providing innovative solutions. It also inspires the younger generation to think creatively and dares them to take the plunge.

Hence the emphasis on MSME growth and sustenance is a must," he said. Rane also released the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor India Report 2020-21 on this occasion.

The report is touted as the largest annual study of entrepreneurial dynamics in the world. The Minister also inaugurated the MSME Ministry-supported newly constructed facilities on EDII campus and presented the Gujarat Start-up Awards 2021. **PTI**

कार्यालय अधिशासी अभियन्ता, निर्माण शाखा,  
उत्तराखण्ड पेयजल संसाधन विकास एवं निर्माण निगम, भिकियासैण (अल्मोड़ा)  
ई-मेल :- eecd.bksain@gmail.com

पत्रांक : 1998/विधि-5/415 दिनांक : 04.12.2021

निविदा शुद्धि पत्र

इस कार्यालय की ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 1913/विधि-5/400, दिनांक 20.11.2021 जो कि दैनिक हिन्दुस्तान व द पार्लियर अंग्रेजी पत्र में दिनांक 22.11.2021 को प्रकाशित हुई थी। उक्त निविदायें तकनीकी कारणों से ई-टेंडर पोर्टल पर प्रदर्शित नहीं हो पा रही हैं।  
अतः निविदाओं की संशोधित तिथियाँ निम्नानुसार हैं:-

Sl. No.	Key Dates	20.11.2021
1	Date of Calling of Tender	20.11.2021
2	Date of Online Publication	07.12.2021 at 10.00 hrs.
3	Document download : Start Date	07.12.2021 at 10.00 hrs.
4	Document download : End Date	21.12.2021 at 17.00 hrs.
5	Bid Submission : Start Date	07.12.2021 at 10.00 hrs.
6	Bid Submission : End Date	21.12.2021 at 17.00 hrs.
7	Offline submission of documents (Cost of bidding document, Bid Security, Original Affidavits & all the Supporting Documents in Support of Qualification)	22.12.2021 at 17.00 hrs.
8	Date of Tender Opening	23.12.2021 at 12.00 hrs.

अन्य नियम व शर्तें पूर्ववत् रहेंगी। अधिशासी अभियन्ता

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR**  
**DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR**  
Tel-0194-2474234 Fax - 2482032 - email - kashflori@rediffmail.com

**Subject:- Extension No. 01.**

In view of no response, the last date for submission of bids invited vide this office e-Tender Notice No. 28 of 2021 dated.12.11.2021 for **Outsourcing of Entry Ticketing system of Mughal Garden Nishant**, is hereby extended as per the details given below: -

1.	Period of downloading of bidding document	04.12.2021 from 01:00 PM to 24.12.2021 up to 2:00 PM
2.	Bid submission Start Date	04.12.2021 from 02:00 PM
3.	Bid submission End Date	24.12.2021 up to 2:00 PM
4.	Date and time of Opening of Tenders (Online)	27.12.2021 at 2:00 PM

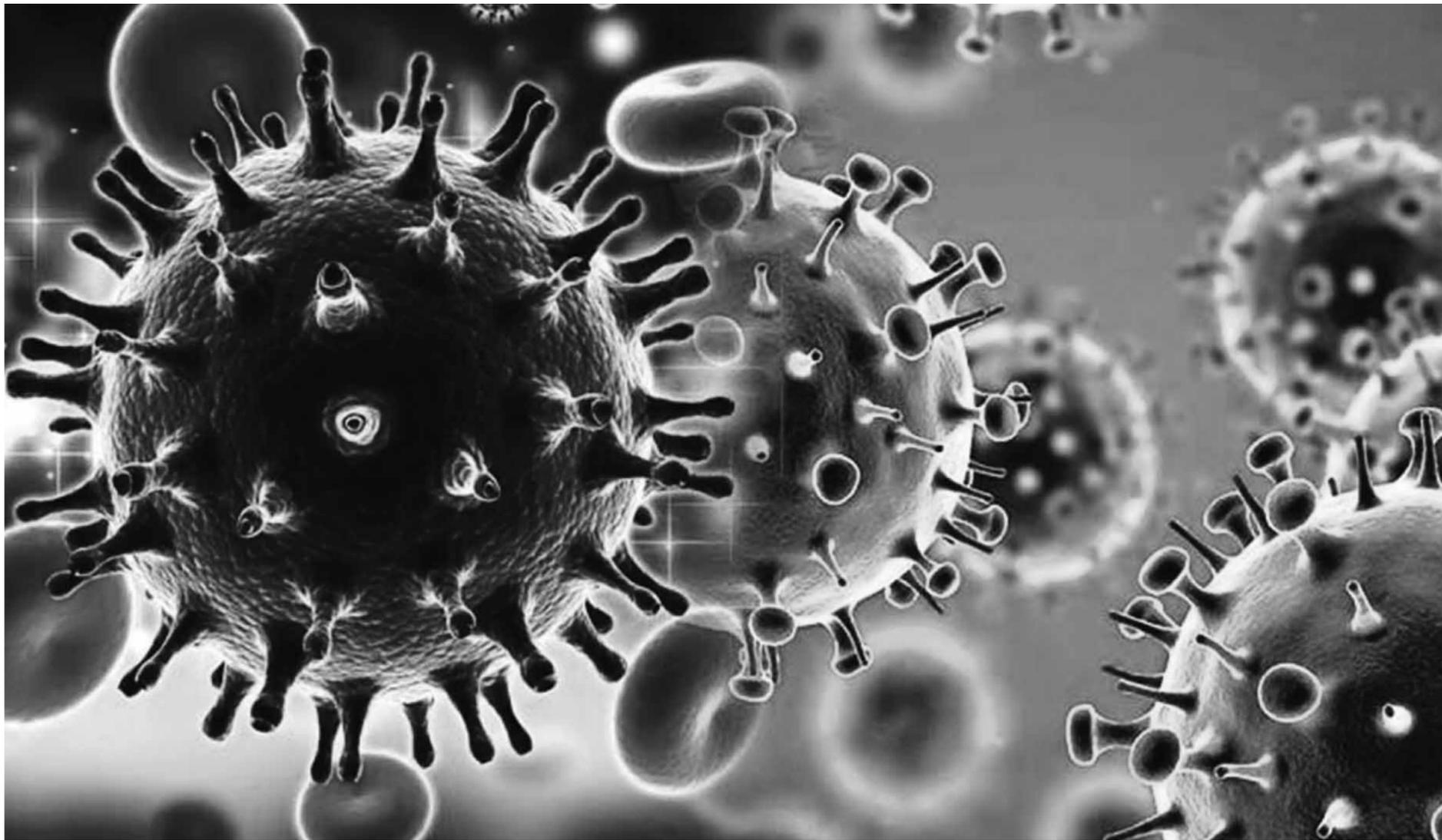
Other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid Tender Notice.

By Order  
Sd/- Accounts Officer  
(Member Secretary)

No. D1PK-14248/21 Dated:- 04-12-2021

# OH! MI-CRON

World Health Organization has declared Omicron (B.1.1.529) a variant of concern. Preliminary evidence suggests there may be an increased risk of reinfection among elderly and the immunocompromised. SUPRIYA RAMESH speaks with experts to bring you a report



**A**fter Delta, any other variant which has stirred fear among people is the new Omicron mutant. Originating in South Africa, it has now spread to 24 countries including India. On December 2, 2021, the country observed and confirmed its first two cases in Karnataka. One of them was a South African national.

Based on the evidence presented to the World Health Organization's Technical Advisory Group on Virus Evolution (TAG-VE) that Omicron has several mutations that may have an impact on how it behaves, on November 26, 2021, WHO designated the variant Omicron (B.1.1.529) a variant of concern (VOC) on the advice of TAG-VE. According to WHO, this variant has a large number of mutations, some of which are concerning. Preliminary evidence suggests an increased risk of reinfection with this variant, as compared to other VOCs.

Scientists are still gathering data to establish how contagious Omicron is, and the severity of the illness it causes. "Omicron variant has a large number of mutations, some of which are concerning. Researchers around the world are conducting studies to better understand transmissibility, severity and immune escape capabilities of Omicron. WHO commends countries which have been able to quickly detect and report cases of the new Variant of Concern," says Dr Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia Region.

Talking about the severity of infection, Dr Anurag Aggarwal, Consultant Internal Medicine, says, "This variant has a large number of mutations, some of which are concerning. Preliminary evidence suggests an increased risk of reinfection with this variant, as compared to other variants of concern."

Aggarwal, citing Professor Tulio de Oliveira, the director of the Centre for Epidemic Response and Innovation in South Africa, tells us that there was an 'unusual constellation of mutations' and that it was 'very different' to other variants that have circulated. "It is incredibly heavily mutated. There were 50 mutations overall and more than 30 on the spike protein, which is the target of most vaccines and the key the virus uses to unlock the doorway into our body's cells. Further, the receptor binding domain (that's the part of the virus that makes first contact with our body's cells) has 10 mutations compared to just two for the Delta variant that swept the world," explains Aggarwal.

After travel routes easing down post-second wave, it is obvious that people would travel everywhere after being caged for more than a year. With that, it is understandable that people will carry the virus from one place to another, even after the major chunk of the population is vaccinated.

**“**  
**IN THE FESTIVE SEASON, COVID-APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR TAKES A BACK SEAT. BUT, TIME HAS AGAIN COME WHEN WE HAVE TO ADHERE TO ALL THE PROTOCOLS DILIGENTLY — AVOIDING SOCIAL GATHERINGS IS ESSENTIAL. IT'S UNDERSTANDABLE THAT WE'VE ALL BEEN COMPELLED TO STAY INSIDE AND AVOID SOCIAL INTERACTION FOR ALMOST TWENTY MONTHS. HOWEVER, IF WE ARE TO COMPLETELY ERADICATE THIS VIRUS, WE MUST LIMIT ITS SPREAD**  
**— DR ARUNESH KUMAR, HOD & SENIOR CONSULTANT-PULMONOLOGY, PARAS HOSPITALS, GURUGRAM**  
**”**

**It is incredibly heavily mutated. There were 50 mutations overall and more than 30 on the spike protein, which is the target of most vaccines and the key the virus uses to unlock the doorway into our body's cells**

**— DR ANURAG AGGARWAL  
 Consultant Internal Medicine, QRG Super Speciality Hospital, Faridabad**



"The confirmation of the Omicron, a variant of concern today by India, the first two cases in WHO South-East Asia Region, was not unexpected in view of the interconnected world that we live in. This emphasises the need for all countries to step up surveillance, to be on alert and rapidly detect any importation and take measures to curtail further spread of the virus," says Singh.

She adds that the response measures for all variants, including Omicron, is the same as that for SARs CoV2. Comprehensive and tailored public health and social measures by Governments, and strict adherence to preventive and precautionary measures by individuals, is a must. People must wear a well-fitting mask which covers their nose and mouth well, keep distance, avoid poorly ventilated or crowded spaces, keep hands clean, cover cough and sneeze and get vaccinated. And continue to take all precautionary measures even after getting vaccinated. All travelers must adhere to public health and social measures at all times and remain vigilant for signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

Talking about the number of mutations, Dr Arunesh Kumar, HOD & Senior Consultant- Pulmonology tells us that this new variant is a matter of concern in India too. It has more than 30 mutations. With time, we will get to know more about this new variant. "This virus can invade our immunity. Therefore, we need to follow COVID appropriate behavior" he says.

The existing vaccines might or might not be effective against the Omicron variant and extensive research is being done to find out the same. "It is still to be known how effective vaccination would be in such a case," he tells us.

### SAFETY COMES FIRST

- ◆ Children over the age of five should also be encouraged to wear masks
- ◆ Maintaining a six-foot social distance while outside the home should always be followed
- ◆ Hand sanitisation should be practiced every 5-6 hours or whenever one goes out
- ◆ Masks should be worn at all times when leaving the house. It should be worn in such a way that it should cover your mouth and nostrils properly. Used masks should be washed on a regular basis to avoid opportunistic infections
- ◆ Quarantine guidelines need to be modified by the centre and state government so that we can restrict the transmission of the virus
- ◆ People should immediately get themselves tested if they are experiencing fever, scratchy throat, low oxygen level and feeling lethargic all the time

Talking about the new wave smashing Europe, Kumar says the main reason behind the new COVID wave in Europe is people not wearing masks. From the last couple of months, many Governments have put leniency when it comes to wearing masks. This actually has led to a new wave. "If we don't let our guards down, we can control COVID," he adds.

Dr Shuchin Bajaj, Founder Director, Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals says, "This is the 5th variant of concern and overall the 15th variant of COVID-19. We already have flights being banned and travel restrictions in place. Therefore, we need to follow COVID-appropriate behavior like wearing masks, following social distancing, and regular use of sanitizer.

With the festive season upon us, we need to make sure that we take proper measures and keep safe as much as possible. "Although the so-called third wave has not eventuate as yet, the sudden appearance and the spread of omicron – a new variant of COVID-19 – across several countries has brought back memories of the second wave and its visibly devastating all-round consequences on people in the country. This means that we must shake off the complacency which was creeping in and instead get back to observing the same COVID-appropriate protocols and behaviour as we did before with utmost seriousness and discipline. So, while we resume wearing double masks, using sanitizers and maintaining social distancing, because of the fact that the virus can be airborne and transmitted through the air, we must also continue to employ indoor air purification systems in order to pre-empt any threat from the new strain, or any strain of the virus for that matter. Since people are now more likely to stay indoors for a greater duration due to the newly-perceived threat from the new variant, the role of indoor air purifiers with their ability to inactivate microbial pathogens including viruses and bacteria will continue to be critical to people's health," says Himanshu Agarwal, CEO, Magneto CleanTech.

"In the festive season, people tend to put all the COVID appropriate behavior on the back seat. But, time has again come when we have to adhere to all the COVID-appropriate behavior diligently. Avoiding social gatherings is essential. It's understandable that we've all been compelled to stay inside and avoid social interaction for almost twenty months. However, if we are to completely eradicate this virus, we must limit its spread. This means we'll have to avoid social gatherings for a while longer. Even if you are fully vaccinated, following the protocol and avoiding social gatherings will help. When you're outside, maintain social distance," says Kumar.



# AJAZ TAKES 'PERFECT 10'

## ...But India bowl out NZ for 62 to inch towards massive win

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Mumbai-born New Zealand left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel had an unforgettable afternoon when he entered the annals of Test cricket history with a 10-wicket haul but Indian bowlers made it a forgettable evening for him as well as his team by dismissing the visitors for a paltry 62, taking a massive stride towards a series victory.

By the end of the day, India were 69 for no loss in their second innings with Virat Kohli deciding against

enforcing the follow-on in the second and final Test.

Cheteshwar Pujara, coming out to open in place of an injured Shubman Gill, looked good during his 29 not out while Mayank Agarwal, after his fine 150 in India's first innings total of 325, remained unbeaten on 38.

The lead swelled to 332 for the hosts and in these conditions, the Indians will brace up for a three-day finish to earn some rest before boarding the charter flight to Johannesburg on December 16.

The second day of the second Test should have solely belonged to the 33-year-old Patel, who had figures of 47-5-12-119-10, to join the 'Elite List', where he has late Jim Laker and Indian great Anil Kumble for company.

By keeping India's first innings total down to a manageable level, Patel must have had a sense of elation but before the

plethora of congratulatory messages on social media would stop coming, his batters just flattered to deceive as they managed to bat out only 28.1 overs.

The team ended up scoring the lowest total by an overseas side on Indian soil.

The Black Caps batted 14.4 overs less than what their premier spinner took to get all the Indian players out.

They didn't even let the feat sink in before Mohammed Siraj's (3/19) hostile four over spell literally decimated them. There were two deliveries that straightened and had enough pace to beat the batter's defence while the other was a mean bouncer.

Ravichandran Ashwin (4/8 in 8 overs) and Axar Patel (2/14 in 9.1 overs) were expectedly just too good on this track. The opposition batters simply couldn't counter the turn and bounce.

The New Zealand innings finished even before the Indian bowlers were nicely warmed up and it was understandable that Kohli wanted some batting time against a battered opposition

which would give him and Pura requisite confidence.

With the match all but in their pocket, Pujara stroked freely and also got a pulled six off Patel — a rarity from an exponent of defensive batting.

While Pujara will certainly value these welcome runs but it can't be seen in isolation that it came when the pressure was already completely released due to a mammoth 263-run first innings lead.

Patel started the day with two quick wickets before Agarwal and Axar added 67 runs for the seventh wicket to take the score towards the 300-run mark. Axar got his first 50 and batted with a lot of caution and occasional aggression.

The best delivery of the six wickets that he got on the day, was the one that got Ravichandran Ashwin out as he drew the batter forward and turned enough to clip the bails.

Ashwin hilariously appealed for DRS without realising that he has been bowled as he thought that the bowler had appealed for caught behind.

The review was wasted as he had already asked for it and once he realised that he was beaten lock, stock and barrel, he didn't wait for the final verdict.

No wonder when Patel got Siraj as his 10th and final victim, Ashwin was seen giving him a standing ovation from the Indian dressing room.

But little would Patel have known that it would turn into an anti-climax after Siraj's opening burst which was as good as one saw in home Test matches where pitches aren't conducive for pace bowling. However, this one had extra bounce.

The delivery that got Ross Taylor out was perhaps the best of the match.

The ball came in as Taylor shaped to play a defensive shot only to find enough deviation which beat the outside edge of his bat and knocked back the off-stump.

That was one of a kind dismissal after which there was no chance of a recovery for the New Zealanders, who will now only look to delay the inevitable.

India vs New Zealand DAY 1

### Scoreboard

**INDIA 1ST INNINGS: (OVERNIGHT 221/4)**

Mayank Agarwal c Blundell b Patel	150
Shubman Gill c Taylor b Patel	44
Cheteshwar Pujara b Patel	0
Virat Kohli lbw b Patel	0
Shreyas Iyer c Blundell b Patel	18
Wriddhiman Saha lbw b Patel	27
Ravichandran Ashwin b Patel	0
Axar Patel lbw b Patel	52
Jayant Yadav c Ravindra b Patel	12
Umesh Yadav not out	0
Mohammed Siraj c Ravindra b Patel	4

**Extras:** (B-13 LB-5) 18  
**Total:** (All out in 109.5 overs) 325

**BOWLING (NEW ZEALAND)**

Tim Southee	22-6-43-0
Kyle Jamieson	12-3-36-0
Ajaz Patel	47-5-12-119-10
William Somerville	19-0-80-0
Rachin Ravindra	4-0-20-0
Daryl Mitchell	5-3-9-0

**NEW ZEALAND 1ST INNINGS:**

Tom Latham c Iyer b Mohammed Siraj	10
Will Young c Kohli b Mohammed Siraj	4
Daryl Mitchell lbw b Patel	8
Ross Taylor b Mohammed Siraj	1
Henry Nicholls b Ashwin	7
Tom Blundell c Pujara b Ashwin	8
Rachin Ravindra c Kohli b J Yadav	4
Kyle Jamieson c Iyer b Patel	17
Tim Southee c sub b Ashwin	0
W Somerville c Mohd Siraj b Ashwin	0
Ajaz Patel not out	0

**Extras:** (LB-1 NB-2) 3  
**Total:** (All out in 28.1 overs) 62

**BOWLING (INDIA)**

Umesh Yadav	5-2-7-0
Mohammed Siraj	4-0-19-3
Axar Patel	9-1-3-14-2
Ravichandran Ashwin	8-2-8-4
Jayant Yadav	2-0-13-1

**INDIA 2ND INNINGS:**

Mayank Agarwal batting	38
Cheteshwar Pujara batting	29

**Extras:** (lb-2) 2  
**Total:** 69 for no loss in 21 overs

**BOWLING (NEW ZEALAND)**

Tim Southee	5-0-14-0
Ajaz Patel	9-1-35-0
Kyle Jamieson	4-2-5-0
William Somerville	2-0-9-0
Rachin Ravindra	1-0-4-0

FAISEL FEATURES



### BEST BOWLING IN AN INNINGS IN TESTS

Figures	Bowler	Opponent	Venue	Season
10-53	Jim Laker (England)	Australia	Manchester	1956
10-74	Anil Kumble (India)	Pakistan	Delhi	1998-99
10-119	Ajaz Patel (New Zealand)	India	Mumbai	2021-22
9-28	George Lohmann (England)	South Africa	Johannesburg	1895-96
9-37	Jim Laker (England)	Australia	Manchester	1956

### LOWEST TOTALS AGAINST INDIA IN TESTS

Score	Overs	Team	Venue	Season
62	28.1	New Zealand	Mumbai	2021-22
79	33.1	South Africa	Nagpur	2015-16
81	30.4	England	Ahmedabad	2020-21
82	51.5	Sri Lanka	Chandigarh	1990-91
83	48.4	Australia	Melbourne	1980-81

# Star players — Retained and released!

The original eight franchises retained some of their yesteryear star performers for the upcoming IPL edition on Tuesday. Players like Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, MS Dhoni, Rishabh Pant, and Jasprit Bumrah were the few big names that were retained by their respective teams, but KL Rahul, Shubman Gill, Shreyas Iyer, David Warner, Rashid Khan, and Ben Stokes were all released despite being star performers all these years. **DRITI ATRI** takes a look at the player retention for 8 teams



### MUMBAI INDIANS:

The five-time champions retained skipper Rohit Sharma, fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah, middle order batsman Suryakumar Yadav and all-rounder Kieron Pollard ahead of the mega auctions. And let go the likes of Ishan Kishan, Hardik Pandya, Trent Boult, and Quinton de Kock, among others. Even though MI retained the core of Rohit, Bumrah and Pollard, they could have picked Ishan over Surya as the pocket-sized dynamo is developing into an explosive batsman and could have served the franchise for many more years to come. Also, Hardik's departure is surprising considering he is one of the biggest match winners in the T20 circuit, but his inability to bowl might have worked against him.

### CHENNAI SUPER KINGS:

The defending champions kept dynamic Ravindra Jadeja, inspirational leader MS Dhoni, 2021 Orange Cap winner Ruturaj Gaikwad, and English all-rounder Moeen Ali. The Dad's Army went for Ruturaj Gaikwad instead of Suresh Raina and Faf du Plessis, mainly because of the age factor and considering that he could be a long-term investment for the franchise. While Jadeja and Dhoni were the expected names before, what came as a surprise was

that Jadeja was the team's first choice player, meaning that he will now earn 16 crore per season. The yellow army also went for Moeen Ali, maybe because, apart from being a dependable batter, Ali can prove very useful on a Chennai wicket.

### ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE:

Virat Kohli and Glenn Maxwell were the two obvious choices for the team, but RCB surprised everyone by picking Mohammed Siraj over Yuzvendra Chahal, Devdutt Padikkal, and Harshal Patel for the 2022 IPL. Siraj, without a doubt, is one of the most talented bowlers in the Indian unit, but the franchise's decision to let go Chahal was shocking, especially when the leggie was the team's best bowler in the last five years. Also, letting go of 2021 Purple Cap winner Harshal Patel and upcoming star Devdutt Padikkal might come back to hurt RCB. Especially Padikkal, who's going to make a big name for himself in the international arena.

### DELHI CAPITALS:

The Delhi Capitals have decided to keep Rishabh Pant as their captain for the upcoming seasons, effectively closing the door on Shreyas Iyer, who was looking for a leadership role in the IPL. The Delhi lad, Pant, was impressive in his first season as captain and led DC to the play-

### RAJASTHAN ROYALS:

The winners of the inaugural edition retained skipper Sanju Samson, English keeper-batsman Jos Buttler and young Yashasvi Jaiswal, and let go English all-rounder Ben Stokes and fast bowler Jofra Archer. The Royals had a tough choice to make between the three English superstars, but they stuck with Buttler alone, who had a good T20 World Cup outing in the UAE this year. Archer and Stokes have struggled with injuries this year, and this was one of the main reasons why the Royals didn't go with them.

### PUNJAB KINGS:

Their best batsman in the last four seasons, KL Rahul, wanted to move out, and PBKS respect-

ed that decision, which is going to be a blessing for whatever side he represents next. In the absence of the Karnataka stalwart, Punjab retained Rahul's best friend and opening partner Mayank Agarwal for the upcoming season, along with youngster Arshdeep Singh, who was impressive in the 2021 edition. The Mohali-based side didn't have much to choose from after the poor show the players put on in the last few seasons, but they could have kept hold of Mohammed Shami or Ravi Bishnoi. The duo has impressed while representing Punjab.

### KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS:

KKR turned the tables the other way round in the second half of the 2021 IPL, where they reached the final as well. Their success in the UAE was primarily built around one batsman, Venkatesh Iyer, and the Kolkata-based franchise retained their prized asset, who will now earn eight crores per season - a 390% increase from the 10 lakh rupees which he earned in the 2021 edition. But while they kept hold of Iyer, along with seasoned campaigners Andre Russell and Sunil Narine and

mystery spinner Varun Chakravarthy, KKR let go of Shubman Gill and skipper Eoin Morgan. Gill's exclusion especially raised eyebrows because the 2018 U19 World Cup winner was KKR's best batter in the last few years and was seen as the future captain as well. Pat

Cummins, former captain Dinesh Karthik, and the middle order duo of Nitish Rana and Rahul Tripathi are among those who have been released.

### SUNRISERS HYDERABAD:

David Warner, Rashid Khan, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Jonny Bairstow, Jason Holder, Jason Roy, Manish Pandey, and

T Natarajan. Sunrisers Hyderabad had so much to choose from, but instead they chose to retain Kiwi captain Kane Williamson and two Indian youngsters from Jammu and Kashmir - Abdul Samad and Umran Malik - ahead of the mega auctions. The franchise's decision to let go Rashid Khan, who is the best T20 bowler in the

last five years, is still not easy to digest for anyone in the cricketing fraternity. Even though Warner, who led them to the 2016 IPL title and was the Orange Army's best batter in IPL history, was excluded, it was expected following his sour relationship with the team management by the end of the 2021 edition.

# Sindhu enters final of BWF World Tour Finals

PTI ■ BALI

Indian badminton ace P V Sindhu entered the summit clash of BWF World Tour Finals with a hard-fought win over Akane Yamaguchi of Japan in the semifinals here on Saturday.

Sindhu, the reigning world champion and two-time Olympic medallist, beat Yamaguchi 21-15 15-21 21-19 in a thrilling match that lasted one hour 10 minutes. She will face Korea's An Seyoung, who beat Pornpawee Chochuwong of Thailand 25-23 21-17 in the other semifinal, in the summit clash on Sunday.

It will be Sindhu's third final appearance in the season-ending tournament. She had won the title in 2018 to become

the only Indian to achieve the feat.

The world number 7 Indian had come into the match with an overall head-to-head win-loss record of 12-8 against the world number three Japanese.

Sindhu has been in fine form after picking up a bronze in the Tokyo Olympics. She had reached the semifinals in her last three events — French Open, Indonesia Masters and Indonesia Open — before coming into the BWF World Tour Finals.

She had finished runner-up in the Swiss Open in March.

But it won't be easy for Sindhu in the final against Seyoung who had come into the season-ending tournament with back-to-back titles in the Indonesia

Masters and Indonesia Open.

The world number six Seyoung had also beaten Sindhu in the quarterfinals of the Denmark Open in October.

Against Yamaguchi, Sindhu trailed 0-4 in the first game but quickly came to level terms at 4-4 and then 9-9. The duo were neck and neck but Sindhu zoomed ahead from 15-14 to reach 18-15. She then took three straight points to before the first game.

The second game was also a tight contest as the two players were levelled at 10-10 before Yamaguchi shifted the gear to pocket it without much fuss.

In the deciding game, Sindhu and Yamaguchi were tied at 5-5 before the Indian reeled off seven straight points.

**महिला सशक्तिकरण एवं बाल विकास विभाग के विगत पाँच वर्षों की "सफलता की गूँज" एवं आंगनवाड़ी कर्मियों द्वारा मा. मुख्यमंत्री जी का सादर आभार समारोह**

**दिनांक : 6 दिसंबर, 2021 , देहरादून**

**स्थान : सनातन धर्म इण्टर कालेज, रेसकोर्स, देहरादून**

मुख्यमंत्री वात्सल्य योजना

मुख्यमंत्री महालक्ष्मी योजना

मुख्यमंत्री ऑपल अमृत योजना

संजोटी नेपकिन योजना

मुख्यमंत्री बाल पोषण योजना

राष्ट्रीय पोषण अभियान

प्रधानमंत्री मातृ-वृद्धा योजना

नव्या वीरा योजना

सीडू रीटेली पुस्तकालय

सखी वन स्टॉप सेन्टर

बेटी बचाओ बेटी पढ़ाओ

**नोट : समस्त प्रतिभागी कार्यक्रम में कोविड दिशा निर्देशों का पालन करते हुए मास्क, सेनिटाइजर व सामाजिक दूरी का अनुपालन करेंगे।**

**सौजन्य से : महिला सशक्तिकरण एवं बाल विकास विभाग, उत्तराखण्ड**

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# the pioneer agenda

I think there's a part of a woman that wants to be the thing that breaks a man down  
— Dakota Johnson



FROM THE INSIDE

## Forgiveness & Peace

Forgiveness leads to inner peace, and inner peace blossoms into outer peace, enriching every heart

2



4

## Astrology helps reshape destiny

Becoming aware, guided by a proven Guru, helps purify mind of its limiting tendencies. It helps one to look at things in the right perspective

Both India and Russia seek a multi-polar world, where “no single country is able to impose its will through domination or through military force”. This will be the key takeaway of the 21st India-Russia Summit scheduled to be held on December 6, writes ASOKE MUKERJI

# COMING OF AGE: THE 21ST INDIA-RUSSIA SUMMIT

The 21st bilateral India-Russia Summit scheduled for December 6, 2021 marks the coming of age of the special and strategic privileged partnership between the two countries. This will be President Vladimir Putin's second foreign visit after the onset of the Covid pandemic in March 2020, and his first to any country in Asia, signaling the salience and resilience of the India-Russia strategic partnership. The annual summit mechanism, proposed by Russia's President during his first official visit to India in October 2000, has vindicated its role in steering the India-Russia strategic partnership through the momentous changes of the past two decades.

### BACKGROUND

The 2019 India-Russia Summit at Vladivostok charted innovative approaches to sustain and broaden India-Russia relations. These included the long-term participation of both countries in each other's strategic sectors such as defence, energy, and technology. The resource-rich Russian Far East was added as a new dimension for trade and economic cooperation between enterprises of India's constituent states and Russia's eastern regions, pushing cooperation in Asia as the new frontier of India-Russia relations. A \$1 billion Indian line of credit was earmarked to implement this initiative, which would be sustained by a new maritime link between Vladivostok and Chennai through the Pacific and Indian oceans.

### THE COVID PANDEMIC

The unexpected Covid pandemic created a barrier to the smooth implementation of these objectives, leading to the postponement of the 2020 India-Russia Summit. Despite this setback, the close personal interaction between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Putin, who have met 19 times since 2014, bridged the physical gap by using digital communications technologies to maintain the momentum, trust, and dialogue that are the hallmarks of India-Russia strategic relations.

A phone conversation on March 25, 2020 between the two leaders resulted in an agreement on ways to maintain the progress and warmth of bilateral relations. A joint response to the pandemic began in April 2020, when India lifted its ban on export of medicines to Russia to mitigate Covid. By mid-2020, the Gamaleya Research Institute of Russia developed the Sputnik-V human adenovirus vector platform vaccine against Covid. In April 2021, after clinical trials in India, the Sputnik-V vaccine joined Covishield and Covaxin on the list of vaccines registered for emergency use in India. In May 2021, joint manufacturing of the Sputnik-V vaccine in India through the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) was initiated, adding to the pool of Indian manufactured vaccines against Covid for domestic and international use in third countries.

### DEFENCE AND FOREIGN POLICY DIALOGUE

President Putin and Prime Minister Modi agreed in a telephone conversation on April 28, 2021 to institutionalise a 2+2 Ministerial India-Russia Dialogue on foreign and defence cooperation to anchor the bilateral strategic partnership. The first India-Russia 2+2 Dialogue is expected to take place on the margins of the 21st Summit.

The ferocious border confrontation between India and China in May 2020 at Galwan caused another challenge for India-Russia relations, as Russia was chairing the trilateral Russia-India-China (RIC) grouping in 2020. However, by par-

ticipating in the RIC videoconference meeting of foreign ministers on June 23, 2020, and subsequently in a physical ministerial meeting in Moscow on September 10, 2020, Indian and Chinese foreign ministers were able to hold a bilateral “frank and constructive discussion” and agree on the need for new confidence-building measures. India has acknowledged its appreciation for Russia's regular arms supplies to India for Russian origin defence equipment during this period.

The focus on long-term India-Russia defence cooperation benefited from regular interaction between India's Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh and Russian Defence Minister General Sergei Shoigu during the past two years. The Raksha Mantri participated in the events in Moscow marking the 75th anniversary of the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany on June 24, 2020, and interacted bilaterally with his Russian counterpart during his visit to Moscow for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Defence Ministers meeting on September 3, 2020, and the SCO Defence Ministers meeting in Tajikistan on July 28, 2021.

The outcome of this interaction includes the first manufacturing joint venture between India and Russia with transfer of technology for about 600,000 world-class AK-203 Kalashnikov rifles at the Korwa Ordnance Factory in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh. Other outcomes include the manufacture and co-production of four Project 1135.6 naval frigates; the supply of 400 more T-90 tanks; additional supplies of Su-30 MKI, as well as the MiG-29 aircraft; and additional supplies of the MANGO ammunition & VSHORAD systems. The supply of the first unit of the S-400 air defence systems from Russia to India contracted in 2018 is to be completed by the end of 2021. India and Russia are expected to sign an agreement on reciprocal logistic support for each other's armed forces that come for exercises in either country.

The current value of India-Russia defence contracts is between \$9-10 billion, making Russia a top defence partner of India. By participating in the Make in India programme, Russia has committed to the transfer of defence technologies to India that it does not share with other countries, while Russian investments in Indian defence production will generate employment and boost defence exports. This approach mirrors India's investments in Russia's defence manufacturing sector two decades ago, which resulted in the supply of technologically advanced equipment for all three services of India's armed forces, including the BrahMos missile system. The Summit is expected to extend the mandate of the India-Russia Military Technical Cooperation platform chaired by the two Defence Ministers by ten years to 2031.

A similar process of regular interaction between India's External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has enabled the India-Russia strategic partnership to respond in a calibrated manner to international challenges. Besides the RIC meeting of 2020, India's foreign minister has visited Moscow for the SCO Foreign Ministers meeting in September 2020 and for a bilateral visit in July 2021, while the Russian foreign minister visited India in April 2021. The two ministers have interacted in the Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) framework twice through videoconferencing during Russia's chairmanship in 2020, and once in 2021 under India's chairmanship.

This interaction has been buttressed by consultations on India-Russia engagement on bilateral, regional, and multilateral issues. Experts



President Putin and Prime Minister Modi at Vladivostok Summit 2019

“THE FOCUS ON LONG-TERM INDIA-RUSSIA DEFENCE COOPERATION BENEFITED FROM REGULAR INTERACTION BETWEEN INDIA'S RAKSHA MANTRI SHRI RAJNATH SINGH AND RUSSIAN DEFENCE MINISTER GENERAL SERGEI SHOIGU DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS”

from both sides met in December 2020 to coordinate views on issues on the UN Security Council (UNSC) agenda, while discussions on the 21st Summit were held at foreign secretary level in Moscow in February 2021. The convergence of Indian and Russian positions in the UNSC on Myanmar, Syria, Yemen, Palestine, the UNSC Taliban sanctions regime, and UN peace-keeping operations during 2021 reflect the outcome of this cooperation.

### MARITIME SECURITY AND CONNECTIVITY

The strategic rapport between the top leaders of India and Russia was on international display on August 9, 2021, when Prime Minister Modi chaired a special meeting of the UNSC on maritime security. President Putin was the only Head of State of a UNSC permanent member who spoke at this meeting, which endorsed a holistic approach to maritime security.

Russia's proposal in August 2019 to establish “a security and cooperation organisation in the Gulf” has assumed a deeper significance for the India-Russia strategic partnership in 2021. Apart from its impact on stability in the Gulf region including Iran, such a regional structure can generate confidence in two major connectivity projects that India and Russia have pursued in recent years — the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) linking Russia through Iran with India proposed in 2000, and the Chabahar project linking India, Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asia, and Russia proposed in 2016.

Greater regional cooperation in the western Indian Ocean will provide stability for the free flow of navigation along two major sea lanes of communication through the Red Sea and Yemen, and through the Straits of Hormuz. These routes transport a significant volume of India's international trade, energy imports and international digital traffic.

A similar holistic approach to maritime security will sustain the Eastern Maritime Corridor proposed by the India-Russia Summit in 2019 to link Russia and India through the Pacific and Indian Oceans as part of India's Act Far East policy. The first steps to modernise the port infrastructure of Chennai and Vladivostok have been initiated during the past six months. Eventually, the Eastern Maritime Corridor will connect India to ports in the Arctic.

India has emphasized the “centrality” of the ASEAN in any sustainable maritime security arrangement in the Indo-Pacific. The first-ever Russia-ASEAN naval exercises off Sumatra in early December 2021 demonstrates a similar emphasis on ASEAN-centrality, leading to India-Russia convergence in the maritime domain.

### AFGHANISTAN AND COUNTERING TERRORISM

President Putin and Prime Minister Modi held a telephonic conversation on August 28, 2021 on the unexpected takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban disregarding calls for an “inclusive” government. The leaders agreed to cooperate in countering the common threats emanating from Afghanistan, such as terrorism, drug trafficking and the impact on Central Asian security. This objective has been integrated into the India-Russia strategic partnership by the first meeting of the India-Russia High Level Mechanism on Afghanistan on September 8, 2021, India's official participation in the Moscow format talks on Afghanistan in Moscow on October 20, 2021, and Russia's participation at the National Security Advisers Conference on Afghanistan hosted by India on November 10-11, 2021, in which Iran and the five Central Asian states participated, but Pakistan and China did not.



BEFORE THE REWARD THERE MUST BE LABOR. YOU PLANT BEFORE YOU HARVEST. YOU SOW IN TEARS BEFORE YOU REAP JOY — RALPH RANSOM

# FORGIVENESS & PEACE

Forgiveness leads to inner peace, and inner peace blossoms into outer peace, enriching every heart, shares SANT RAJINDER SINGH

If we wish for the world to be better than what we have seen in the past century, then we must be willing to make peace and love a part of our lives. We must wash away any hatreds and prejudices that have stained our hearts and souls. If we want others to be peaceful, we must be models or peace ourselves.

## THE FIRST STEP

No one said that attaining peace is easy. The hardest step towards peace is the first step, and that is forgiveness. We must learn to forget the past and forgive our enemies. We must develop compassion for those who have hurt us in the past. We must realise that we have all been victims of the hatred and discord of our ancestors. It is time to put a stop to it. Revenge must be replaced by forgiveness and compassion.

How can we take those first steps? How can we cleanse ourselves of anger and hatred and replace them with love and forgiveness? Compassion, forgiveness, and peace can be ours through spirituality.

## WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?

Spirituality is the recognition that our true self is our soul. It is recognising that our soul is one with God. It is realising that we are not merely our body and mind, but a soul that inhabits the body. We may think of ourselves as being a body bearing a name, that we are a citizen of India or Colombia or France, or that we are from a certain caste or religion. But spirituality is recognising that behind these outer names and outer labels we are all souls, a part of the one Creator. We are all connected at the level of our soul as we are children of the same Creator.

## MAKE IT A PART OF OUR LIVES TO BUILD A PEACEFUL FUTURE

When we develop this angle of vision, we no longer see through the eyes of prejudice and discrimination. We start breaking down the barriers that separate one human being from another. We start feeling like we are all connected at the level of soul. When we experience our unity and connectedness, we start caring about each other. We want to help and serve each other. The hungry cries of our neighbour's children will cause us as much pain as the cries of our own children. We will see the homeless person on the street as per own homeless grandfather, and we will be moved to help him. Our vision will be broadened and we will have compassion for the suffering of all human beings and will want to help them with all our heart.

## HOW CAN WE DEVELOP THIS NOBLE VISION?

We can do so by awakening spiritually. A method can open our spiritual sight so that we can wash away hatred



and replace it with love and peace. That method is a simple technique of meditation, by sitting in stillness for some time, we can get in touch with our soul. We will find that we are much more than this outer body and mind. We will discover our spiritual essence that is filled with love, peace and bliss. When we identify with our soul, we will realise our oneness with God.

How many of us have yearned to have a divine vision of God? For many, finding God is a dream that hardly seems possible, but many people through the ages have seen God. They have merged with God. How did they do it? They all used one technique. We may call that technique inversion, concentration, or meditation. They sat in the stillness, directed their attention within, and ultimately discovered their soul and God. When we do so, we attain the state reached by all the great saints and founders of religions. We become loving, kind, peaceful and giving human beings.

In Meditation we come in contact

IN MEDITATION WE COME IN CONTACT WITH A DIVINE POWER. THIS POWER MANIFESTS ITSELF AS A LOVING LIGHT

with a divine power. This power manifests itself as a loving light. When we contact this light within ourselves, we experience a profound peace, bliss, happiness unlike any we can find in this world. The beauty of meditation is that this intoxication remains with us even after we resume our daily activities.

When we rise above our physical body and experience the Divine Light, we also see that all other beings are also souls. We see that the same Light is within us is within everyone else. We start to realise that we are all souls, all part of God. Thus we start caring about all living things. In this way, our personal attainment of peace and happiness will contribute to a golden age of peace and happiness on earth.

## INNER PEACE LEADS TO OUTER PEACE

We can develop our spiritual side. By learning meditation, we can spend some time each day coming in contact with God within ourselves. As God bathes us in love and bliss, we are

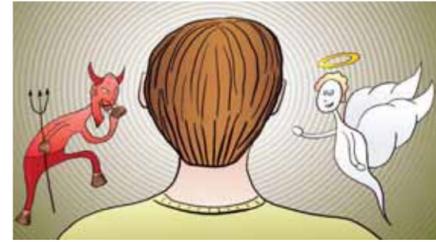
cleansed of the years of habits that caused us to have hatred and prejudices. In this state of peace and love, we are then able to develop the qualities of forgiveness and compassion for those who have hurt us. God instilled in us the qualities of love, forgiveness, and compassion. The Lord holds our hands as we take our first step toward reconciliation and peace.

As we become more peaceful ourselves, we begin to radiate peace to all those with whom we come in contact. Peace begins with us. By transforming ourselves, we can transform others, including our family, community, society, and eventually the whole world. In this way, we will be building a peaceful, safe world for our children, posterity, and ourselves. It all begins with the first step and that is forgiveness. Forgiveness will lead to inner peace, and this inner peace will blossom into outer peace in the world, enriching every heart and making this world a much better and peaceful place to live.

The writer is a spiritual leader



HIDDENSOULS PRAMOD PATHAK



## Ethics for the modern times

We are into strange times. Contradictory things are moving in tandem. These are times of vulgar consumerism. These are times of brazen commercialisation. These are times of unabashed consumption. Snobbery is on the rise. But another trend is catching up. A trend that is not in tune with whatever is discernible. The trend of unreserved display of compassion and kindness. So we find that intentional acts of kindness and compassion are being institutionalised and marketed. Special days are observed to market age old values. Values that were passionately adhered to in the past are becoming a fashion. So we observe world kindness day and the like. Even as unnecessary private consumption driven by ego continues unchecked, we are finding that showcasing compassion and kindness also goes with a lot of noise, and is also ego driven. Sometimes for public consumption and sometimes for publicity. While the ancient Indian thought mentioned about 'Gupt Daan' or charity with humility and quietude, in the present days, there's pomp and show. This is not to demean those acts of charity, or question the motive behind compassion. But certainly a gentle reminder that ego driven charity is not as impactful as passionate compassion. Wasteful consumption is antithetical to genuine compassion. A case in point is the kind of food wastage that goes in the elite restaurants which on close observation will seem reminiscent of the Roman kings of the yore, who ate, drank and made merry oftentimes biting more than they could chew. Food wastage in a party is something that can be bracketed as criminal because even by disciplined eating, a lot can be spared for the needy. Ironically, it is the same class that wastes food in the elite eateries that also loudly carries out those acts of compassion. Political correctness and social approval are highly sought after these days and have become key motivating forces driving human action. Without debating on whether this is good or bad, let us think of the essence of ethics which has become a subject matter of popular discourse these days. Goswami Tulsidas had very successfully pointed out that compassion is the essence of Dharma whereas Pride is the source of sin. But these days we find that even compassion is a by-product of pride. So even acts of compassion feed pride though they are mutually exclusive. Conscientious consumption and passionate compassion need to be a self-imposed code of conduct. The world still has enough for everybody's need. But the problem is greed. Even one man's greed can upset the apple cart. Where do we go wrong? The answer is very simple. Just try to introspect, if whatever we want is actually needed. Next time when you go to have food in a restaurant that offers you whatever you can eat for a given price, assess you need first. How much of what can you eat? It is rather common place to see people order extra to get full value for what they have paid. Be a little reasonable and think of those who are still struggling to get a square meal a day. Perhaps you will save a lot of food wastage. Numbers of poverty reduction make difference to governments, not the governed. Despite all these data about GDP growth and rising economy poverty is still a problem the world needs to contend with.

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## FROM PAGE 1

# COMING OF AGE: THE 21ST INDIA-RUSSIA SUMMIT

## ENERGY, TECHNOLOGY, TRADE

The primary driver of the India-Russia strategic partnership is its contribution to the transformation of the two countries in the 21st century. Bilateral cooperation in energy, technology, and trade to achieve this objective is a priority for both countries. The Summit is expected to endorse three energy cooperation projects, viz. investments by ONGC-Videsh, Indian Oil and Oil India into Russia's Rosneft owned Vostok which has an estimated reserve of about 6 billion tonnes of crude oil; potential Indian investment into the Arctic LNG-2 gas field in Siberia which has 461 billion cubic metres of natural gas; and possible Russian investment into the Paradip cracker plant in Odisha, which will open a new avenue of cooperation in petrochemicals.

Nuclear energy, with its strong linkage with international security, plays a big role in India's energy security framework. Today, Russia is the only major nuclear power partnering India after the historic 2008 waiver given by the Nuclear Suppliers Group. India's largest nuclear power plant at Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu is an India-Russia project for six nuclear power reactors of 1000W each, of which two units came on stream in 2017, two more are expected to be operational in 2027, and construction of the fifth and sixth units was begun on 29 June 2021.

Three areas with a strong technological imprint, viz. cooperation in outer space, the digital economy, and the Blue Economy, are expected to transform the contribution of India-Russia scientific and technological collaboration to the strategic partnership. Space cooperation has built upon on existing satellite launches, the GLONASS navigation system, and cooperation in training India's astronauts in Russia for India's first manned space mission (Gaganyaan) due to be launched in late 2022 or early 2023. Digital cooperation is spearheaded by youth-driven digital innovation involving India's Atal Innovation Mission and Russia's Sirius, and encompasses areas such as additive manufacturing, 3D printing, blockchain, Artificial



At the Sochi informal summit May 2018 watching display of Russian ethnic music

Intelligence, and Big Data Analytics. Cooperation in the Blue Economy, as part of India's SAGAR Indian Ocean policy, will look at deep sea research and shipbuilding. The Summit is expected to agree to establish a Joint Commission on Science and Technology.

The 2019 Vladivostok Summit's target of reaching \$30 billion two-way trade by 2025 has been set back by the unexpected contraction of the economies of both countries due to the Covid pandemic. In the financial year ending March 2021, two-way trade was valued at \$9.31 billion, with Russian exports to India accounting for \$5.83 billion and Indian exports to Russia \$3.48 billion, mostly the result of public sector led trade. Despite a growth of about 30% in the first six months of 2021 compared with the same period in 2020, the Summit will need to find ways to significantly increase private sector participation from both countries in trade and investment relations, including through greater financial sector cooperation.

## PEOPLE TO PEOPLE

On 22 January 2020, India hosted the first Ganga-Volga Dialogue, an idea that emanated from discussions between President Putin and Prime Minister

Modi. The Dialogue touched upon four broad themes in the context of India-Russia bilateral cooperation; viz. education, culture, and civilisation; entrepreneurship and innovation; trade routes including inland navigation; and India, Russia and Greater Eurasia. The Summit's endorsement of this initiative will be a major impulse to encourage greater people-to-people interaction and sustain their strategic partnership.

## THE WAY AHEAD

On 8 July 2021, speaking at the prestigious Primakov Institute in Moscow, External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar identified "geo-political compatibility, leadership trust and popular sentiment" as the key drivers of the India-Russia special and privileged strategic partnership. Both India and Russia seek a multi-polar world, where "no single country is able to impose its will through domination or through military force." This will be the key takeaway of the 21st India-Russia Summit.

The author was India's Ambassador to the United Nations (2013-2015) and India's Deputy Ambassador to the Russian Federation (2001-2005). He is a Distinguished Fellow of the Vivekananda International Foundation, New Delhi

# Artah worshippers

Driven by needs/difficulties, the artah stage of a soul marks the start of spiritual journey, writes AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

This Sanskrit word means distressed, troubled, etc. Lord Krishna refers to such persons in the verse # 7.16 of the Bhagavad Gita, when He refers to four kinds of virtuous people, who worship God. Lord Krishna commends them as really noble, because they choose to seek help from God (7.18) Three kinds of sufferings are common to everyone on this planet earth, which the Lord has described as impermanent place of miseries. (8.15) These are what we get due to punishable acts (karmas) done in the past, which include previous lives. Then, others give us trouble. And natural forces also cause sufferings, like this pandemic.

The artah stage of a soul marks the start of his spiritual journey. Yes, it is driven by material needs/difficulties, but such persons have taken the first step out of four steps needed to reach the final stage of being a wise person. Then, one becomes just like God, that is his consciousness is yoga-based and he remains well established only in God-the supreme destination. (7.18) In the artah stage, the consciousness is much lower, and is influenced by all the three modes, with the lower modes still playing substantial roles. In comparison, a person becomes wise after having transcended all the three modes. Some advanced artah persons also possess attributes of the next two stages, that is of being seekers of wealth and being inquisitive about God.

Though artah stage is the initial stage in the spiritual journey, such persons have faith in the existence of God. That is the reason they approach God for relief. They are aware that God is supreme. However, what everyone does not realise is that the "karmapha-



la principle" is being administered by higher authorities. And they act strictly as per guidelines set by God. Another mistake by most people is to assume world to be a place of fun. Yes, this world is not as bad as hell but heaven it is certainly not. The expectation from God is also faulty in most cases. One expects God to erase/delete all troubles instantly. He won't.

What, then, is the proper way to approach God? First of all, one must accept that whatever is happening to him is all due to his faulty past act/acts. This acceptance is crucial to get started. There must be remorse also for what should not have been done. The third important requirement is preparedness to tolerate whatever punishment is being meted out. Yes, God has unlimited powers to do anything, but He doesn't exercise them just like that. Because the creation can only function based on sound principles. Therefore, even if approached properly, God has to see whether the purpose of punishment has been served or not. However, artah are much better placed than those

who don't approach God and worry endlessly.

Artah worshippers stand to gain a lot by approaching God. They get relief as decided by God. He does so through mediums chosen specifically for this purpose. Thus artah worshippers get chance to reform themselves. At the same time they begin to realise the reality of this world, its karmaphala principle. Slowly, they get rid of the false notion that this world is there for lustful enjoyments. There is no doubt that pleasures are also there, but which are according to "dharma". They thus begin to stop themselves from doing harmful acts, which would bring punishments in future. God begins to guide and help them in subtle ways. This is also the start of "bhakti".

What is the conclusion then? If in trouble, do whatever to try to get out of it, but do not forget the given of real and absolute relief. Take God's shelter for guidance. But one must remember to have the right expectations.

Bishnoi is a spiritual writer and can be reached at spiritual@ajitbishnoi.com

# Challenges for Scholz in post-Merkel era

The countdown for the post-Merkel era has just begun. The historic sixteen long years (four terms) of Angela Merkel chancellorship will be over by the end of this month. A new Chancellor is all set to take over. And once again, a rag-tag coalition has come to an agreement to form the next Government of Germany, the economic powerhouse of Europe.

Olaf Scholz, the Chancellor-elect, is a left leaning leader of the SPD (Social Democratic Party). He was born on June 14, 1958. Scholz is currently serving as the Federal Finance Minister and Vice Chancellor in the Merkel Government since March 14, 2018. Earlier, he served as the Mayor of Hamburg from March 7, 2011 to March 13, 2013. He also worked as the acting leader of the SPD in 2018.

The national election in Germany took place on September 2021. And now the Germans have got a new Bundestag (the Lower House of the German Reichstag i.e. Parliament), the 20th one in its post-war federal history. The current German Constitution stipulates that Parliament must meet 30 days at the latest after the election day, ending the term of its predecessor.

It would be really difficult for Scholz to match his predecessor's record. Merkel is the first woman leader of Germany; the second longest serving Chancellor ever and the first modern Chancellor to hail from eastern part of the country. Helmut Kohl was the longest serving Chancellor of Germany and he was in office from October 1, 1982, to October 26, 1998. If there would have been no announcement of a new government by December 17, Merkel would have surpassed Kohl's record. But now, the new Traffic Light Coalition (TLC) has already declared Scholz as the new Chancellor of the country.

The TLC is named after the three parties' respective colours in the alliance. All the three partners wanted to accelerate the transition to a green economy and digitalisation while maintaining strict fiscal discipline according to a 177-page pact signed by the SPD, the Greens and the Free Democrats. Interestingly, at a press conference held recently in Berlin along with the leaders of the Greens and the FDP, Scholz recalled when the "first traffic light" was installed at the city's Potsdamer Platz in 1924,

many people doubted whether it could really work. But he told people that this traffic light partnership will be indispensable for Germany. This coalition will see the first woman Foreign Minister of Germany, i.e. the Green's co-leader Annalena Baerbock. Again, FDP leader Christian Lindner is going to take over as the Finance Minister and Green's co-leader Robert Habeck is expected to take on as the newly expanded Economy and Environment Minister. Further, the brand-new coalition will try to balance the Green Party's call for a tough stance on Russia and China on human rights. But Scholz is attempting not to risk a direct confrontation with the two authoritarian regimes on complex issues such as Taiwan and Ukraine. This government will also allow multiple citizenships and legalize the sale of cannabis for recreational use at all registered outlets across the country.

Again, Merkel has set a record in history for the fact that she will be the first Chancellor to leave her office at a time of her own choice. However, many political analysts say that she did face serious internal pressure in her CDU (Christian Democratic Union) party to step down after the refugee crisis (mostly refugees came from war-torn nations like Syria, Iraq) rocked Europe, particularly Germany. But she announced on her own that by autumn 2021, she will relinquish the top job of Germany. Interestingly, from Konrad Adenauer through Helmut Schmidt to Helmut Kohl, all of the country's great leaders left their offices either under extreme party pressure or through an outright defeat in a national election.

For now, Merkel will continue as caretaker Chancellor till the new government is formed. Generally, the formation of coalition takes longer than usual in Germany. In 2017, when Merkel formed her last alliance government, it took nearly six months to ink the pact with the partners.

German election heralds absolutely a messier political environment. It has gradually resulted into a much weaker leadership in comparison to Merkel for now. After the national election in this September, the new German Parliament looks like this: the Christian Democratic Union (CDU)/Christian Social Union (CSU) of Merkel gets 196 (-50) i.e. 24.1%; the Social Democratic Party (SPD) of



Olaf Scholz, SPD chancellor-designate and executive federal minister of finance, raises his thumbs after the SPD convention at Willy Brandt House approved the planned coalition agreement in Berlin, Germany, on Saturday. Delegates voted on a coalition agreement with the FDP and Bündnis90/Die Grünen to form a new federal government

Scholz gets 206 (+ 56) i.e. 25.7%; the Green Party 118 (+51) i.e. 14.8%; the Free Democratic Party (FDP) 92 (+12); the Alternative for Germany (AfD) 83 (-11) i.e. 10.3%; the Left (Linke) 39 (-30) i.e. 4.9% and others 1 (+1) i.e. 8.7%. Merkel's Conservatives is the most successful party in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany. The SPD is traditional Centre-Left party. It appears intermittently in successive governments, sometimes in alliance with the CDU. The FDP is little less socially conservative party than the CDU. Though it is small, it is coherent and known for its pro-business approach. The AfD is a strong right-wing party that firmly opposes immigration and is absolutely sceptical about the EU. The Greens are influential and have tied up with many governments both at the centre and in some states.

This election showed the most consequential gains for the SPD, particularly in East Germany. Besides, the party has also recovered grounds in its traditional homelands such as

the Rhineland and in the north-west Germany, where it shared some of the advances with the Green Party. Despite losing some grounds, the AfD was able to muster support in Thuringia and other parts of the East Germany. Sadly, the CDU lost most of its support bases almost everywhere, but its partner party CSU could do better in Bavaria. The Linke Party lost big grounds in the East.

As legendary Merkel is tipped to tiptoe into Germany's political sunset, Scholz is taking up all challenges and opportunities left behind by the CDU leader. Today Germans are talking about a radical shift in the 'machtarchitektur', i.e. the architecture of power structure of the country. And the new SPD-led coalition is heading for wide policy changes both at home and abroad. During the four tenures of Merkel, the coalition partners like the SPD and others have always complained about their minimal role in policy making and in public appearances. She was adopting a pure top-down approach in running her fragile coalition government in all

the last 16 years in office. But this time, with Scholz, the power arrangement with partners is quite different. His partners are the Greens and the FDs which are handed over crucial ministries such as the foreign, finance, new economy and environment. Moreover, the Ministers and major leaders of these parties are much younger and dynamic than Scholz. They have a broader vision of Germany than him. Therefore, it would be too difficult for him to clip their wings or rather side-line them the way Merkel did with her political allies.

It seems Scholz has already convinced the German electorate that he would be able to replace the maverick Merkel. Truly speaking, her departure has not only ushered in a new era in Germany but also literally shakes up the fragile power balance among the competing powers in the coveted European Union. At a time when Russia under Putin is increasingly becoming aggressive and Lukashenko is pushing the migrants towards the border between Belarus and

Poland, the EU demands the role of accommodating and tough decision makers like Merkel. Her successor-in-waiting Scholz has a much bigger role to play — leveraging German power to handle a pandemic Covid-19 and an ever-growing trend of migration of people from West Asian countries to Europe. Many in Europe today see huge potential in French President Emmanuel Macron, Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi and Scholz as contenders for leading Europe to the world stage. And probably to take over Merkel's mantle as the unquestioned leader of Europe, the world's another crucial power bloc. But the biggest hurdle for all these three statesmen would be to cope up with an EU minus the presence of the UK and the fast marginalisation of the group in global politics.

Scholz, a terse, well-briefed and a grounded professional political leader, would be no less a competent figure than Merkel to steer Germany ahead in this time of crisis. Undoubtedly, he would be

offering his long innings in German politics both for the benefit of his country and for Europe. Thus, Robin Alexander, a long-time political observer of Merkel and Scholz, aptly describes his credentials: "He is like a soccer player who studies videos of another player and changes his game. From temperament and political style all the way down to facial expressions, Scholz now channels Merkel. If Scholz was a woman, he would wear pantsuits."

Now it remains to be seen how the new Chancellor will take Germany to the post-Merkel era to overcome both fears and challenges in the days ahead.

(Dr Makhan Saikia has taught political science and international relations for over a decade in institutions of national and international reputation after specialisation in globalisation and governance from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. He is the chief editor of the Journal of Global Studies, an international research journal)

As legendary Merkel is tipped to tiptoe into Germany's political sunset, Scholz is taking up all challenges and opportunities left behind by the CDU leader. Political observers say Scholz, a terse, well-briefed and a grounded professional political leader, would be no less a competent figure than Merkel to steer Germany ahead in this time of crisis. However, it remains to be seen how the new Chancellor-elect leads Germany to the post-Merkel era to overcome both fears and challenges in the days ahead



MAKHAN SAIKIA

## PERSPECTIVE

# Afghan woman judges still fear Taliban

A female judge, Muska, was hiding with her family from newly empowered Taliban militants in Afghanistan when an apparent reading mistake 7,000 miles away helped to drastically change her life.

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro opened his nation's doors to potential refugees from the Asian nation during remarks at the United Nations General Assembly on September 21. "We will grant humanitarian visas for Afghan Christians, women, children and judges," he read on the teleprompter — apparently mispronouncing the final word, which was "jovens" — youngsters — in his printed speech as "juizes," or judges.

Error or not, his government fulfilled that offer. Muska and her family were taken by bus to the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif and were then flown to Greece with six female colleagues. By the end of October, they found themselves in Brazil — a country with very little in common with Afghanistan beyond their shared love of soccer.

Speaking to international

media for the first time, Muska told *The Associated Press* this week that she and the other judges still fear retribution from the Taliban — some of whose members had been sentenced for various crimes in their courts.

She asked that her true name not be used, nor her precise location — at a Brazilian military installation — be published. Her colleagues declined to speak to the news media. Muska had been a judge for almost 10 years before the Taliban captured power in August and she said her home in the capital, Kabul, had recently been searched.

Afghanistan had about 300 female judges, Muska said, and many are now in hiding, their bank accounts frozen.

"We knew they (the Taliban) wouldn't let the women judges work. We would have serious threats to our lives," she said. "They released all the criminals from the prison. These were the criminals that we sentenced."

The judges who remain "are very scared, in hiding. They have serious financial problems, no salary, lost their



An Afghan judge who asked that her true name not be used, sits during an interview with AP in Brasilia on Wednesday. Seven Afghan female judges have taken refuge in Brazil due to fears of retribution from the Taliban

jobs, had their bank accounts blocked. They are still in danger," the judge said. "It is not good in Kabul."

The Taliban won widespread support in Afghanistan in part because the toppled US-backed government was wide-

ly seen as corrupt. "But women judges were the bravest, strongest and most honest officials in the previous administration," said Muska, who said the decision by US President Joe Biden to end American presence in the country meant

she quickly had to leave. "Everything happened suddenly," she said.

Judge Renata Gil, the head of the Brazilian Association of Magistrates that is sponsoring the refugees, said the Afghans arrived "in a lot of fear, still feel-

ing threatened." "They are being chased because they convicted Taliban fighters," she said noting that she herself had received death threats "because I sentenced drug dealers. For women this is much harder."

Speaking at the association's headquarters in the capital, Brasilia, she said, "I hope they are able to live their lives independently. But as long as they need, we will be here to help."

The judges and their 19 family members — apparently the only Afghan refugees who have come to Brazil since the Taliban returned to power — now have Brazilian bank accounts and health care. Those who can are taking lessons in Portuguese. It's not clear yet what the future holds for them in Brazil, where at least they are protected. But Muska said they'd like to return home one day.

"I hope I can join my family members in Kabul. I have this dream I am in my house. I miss everything," the judge said. Muska hasn't seen much of Brazil due to security reasons, difficulties with the language and her own fears. But

she has found people with empathy for her situation. "They cry with us, we know they can sense our feelings," the judge said with tears in her eyes.

Muska's three children, including a toddler, are also having a tough time adapting. The judge used to have her parents and nannies to help, but in Brazil she's largely on her own, while worrying about her future, and theirs.

The children look happy and energetic as they run and jump at a public playground, speaking Dari among themselves. But the judge said her eldest daughter has questions she cannot answer. "She is always asking about my parents, her friends, her cousins," Muska said. "She always asks us questions about the Taliban, if they will kill us."

Despite the difficulties, Muska said she believes the future will be brighter for her children than for those still in Afghanistan.

"I have hope for them. That they have their studies in a good situation, in a good educational system," she said. "They will have their choice on what they can do." AP

Afghanistan had about 300 female judges before the Taliban snatched power, and many of these judges are now in hiding and their bank accounts frozen



IT IS IN YOUR MOMENTS OF DECISION THAT YOUR DESTINY IS SHAPED — TONY ROBBINS



**YOUR WEEK AHEAD**

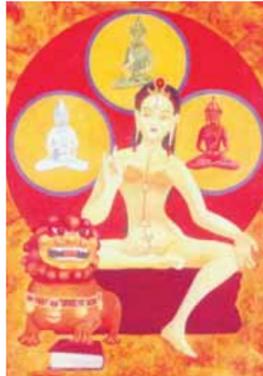
MADHU KOTIYA



**ARIES** March 21-April 19

This week foresees you indulging in social activities. You will be shifting the balance in your life from work to social activities. This will improve your health and give you more energy. On the career front, you may feel a little confused with your career. Try not to get too overworked about it. Your modest approach and shift into a different track/department would be helpful. This is the time to define yourself do not bother yourself with other people's perspectives. There will be a time when you think that everything has come to a standstill. Use this time to enhance your skill. On the personal front, your partner is supportive. You can try and talk to your spouse and relieve yourself from the stress.

**Lucky number 14**  
**Lucky colour Green**  
**Lucky day Thursday**



**LEO** July 23-Aug 22

This is a good week for your emotional and physical well-being. Your positive approach to things will be of great help. Those waiting on health test results, know that the news will be good. You are likely to enter new realms in your spiritual exploration. You will get attracted to herbal ingredients and homemade remedies to cure health and you may join some courses. For some of you who are working from home, do not take it as leisure time, otherwise, this might turn negative. On the personal front, you may be involved in a serious conflict. Feelings of helplessness and lack of understanding are indicated. The situation may be lightened up with the support of a close family member.

**Lucky number 8**  
**Lucky colour Magenta**  
**Lucky day Friday**



**SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22-Dec 21

After recovering from certain health issues, you feel recharged with energy and stamina. During this time, you will find your self-confidence unharmed. Be grateful for all the blessings that surround you at this time. This week you will reflect on the positive influence and will prove to be a motivator for others. Career-wise, you will experience roadblocks and will find stagnation in your present job. The current scenario is not bright and this could demoralise you. Those in business will get some monetary gains. Prioritise your expenses and avoid unnecessary spending, this will help you now as well as in the long run. On the personal front, your maturity plays an important role at home.

**Lucky number 18**  
**Lucky colour Silver**  
**Lucky day Wednesday**



**TAURUS** April 20-May 20

This week count your blessings and enjoy the good things that life has to offer. Whatever you do, keep it simple and enjoy it. Stay safe and enjoy a good meal with your family. Some of you would like to stay close to nature, therefore, will spend time gardening. Females will feel sensitive and nurturing and make life meaningful. Professionally, good times on the card. Moneywise week is satisfactory, and your generosity will earn you goodwill. Overall, it is an extremely good period in your career life, and you should take full advantage of it. Do not indulge in gossip as it might hurt your image. On the personal front, you will find emotional stability. This is the time to enjoy your relationships.

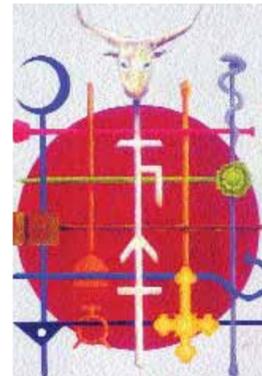
**Lucky number 6**  
**Lucky colour Purple**  
**Lucky day Friday**



**VIRGO** Aug 23-Sep 22

This week you will feel very charged up and ready to take up physical activity. You are focused and goal-oriented. Your enthusiasm and charismatic personality will impress others. You are optimistic about your future. Therefore, your overall health will remain good. On the career front, you are trying your best to be in your senior's good book. Your determination and ambition will make you move forward. Remember that you'll need to use both your intellect and your heart to be successful. On the personal front, it is advised not to let small issues blow out of proportion in your mind. Beware that there is someone who does not want your relationship to grow and who is working against you.

**Lucky number 13**  
**Lucky colour Brown**  
**Lucky day Saturday**



**CAPRICORN** Dec 22-Jan 19

When it comes to following a healthy diet, you make the same mistakes — neglect. Give extra attention to your diet, and follow physical exercise for at least half an hour that you can take better care of yourself. On the career front, it is time to take a stand and make some tough choices. Be straightforward in your communication and to the point. This will bring reasonable change and improvement to a specific concern in life. You will find happiness in accomplishment. This week if you implement certain important pending decisions that will have the potential to change the rhythm of life for the better. On the personal front, you have very forceful energy this week. You are likely to be diplomatic and know how to get things done in your favour.

**Lucky number 7**  
**Lucky colour Grey**  
**Lucky day Saturday**



**GEMINI** May 21-June 20

You are likely to spend time in spiritual pursuits to find peace and inner calm. Follow meditation, yoga, and Pranayam etc to bring balance and gain strength to fight stress. You will be able to find solutions to most of the issues of life. Don't be in a hurry for any work. Give time to pamper yourself. The divine connection will show you the right path. This week financial worries are indicated. Professionally, you are not happy and some of you feel demotivated. If possible, interact with people to keep up your morale. Do not give up on a temporary low phase. This is the time to wait for the good times. Things are not so good in the relationship. Your partner will have a long list of accusations, sit and discuss them. Things will move into a lighter phase.

**Lucky number 15**  
**Lucky colour Sky Blue**  
**Lucky day Thursday**



**LIBRA** Sep 23-Oct 22

This week your priorities will focus on others like children, spouse, and any elderly members in the family over your health. For those who follow an unhealthy diet, this is a wake-up call. A poor level of vitamins and protein will make you feel tired and irritable. The time is not favourable in terms of health, you must take care and eat healthy to increase metabolism. Professionally, those who are looking for a job will get hired in a few days that will test their skills and potentials. This will be a very demanding job. Believe in yourself. Some of you will be weighed down with far more responsibilities. On a personal level, you will have concern for others and people around you will be grateful and reciprocate well to your good intentions.

**Lucky number 11**  
**Lucky colour Beige**  
**Lucky day Sunday**



**AQUARIUS** Jan 20-Feb 18

This week you may need a medical examination, to clear some doubts and lead a stress-free life. You are likely to face some confusion and it will make you feel low. This is the time to lift yourself and transform your lives. It is a crucial time when you must be honest with yourselves and decide what best action should be implemented to rise to the challenges and embrace the best life. Career-wise, this week will be in your favour. You are likely to appreciate your sincere and hard work. Financially the week will be satisfactory, but you need to follow a budget to avoid any tough times. Relationship wise, you will experience freshness and a blissful state. This week you will be passionate and energetic and will enjoy a charming personality.

**Lucky number 2**  
**Lucky colour Pink**  
**Lucky day Sunday**



**CANCER** June 21-July 22

You can enjoy this week as you had planned. Your health, wealth and happiness are co-related. It is recommended that you learn some stress-free techniques to keep you healthy. Take some time out for a walk amidst nature that could be a great energy provider and refreshing for you. Career-wise, you need to ease your expectations. Those in business will see a good response and hike in financial matters. Those in the job need to sit down with a financial planner and figure out exactly your needs are and plan their finances accordingly. On the personal front, you are likely to feel a tight leash around you. There is a lack of understanding and feelings for each other. Married couples need to communicate well.

**Lucky number 19**  
**Lucky colour White**  
**Lucky day Tuesday**



**SCORPIO** Oct 23-Nov 21

This week take your time to identify hidden issues and other subconscious thinking that is preventing you from seeing the fact. Some of you may look out for emotional support from a female person to identify the emotional trouble and what can be done about it. Meditation is beneficial currently. Don't be disappointed about not getting the things done as this would spoil your day or maybe the week. On the career front, investing your time in attending a webinar or any online skill development class will be favourable. These programs will help you virtually connect with people. This will further provide you unique guiding light and moral force. This week relationship area needs your attention and clear expression. Express yourself before it is too late.

**Lucky number 20**  
**Lucky colour Mauve**  
**Lucky day Monday**



**PISCES** Feb 19-March 20

You will feel great about yourself. Overall health remains good for you. This week is a period of great productivity. You will have a sense of fullness and confidence that will make you feel that you have finally found your niche. This time is the biggest changing point in your life, so getting stuck and aggressive about things that are not working in your favour could hold you back. Choose a middle path to live life fullest. On the career front, you will face opposition. Your colleagues might not agree with you. Aggression is indicated. You need to understand the mentality of others and stay away from conflicts. On the personal front, you will use your charm to attract people. Be careful as a complication is indicated in relationships.

**Lucky number 12**  
**Lucky colour Peach**  
**Lucky day Tuesday**

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**ASTROTURF**  
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO

# Astrology helps reshape destiny

As we established in the previous two issues that human beings are empowered to guide their actions by choice and discrimination, this exclusive human prerogative also enjoins upon a being to make conscientious choice to modify even their destiny indications. The obvious implication is that 'freewill' has a role to play in human life, using which, we even reshape our destiny. How well we use that option is altogether a different matter. The fatalists may still insist that destiny is beyond change. What they forget that civilisation has successively grown thus far out of its primitive stage through human efforts only. If expectancy of life in India has risen to around 70 from below 50 since Independence, it is not that destiny of Indian people has changed by itself. Medical facility has improved and people have become more health conscious, which is nothing but human effort. If you still continue to be fatalist, you will be left behind in the run of time. The western world has been confidently using their power of freewill. They would be committing many mistakes in the way, yet they have grown faster and far beyond us.

a unified world we live in, where no individual has a reality independent of the entirety, all set into an interdependent mechanism, 'freewill' cannot be absolute. In such a framework, we all have a shared destiny. So, you can't just blindly pursue your whims and fancies. You are within your right to pursue aspirational urges, but it will not yield desired result, if it is in conflict with the callings of collective existence. We, therefore, need to learn how to use our freewill option rightfully. It would be possible only when we remain alert to invoke our discriminatory faculty before taking any call. The irony, however, is that caught up in the flirtations of mind, we are not left with enough of mind-space necessary for due diligence before exercising our option. Truth remains that human potential — mind power — is immense, which unfolded in full will know limits. But major part remains buried under the limitations of mind. The irony, however is that human beings have access to hardly 5 to 7 percent of the faculties of mind. That is available by default. More than that is subject to our conscious efforts. Even what is available by default, if it could be optimally utilised, one will be



able to negotiate the callings of life with relative ease. The paradox, however, is that engaged in unnecessary brooding and contemplation, dreaming, worrying, dealing with sense of fear and insecurity, we more often dissipate considerable amount of mind power towards unproductive ends. Consequently, we are hardly left with enough to do justice to our priority preferences. When we fail, we find it convenient to shift the blame on destiny. Going by what Swami Vivekanand says, we do not fail in life because destiny is so scripted. We rather don't strive sufficiently to unfold immense power within. It is believed that Einstein and those in his ilk would have used around 10 percent of their mental abilities to have created history. The ancient India's learned masters would have been able to access full landscape of mind to have realised even subtle realities of life operative at intangible level.

What's the way forward then? Identify and acknowledge limiting tendencies of mind by self-reflection and address them through fresh educative inputs. Our ego, however, doesn't let us acknowledge our infirmities. Here Astrology comes handy as an effective

diagnostic tool to dispassionately figure out the basic fabric of an individual's making. For, it does energy mapping of a being, which a horoscope is. And energy knows no bias. Becoming aware, thus, guided by a proven Guru, purify the mind of its limiting tendencies. Sufficient mind-space will then be available, necessary for processing your thoughts objectively, and thereby all actions on your part. With such an expanded vision, and thereby mind-power, first, you will not take things on its face value. So, you will not will upon any action without due diligence.

Second, you will look at issues in hand with an open mind without any limitations whatsoever. You will, therefore, be able look at things in the right perspective due. You may then be able to discriminate between 'what you want' and 'what is right', and accordingly make most appropriate choices. Also, you will be able to intelligently deal with unforeseen challenges coming your way, and with relative ease.

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