

WORLD 5

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VOLCANO ERUPTS

MONEY 6

LOT OF UNHEALTHY SPECULATION
ON CRYPTO TAKING PLACE: FM

SPORT 7

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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.

PM GIFTS ₹18K CR IN POLL-BOUND U'KHAND

Dehradun: Prime Minister Narendra Modi gifted development projects worth more than ₹18,000 crore to poll-bound Uttarakhand and said his Government believes in the development of all and not in serving a particular community, caste or religion and using them as a vote bank.

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



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

of the 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 Zimbabwe, 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.

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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.

Continued on Page 2

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 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, Dharmwad 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.

Continued on Page 2

Sena raps Mamata for bid to damage Cong

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Slamming the Trinamool Schief 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.

Continued on Page 2

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.

Talking about the prospect of the Congress in the forthcoming Assembly polls, Akhilesh said, "The public will refuse them... and they will get 0 seats in the upcoming election."

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.

The project will provide business opportunities to various MSMEs and other defence industries for supply of raw material and components, which will lead to generation of new employment opportunities. The project marks a significant stride towards making UP a key contributor in the ascending defence manufacturing prowess of India.

The 7.62 X 39mm caliber AK-203 Rifles will replace in-service INSAS Rifle inducted over three decades back.

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

Want legal backing of MSP; Shah speaks with farmer leaders

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Protesting farmers' groups on Saturday formed a five-member committee for dialogue 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 late on Friday 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



Bharatiya Kisan Union spokesperson Rakesh Tikait addresses a Press conference after farmers' meeting at Singhu Border in New Delhi on Saturday PTI

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, Shiv 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 gets 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.

"Whatever we talk about with the Centre, we will have that agenda ready. In Haryana, we already have a committee. If the Haryana Government wants to talk, they are ready. Our five-member committee will handle all affairs, and we hope the Centre will be in touch with us through them. It will be responsible for deciding who will talk in respective States," Tikait added.

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Mumbai-born Ajaz Patel takes 10 in an innings

3rd in 144-year Test history after Laker, Kumble

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.



New Zealand bowler Ajaz Patel celebrates the wicket at Wankhede stadium in Mumbai on Saturday PTI

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.

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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 'Chinna' 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



VINOD DUA
11 March 1954 — 4 Dec 2021

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.

Continued on Page 2

EXTORTION CASE

First chargesheet filed against Mumbai's ex-top cop, 3 others

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Two days after he was suspended from service, the Crime Branch Unit XI of the Mumbai Police on Saturday filed a charge-sheet against senior IPS officer and Mumbai's former Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh and three others before a city court, in an extortion case registered against them by a hotelier.

The crime branch sleuths filed a comprehensive charge-sheet against Singh, incarcerated dismissed police inspector Sachin Vaze and two others Sumit Singh and Alpesh Patel, before Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate S. B. Bhajipale, in an extortion case filed by hotelier Bimal Agarwal.

Saturday's was the first charge-sheet filed in the five FIRs registered against him in Mumbai and Thane. The development came 48 hours prior to the expiry of interim protection from arrest granted to him by the Supreme Court.

Singh and three other accused have been booked under sections 384, 386, 388, 389 (all sections relating to extortion), 120-b (criminal conspiracy), 201 (destruction of evidence) and 34 (common intent) of Indian Penal Code.

In his complaint, Agarwal had alleged that Singh and Vaze -- who is currently behind the bars for alleged involvement in the cases involving the recovery of an explosive-laden SUV near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's south Mumbai residence and subsequent murder of busi-

nessman Mansukh Hiran— and two other accused had extorted cash and valuables worth Rs 9 lakh from him as a pay-off for not conducting raids on two of his bars at Goregaon in north Mumbai which he ran in partnership with another person.

Singh and Vaze had allegedly also forced him to purchase two smart phones worth around Rs 2.92 lakh for them.

Apart from Singh and Vaze, Alpesh Patel and Sumit Singh are currently on bail.

Riyaz Bhatti and Vinay Singh alias Babloo have been named as absconding accused in the case. Of the accused, Alpesh Patel was arrested from Mehsana railway station in Gujarat. Patel had reportedly destroyed the mobile phone and SIM card used in the offence. One of the two mobile phones given to Sachin Waze by the complainant as part of the extortion has been seized by the investigators.

Based on Agrawal's complaint, the police had registered a First Information Report (FIR) against Singh, Vaze and two others for offences under Sections 384, 385 388, 389 (extortion), 120B (criminal conspiracy) and 34 of the Indian Penal Code.

It was connection with this case that the same court had on November 17 declared Singh—who had been absconding for more than six months – as "proclaimed offender and ordered him to appear before the court or the Investigating Officer within 30 days. On November 25, Singh returned to the city and appeared before the Crime Branch Unit 11 office of

the Mumbai police.

In his complaint, Agarwal had also alleged that extortion calls were made to him between January 2020 and March 2021.

The filing of the charge-sheet comes as a major embarrassment for Singh, who was once the Police Commissioner. The city crime branch sleuths were waiting for his suspension before they filed a charge-sheet against Singh.

On December 2, the Maharashtra government suspended Singh from service in view of serious offences registered against him and the disciplinary proceedings launched into "certain irregularities and lapses" committed him, including his unauthorised absence from duty.

"The Government of Maharashtra is satisfied that it is necessary and desirable to place Parambir Singh under suspension... in accordance with the Rule 3(1) and Rule 3(3) of the All India Service (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 1969," Venkatesh Bhat, Joint Secretary, state Home Department, had stated in a three-page order on Thursday evening.

Singh -- who had created a sensation on March 20 this year by alleging that State Home Minister Anil Deshmukh had asked now arrested and dismissed police officer Sachin Vaze to "collect" a staggering Rs 100 crore per month from bars, restaurants and other sources in Mumbai -- has been booked for several serious offences registered against him in four different police stations in Mumbai and neighbouring Thane district.

1 in 100 Covid patients likely to develop central nervous system complications

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

At least one in 100 patients hospitalised with Covid-19 are likely to develop central nervous system complications, like strokes due to clogged arteries, bleeding in the brain, inflammation of the brain, and other potentially fatal complications, researchers have said after analysing nearly 40,000 cases of such hospitalised infected patients.

Many of the patients had comorbidities like hypertension, cardiac disease and diabetes, as per the study, one of the largest multi-institutional studies to date on brain complications of Covid-19.

Researchers from the Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, US said the most common finding was a stroke due to clogged arteries.

Symptoms led doctors to suspect brain complications in about 11 per cent, the researchers reported at the recent annual meeting of the Radiological Society of North America.

The most common complication was ischemic stroke, with an incidence of 6.2 per cent, followed by intracranial hemorrhage (3.72 per cent and encephalitis (0.47 per

cent), an inflammation of the brain.

"Much has been written about the overall pulmonary problems related to Covid-19, but we do not often talk about the other organs that can be affected," said study lead author Scott H. Faro, M.D., FASFN, professor of radiology and neurology and director of the Division of Neuroradiology/Head & Neck Imaging at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia.

"Our study shows that central nervous system complications represent a significant cause of morbidity and mortality in this devastating pandemic."

The patients had been admitted between September 2019 and June 2020. Their average age was 66 years old, and there were twice as many men as women.

The most common cause of admission was confusion and altered mental status, followed by fever.

There were 442 acute neuroimaging findings that were most likely associated with the viral infection. The overall incidence of central nervous system complications in this large patient group was 1.2 per cent.

Guv Patel, Chouhan pay homage to Tantya, symbol of tribal pride

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

If martyrs are not worshiped, then from where will this seed come, who will put soil on his forehead after addressing the Earth as mother. With the utterance of these words, Governor Mangubhai Patel and Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan paid homage to Jannayak Tantya Mama, a symbol of tribal pride and identity, on his sacrifice day in a memorial program organized at Nehru Stadium, Indore today.

In the remembrance program, Governor Patel and Chief Minister Chouhan worshiped the Gaurav Kalash Yatra organized in the memory of Jannayak Tantya Mama. They also paid respect to the descendants of Krantisurya Jannayak Tantya Mama and honored them.

Patel said that he is feeling happy and proud to participate in the program organized on the martyrdom day of the great leader of freedom movement Krantisurya Jannayak Tantya Mama. Patel thanked Chief Minister Chouhan for organizing a grand program to honor the memory and martyrdom of Jannayak Tantya Mama. He told that the Gaurav Kalash Yatra, dedicated to the sacrifice



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan addresses a programme organised on the martyrdom day of tribal leader Tantya Bhil, in Indore, Madhya Pradesh on Saturday
Pioneer photo

of Tantya Mama, came to Indore today after traveling thousands of kilometers. Lakhs of people participated in this yatra, which itself shows the popularity of Tantya Mama. He said that efforts are being made day and night by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Chouhan for the welfare and all-round development of the tribal community.

The Chief Minister said that the British of even up to England were scared by the name of Tantya Mama. Tantya Mama, the leader of the freedom movement, took up arms against the atrocities against the poor. Today is the time to remember the tribal heroes like Tantya Mama who dedicated the last drop of their body's blood for the country's independence.

Sudden spike in Covid cases in UP as 27 test positive

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

After a lull of almost three months, novel coronavirus infection cases spiked in Uttar Pradesh with 27 people testing positive in the last 24 hours while during the same period eight Covid-19 patients recovered.

A UP Government spokesman said that the maximum of nine new Covid-19 cases were reported from Gautam Buddha Nagar (Noida) followed by five in Mainpuri, three in Varanasi and two each in Lucknow, Mathura and Bareilly and one each in Ghazipur, Prayagraj and Maharajganj.

At present there are 116 active cases in the state while 1.51 lakh samples were tested for novel coronavirus infection in the last 24 hours.

"Following a sudden spike in COVID-19 cases, the UP government has intensified screening and strengthened surveillance across the state. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has instructed officials to intensify genome sequencing of the Covid samples. In pursuance of the directive, genome sequencing of samples is being carried out at a rapid pace in at Lucknow's KGMU and SGPIMS," the official said.

The facilities of genome sequencing are available in BHU, CDRI, IGIB, Ram Manohar

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I/c. Director of Instruction NDVSU, Jabalpur

**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BARIPADA**

"e" Procurement Notice for PMGSYWorks

Identification No.- Online Tender- PMGSY N.C.B. No. 199 for 2021-22.
Letter No.- 3709/Date26.11.2021//

1. Name of the work:- Balancework of PMGSY-I, Batch-II of 2017-18 & PMGSY-II, Batch-I of 2018-19Packages in the district ofMayurbhanj.

2. Total No. of works :- **02No. (Two)**

3. Estimated Cost :- **Rs.53.41 lakhs to Rs.107.10 Lakhs(approximately).**

4. Eligible Class of Contractor: **-As per Annexure.**

5. Period of Completion :- **As per Annexure.**

6. Other details :-

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender On-line for bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification.	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/O C.C.E.R.W. Circle, Baripada	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Baripada.	PMGSY Online N.C.B. No. 199	DL06.12.2021 at 11.00 A.M.	DL20.12.2021 at 5.00 P.M.	DL18.12.2021 up to 5.00 P.M.	DL21.12.2021 at 11.00 A.M.	DL29.12.2021 at 11.00 A.M.

- Further details can be seen from the website: **www.pmgstyenders.gov.in**
- Any Corrigendum / Addendum will be displayed in the above e_tender website only.

Chief Construction Engineer,
Rural Works Circle, Baripada.

OIPR-25130/11/0020/2122

'Naya Kashmir' that is being advertised is not reality: Mehbooba

New Delhi: PDP president Mehbooba Mufti on Saturday accused the Centre of projecting Jammu and Kashmir as "peaceful" whereas the fact was that blood was being spilled on its roads and people were being slapped with anti-terror laws for expressing their opinion.

Speaking at the Aaj Tak Summit here about "Naya Kashmir", Mehbooba, a former chief minister, said her late father Mufti Mohammed Sayeed had tied up with the BJP in 2014 only because he wanted to usher in a new regime of peace in the state.

"My father had seen a statesman like Atal Bihari Vajpayee earlier and he had hoped that the new regime of BJP will work on the same ideology," she said.

She questioned the use of the term 'Naya Kashmir' and said "the new Kashmir that is being advertised is not the reality. Today an 18-month-old girl is sitting in a protest to get

the body of her father who was killed by security forces."

"Today, a Kashmiri Pandit was killed in broad daylight. The road is covered with the blood of a Bihari man and we call it Naya Kashmir? Is this what we anticipated from the word 'Naya Kashmir'?

Everywhere the situation is projected to be better, then why are the number of paramilitary forces increased, fresh bunkers built," she asked.

She also targeted the central government.

"Forget 'Naya Kashmir' and let us talk about 'Naya Hindustan'.... In Naya Hindustan, anyone talking about the Constitution is labelled as 'tukde tukde gang', minorities irrespective of being a roadside vendor or a film star are socially and economically outcast, farmers demanding repeal (of farm laws) are labelled as Khalistani and booked under UAPA," she said.

PTI

From page 1

Their genome sequencing is being done to ascertain if they have been infected with the Omicron mutant.

India is on a list of at least 30 countries where the variant has been detected though, so far, the evidence doesn't suggest it to be more lethal than the Delta variant. However, the sharp rise in cases in South Africa and the significant number of mutations it bore that potentially gave it a growth advantage are factors that prompted the World Health Organisation (WHO) to label

it a Variant of Concern within days of it being reported by the South African medical authorities.

India currently reports around 9,000 coronavirus cases a day, with the bulk of them being reported out of Kerala. The India Sars-Cov-2 genome consortium, which is in charge of testing a portion of positive samples to ascertain their genomes, in an update on Monday underlined that most of the cases being detected in India were of the Delta variant and its associated sub-lineages.

Mumbai-born Ajaz Patel takes 10...

From page 1

He bowled four separate spells of 24-10-57-4, 5-0-16-0, 6-0-16-2, 12.5-2-30-4 and got his 10th and final wicket in the form of Mohammed Siraj, who tried a slog and was caught by another player of Indian origin Rachin Ravindra.

Patel got a standing ovation from the Indian team as the umpires handed him the coveted ball while leading his team off the field.

Incidentally, Patel is the second player after Douglas Jardine, who has played against India in his city of birth.

Vinod Dua...

From page 1

"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 Chinna in 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 Manch", a programme for the youth on Doordarshan. But it was the election analysis he co-anchored with Pranroy 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 pro-

gramme "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

Delta...

From page 1

"Several studies have reported the increase in immune response in Covid-19 recovered cases and breakthrough infections post-vaccination," the team noted in the study.

They said that such a rise in immune response actually helps effectively neutralise the immune escape variants in breakthrough Covid cases.

"Once the individual gets re-infection after vaccination or vaccination post-recovery, memory B cells (a type of white blood cells involved in immune response) are triggered that generate higher levels of immune response," the team noted.

They added that a booster dose vaccination among fully vaccinated people who have never been infected with Covid-19 would achieve a protective immune response to fight against emerging SARS-CoV-2 variants.

Amethi factory...

From page 1

AK-203 Assault Rifles, with an effective range of 300 meters, are light weight, robust and easy to use.Modern Assault Rifles with proven technology that will enhance the combat potential of soldiers to adequately meet present and envisaged operational challenges.

Test, track, treat...

From page 1

"Also, 13 out of 14 districts are reporting a high number of weekly new cases in the State. Districts of concern in the week ending December 2 are Thiruvananthapuram (5,541), Ernakulam. (4,976), Kozhikode (3,676), Thrissur (2,903) and Kottayam (2,478)," Bhushan noted.

Four districts --Thiruvananthapuram (11.61 per cent), Wayanad (11.25 per cent), Kozhikode (11 per cent) and Kottayam (10.81 per cent) -- are showing high weekly positivity of more than 10 per cent, while nine districts are reporting weekly positivity between 5-10 per cent.

Four other districts -- Thrissur, Malappuram, Kozhikode and Kollam -- are reporting high quantum of weekly new deaths in the state.

As for Jammu & Kashmir, Bhushan said, it has reported 4,806 new cases in the month ending December 3, with a few districts such as Kathua, Jammu, Ganderbal and Baramulla showing an increase in the previous week.

Tamil Nadu has reported 23,764 new cases during the same period. Vellore, Thiruvallur in Chennai showed an increase in weekly new cases in the past week while Odisha has reported 7,445 new cases during the same period, with a contribution of 2.5 per cent to India's new cases from over the past month.

"It is important to note that Khordha district in the State is reporting a high quantum of weekly new cases with 900 new cases reported in the week ending December 3," he said.

They will enhance the operational effectiveness of the Indian Army in Counter Insurgency and Counter Terrorism operations.

The project will be implemented by a special purpose Joint Venture called Indo-Russian Rifles Private Ltd (IRRPL). It has been created with erstwhile Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) [now Advanced Weapons and

Equipment India Limited (AWEIL) and Munitions India Limited (MIL)] of India and Rosoboronexport (RoE) and concern Kalashnikov of Russia. The rifles will be manufactured over a ten-year period time. Meanwhile, India will procure 70,000 AK-203s off the shelf from Russia to maintain operational preparedness, sources said.

The deal was first

announced in 2018 and the Prime Minister had even inaugurated the production facility at the Korwa Ordnance Factory in Amethi in March 2019.

On Putin-Modi summit, officials said the two leaders will review the state of bilateral ties and discuss ways to further strengthen the strategic partnership between the two countries.

Capital’s air quality remains very poor



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi’s air on Saturday continued to remain in the very poor category, System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR), said.

The overall Air Quality Index (AQI) on the National Ambient Air Quality Index (NAAQI) was 342 micrograms per cubic.

According to the short range weather forecast, SAFAR said, for the next three days, winds are likely to be low reducing ventilation leading to degradation of air quality but within the same category. “From December 7 onwards winds are expected to increase dispersing pollutants but AQI is likely to

remain in ‘very poor’ category. Partly cloudy sky and low mixing layer height are preventing efficient dispersion of pollutants,” it said.

As per the SAFAR, the PM 10 levels were recorded at 248 in the ‘moderate’ category and PM 2.5 levels were recorded at 148 in the ‘very poor’ category. The air quality in Noida has improved from the ‘hazardous’ to the ‘very poor’ category. The overall AQI in Noida stood at 331. Meanwhile, the air quality in Gurugram was at the upper end of ‘severe’ category at 480.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered ‘good’; 51 and 100 ‘satisfactory’, 101 and 200 ‘moderate’, 201 and 300 ‘poor’, 301 and 400 ‘very poor’, and 401 and 500 ‘severe’.

City logs 51 corona cases in 24 hours

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi reported 51 coronavirus cases on Saturday while the positivity rate of 0.08 per cent, according to data shared by the health department.

As per the health bulletin, A total of 64 826 tests -- 55,421 RT-PCR and 9,405 rapid antigen -- were conducted a day ago, according to the latest health bulletin.

The number of cumulative cases of the disease rose to 14,41,295. Over 14.15 lakh patients have recovered so far. The death toll due to the coronavirus infection in Delhi stood at 25,098.

In November, seven Covid-19 deaths were reported in the national capital, the highest number of fatalities due to the coronavirus infection in the last three months in the national capital, according to official data. Delhi had recorded four Covid deaths in October and five in September.

Concerned over the threat posed by the new omicron variant of coronavirus, Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal said on Tuesday that his Government has prepared 30,000 oxygen beds and ramped up oxygen supply and storage facilities.

AAP launches ‘MCD Badlaav’ drive

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In view of municipal polls in Delhi scheduled next year, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has launched a massive ‘MCD Badlaav’ campaign under which the party will begin a door-to-door membership campaign from Sunday.

The campaign seeks to reach voters in each and every ward and was jointly launched by senior AAP leaders Manish Sisodia and Gopal Rai in presence of party workers, MLAs, councillors and office bearers at the party’s headquarters.

Addressing the media, AAP senior leader Manish Sisodia said that the AAP is not a party, it is a movement; every party in the country is trying to copy us. “We have to change the politics of this country. The Delhi government under Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal so far in education, healthcare and other sectors, and exhorted the people to vote for the AAP in the upcoming elections to bring the party at the helm of affairs at the municipal corporations in Delhi,” he said.

Sisodia said that the membership drive is beginning tomorrow to reach every one. “Those who won’t work will be counted



in negative. You must keep in mind that big brother is watching. Just by making attendance and sharing picture on Facebook and WhatsApp will not help,” he said.

Speaking on the occasion, Rai targeted the ruling BJP on the issue of alleged corruption in civic bodies and said the safe front party has given two gifts to the people of Delhi during its 15 years regime -- “three garbage mountains and extortion in every lane” of the city.

“To bring change in Delhi municipal

corporations, a ‘maha abhiyan’ (massive campaign) is starting from today to oust the corrupt BJP from power,” he said.

As part of the ‘MCD Badlaav’ campaign, a massive membership drive will be rolled out on Sunday; he said and asked his party leaders and workers to ensure its success.

Rai, who is convenor of the AAP’s Delhi unit, also gave his party leaders and workers a target of making at least 50 lakh people members of the party under the ‘MCD Badlaav’ campaign.

Man held for buying phones showing fake payment screenshots

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested a 25-year-old man for allegedly cheating shopkeepers by purchasing mobile phones showing fake screenshots of payment in the National Capital.

The accused has been identified as Hemant Vashisht, a resident of Faridabad in Haryana.

According to police, a case was registered on Thursday at Cyber Police Station in central district. The matter came to light when a Rajinder Nagar shopkeeper named Mohsin Khan filed a complaint against an alleged fraud. In his complaint, he wrote that in August a customer came to his shop to purchase a Samsung S-21 mobile phone. The customer wanted to make the payment through online mode, he said, and when he agreed, the customer showed him a screenshot of the payment. Later, the shopkeeper found no payment was made by the buyer and the screenshot showed, was fake.

“During investigation, police found that the bought phone was being used by a man named Aslam, living in Ramesh Nagar. When asked about it, Aslam said he had purchased the phone from a shop in Gaffar Market, Karol Bagh. Later, police interrogated Sunil Kumar, the shopkeeper from whom Aslam had bought the mobile,” said Shweta Chauhan, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Central district. “Kumar told police that he bought the phone from an unknown person. Later, police received a tip-off that Vashisht was coming to sell another phone to the same shopkeeper, and arrested him when came,” said the DCP.

Vashisht is a commerce graduate from Allahabad University and is currently working as property dealer in Faridabad, she said. He used to cheat people by showing fake screenshots of payment for expensive mobile phones and later sold those mobile phones to others, the DCP said.

Delhi Congress to forcefully oppose new liquor policy



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Congress will “forcefully” oppose the new liquor policy as it will not only ruin the health of the youth but create law and order situation in the national Capital, former president of the Delhi Congress and former speaker of the Delhi Assembly, Subhash Chopra said on Saturday.

Expressing “shock” over the decision, Chopra said that around 850 new liquor outlets have been opened across the city, including at non-conforming areas. “How could the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, being the chairman of the Delhi Development Authority, allowed opening of liquor outlets at non-conforming areas, even without seeking the opinions of local residents, Gram Sabhas and social and religious organizations,” he asked.

Addressing the media, Chopra said that liquor shops have been allowed to open without following mandatory

distance from places of worship and educational institutions, and at some places, shops have been opened side-by-side so that more and more youth could be attracted to liquor addiction, to further vitiate the already disturbed law and order situation in the Capital.

“The Chief Minister who kept criticising the liquor policy of the Congress Government before coming to power, has now flouted all norms to liberalize the excise policy,” he said.

The Congress leader further said that the closure of government operated liquor vends will render nearly 3,000 employees jobless. “It is shocking to learn that vending licenses have been issued to companies who have been defaulters of excise duty to the government. Two companies related to the Balaji group, controlled by a politician from Andhra Pradesh, have been allotted three zones (Zone 4, 23 and 32), and another successful

bidder, Khao Gali Restaurants Pvt. Ltd, have been allotted Zones 2 and 3, though they have been black-listed in Delhi,” he alleged.

Elaborating about the issue, he said that the some group of Madhya Pradesh, which has been black-listed in the State over non-payment of excise dues, is also in the list of another beneficiary.

He said that there is discrepancy in the deposit of earnest money, as there seems to have taken place huge corruption in the allotment of liquor vending zones, as the policy will be destructive in many ways.

Chopra said that the AAP Government seems to have learnt no lessons from the past experience as no new ICU oxygen bed has been added in Delhi hospitals, and the construction work of the three new hospitals started by the Congress Government at Ambedkar Nagar, Burari and Dwarka, is still dragging on.

Mohalla clinic doctors will be trained to treat Hepatitis B, C patients

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Health Minister Satendar Jain said on Saturday that Delhi Government is planning to make mandatory free screening services and treatment available of hepatitis B and C for pregnant women to ensure timely treatment and for this ‘mohalla clinics’ staff will be trained.

Jain participated in the 24th Hepatitis day at the Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences. He released a report on “Hepatitis Awareness Activities.”

The Minister explained that Hepatitis C is easily treatable with a 12 week medicine course. Hepatitis B can also be prevented. “The two ways by which Hepatitis B spreads is from expecting mother to a child and through blood transfusion. This can easily be prevented through early detection,” he said. “We will train the staff of Mohalla Clinic to treat this disease along with screening and we will make sure that free medicines are available there to treat the disease at the primary level. We will devise a mechanism to provide free medicines to patients of Hepatitis B in Mohalla Clinics. Additionally, we will bring Hepatitis under the notifiable disease list of Delhi within the next few months.”

He also said, “The Delhi government will integrate the test of Hepatitis with its upcoming Health Management Information System, by this, we will ensure that every health card holder goes through a hepatitis test, once in a lifetime.”

Deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia, who was also present, said that Delhi government shall stand committed to the elimination of Hepatitis B and C and would welcome any additional policy changes and financial support required by ILBS to make this program a success.

IGI Airport sets up 20 counters for those who pre-book on-arrival RT-PCR tests

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Tests can be pre-booked at Air Suvidha portal on www.newdelhiairport.in. For the convenience of the passengers, Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) has set up 20 dedicated counters on arrival piers for passengers who have pre-booked their RT-PCR/Rapid PCR test. There will be dedicated queues for these passengers. They will save the time taken for registration and will proceed directly for testing.

“DIAL is also facilitating the RT-PCR tests of 2 per cent international arriving passengers who are not from at-risk countries. With DIAL’s facilitation, these tests are being carried out free of cost with no burden on the passengers,” A DIAL spokesperson said. Passengers from 11 At Risk countries, including Europe, have to undergo mandatory RT-PCR/Rapid PCR test on arrival in India. The arrangement has been made following a rise in cases of infection by a new variant of Covid-19 virus (Omicron).

“A significant number of incoming international passengers at Delhi Airport are pre-booking their Rapid/RT-PCR tests. This number of pre-bookings has been going up ever since the latest testing norms have come into practice. These dedicated counters will help ease the process further for passengers,” CEO-DIAL Vidh Kumar Jaipuria said.

Business Blasters website launched to support young entrepreneurs

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government on Saturday launched the official Business Blasters website to support young entrepreneurs.

Now, anyone can now place orders to buy products made by the Delhi Government’s students on www.thebusinessblasters.in. Entrepreneurs from all over India can register on the website to mentor or invest in the students’ startups.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia asked people to be a part of the change and help Delhi Govt students become self-reliant individuals, who will be future job providers rather than job seekers.

Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) from Kalkaji, Atishi said that for anyone who wants to invest in these young entrepreneurs or mentor them, please register on: www.thebusinessblasters.in. Second episode of Business Blasters will be aired this Sunday on December 5, at 7 pm on all major TV channels.


According to the Delhi Government, it is India’s first of its kind televised event which will give class 11th and 12th students of Delhi Government schools an opportunity to present their projects to investors and obtain investment capital to take them to the next level. The show will witness students’ business ideas, shortlisted from 51,000 ideas submitted by 3,00,000 students.

The website will serve as a central repository of information on judges, students and their projects featured in the Business Blasters TV show which was launched last week. Additionally, it will showcase various developments, updates and news about the program. Visitors will also be able to watch the latest episodes of the TV show on the website.

On the launch occasion Dy. CM Shri Manish Sisodia, tweeted, “Be a part of the change and help Delhi Govt students become self-reliant individuals, who will be future job providers rather than job seekers. To mentor or invest in our young Business Blasters, sign up at <http://thebusinessblasters.in>”


MLA Atishi also tweeted and said, “Have been getting lots of calls and messages from people across the country wanting to support Delhi Govt’s young Business Blasters! For anyone who wants to invest in these young entrepreneurs or mentor them, please register on: www.thebusinessblasters.in”

A special section of the website is dedicated to the project journeys of students and the story behind their ideas. Different stakeholders can also register their interest in being a part of Delhi Government’s Business Blasters Programme as a mentor, investor or a buyer on the official website itself.




75

Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav



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Delhi State Legal Services Authority

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Delhi State Legal Services Authority



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DP9306/21

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 eyewash. 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 Khara 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," party said in a statement. The Congress said that

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 that 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. PAC was constituted in 1921 in the pre-Independent India. Since the sixties, an opposition member has been heading the committee. The PAC examines the

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. South Africa-born Sher was widely considered to be one of Britain's finest contemporary actors, playing almost all the great Shakespearean roles from King Lear to Shylock. In 1985, he won an Olivier Award for his energetic portrayal of Richard III as a villainous hunchback, propelling himself around the stage on crutches. While at the RSC, Sher — once described by Prince Charles as his favourite actor — met his husband, Gregory Doran, who would become the company's artistic director.

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.

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.

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.

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 Mortgagee (Borrower)) is intending to purchase the Entire Second Floor, with roof rights "said floor" built on Property Bearing No. 35-A, in Block E, area measuring 249 Sq. yds., Situated in residential Colony known as Rajouri Garden, Area of Village Basai, Suburb of Delhi. (hereinafter referred to "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 our clients IDFC 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 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 or 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 Dhawan Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Vertas, Unit no 907, 9th Floor, GD-TL Tower, (B-08), Badli Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9066707172/9818222863 (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: Harendra Kumar Gurjar, (Gurujii), 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.

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.

Merkel gave what is expected to be her last weekly video message two days after federal and state leaders decided on a series of measures meant to break a wave of coronavirus infections.

The measures include excluding unvaccinated people across the country from nonessential stores, restaurants and sports and cultural venues. In a longer-term move, parliament will consider a general vaccine mandate.

At least 68.9 per cent of Germans are fully vaccinated against the coronavirus, short of the Government's aim of a minimum



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.

Official figures suggest that the infection rate may now be stabilising, but at too high a level.

The national disease control center on Saturday reported 64,510 new daily cases and a 7-day infection rate of 442.7 new cases per 1,00,000 residents. Another 378 deaths in 24

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. "This is so bitter because it is avoidable. With the effective and safe vaccines, we have the key to this in our hands."

She renewed a plea to Germans to take the virus seriously, adding that the new omicron variant "appears to be even more contagious than the previous ones."

"Get vaccinated, no matter whether it's a first vaccination or a booster," Merkel said. "Every vaccination helps."

Merkel is expected to leave office on Wednesday and be replaced by Olaf Scholz of the center-left Social Democratic Party, who is currently vice chancellor. Scholz said on

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

"There would be a different situation now if just a few more citizens had also made the decision to get vaccination," he said at a convention of the Social Democrats. "We must again make a whole new effort, set in motion a whole new campaign" to get more shots in arms, Scholz said.

Senior members of the party denounced a Friday evening protest outside the home of Saxony state's health minister, Petra Koepping, a Social Democrat. About 30 people gathered with torches and placards outside the home in the eastern town of Grimma.

The demonstrators chanted against coronavirus policies before fleeing in cars when police arrived.

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.

The three cases are a man living in the district around the capital Lusaka who travelled abroad recently and is showing mild symptoms, a man in

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.

The Omicron variant has been detected in 39 countries, up from 23 just two days ago.

Agencies

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.

The 5,352 new cases reported by the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency on Saturday marked the third time this week the daily tally exceeded 5,000. The

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.

As the delta-driven surge threatens to overwhelm hospital systems, there is also concern about the local spread of the omicron variant, which is seen as potentially more infectious than previous strains of the virus. AP

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.

The employees were all located in Uganda and included some foreign service officers, said the person, who was not authorised to speak publicly about an ongoing investigation. Some local Ugandan employees of the department appear to have been among the 11 hacked, the person said.

The hacking is the first known instance of NSO

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.

"We have been acutely concerned that commercial spyware like NSO Group software poses a serious counterintelligence and security risk to US personnel," White House press secretary Jen Psaki said at briefing on Friday.

Senior researcher John Scott-Railton of Citizen Lab, the public-interest sleuths at the University of Toronto who have been tracking Pegasus

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

"For years we have seen that diplomats around the world are among targets," he said, "and it looks like the message had to be brought home to the US Government in this very direct and unfortunate way. There is no exceptionalism when it comes to American phones in diplomats' pockets,"

News of the hacks, which were first reported by Reuters, comes a month after the US Commerce Department black-listed NSO Group, barring US technology from being used by the company.

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.

The new intelligence finding estimates that the Russians are planning to deploy an estimated 1.75,000 troops and almost half of them are already deployed along various points near Ukraine's border, according to a Biden administration

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.

In a grisly incident on Friday, Priyantha Kumara Diyawadana, who was in his 40s, was lynched and his body burnt by angry supporters of a hardline Islamist party which attacked a garment factory in Pakistan's Punjab province over blasphemy allegations.

Diyawadana, a Sri Lankan Christian from Kandy city, was working as the general manager of the garment factory in Sialkot district, some 100 kms from Lahore.

New footage shot prior to the lynching showed a colleague trying to protect the victim on the roof of the factory where he had fled while the mob of around two dozen people slowly grew in number.

In the video, some among the mob can be heard chanting slogans and saying "he (the manager) will not escape today", while the colleague tried to shield Diyawadana with his body, who clung to the

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. The mob had then set the body on fire.

The Sri Lankan Government and the Opposition were united in urging the Sri Lankan authorities to have talks with Islamabad to ensure the safety of the rest of the Sri Lankan workers in Pakistan.

Pakistan Prime Minister Khan said he had spoken to Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa "to convey our nation's anger and shame to

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.

Khan's response came after Sri Lankan Prime Minister Rajapaksa said in a tweet that he was shocked to see the "brutal and fatal" attack on Diyawadana by extremist mobs in Pakistan.

Over 800 booked under terrorism charges in lynching of Lankan

Lahore: Over 800 people have been booked under terrorism charges while 13 prime suspects are among 118 arrested so far in the horrific lynching of a Sri Lankan national over allegations of blasphemy in Punjab province of Pakistan, a top police official said on Saturday, as pressure mounted on the government to bring the guilty to justice.

In a shocking incident on Friday, angry supporters of the hardline Islamist party Tehreek

e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) attacked a garment factory and lynched its general manager Priyantha Kumara Diyawadana before setting his body on fire over allegations of blasphemy.

Diyawadana, who was in his 40s and was from Sri Lanka's Kandy city, was working as the general manager in the Rajko industries (dealing in garments — sportswear) in Sialkot district, some 100 kilometres from Lahore, for the last seven years or so. PTI

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.

Saudi Arabia's financial support comes more than one month after PM Imran Khan visited Riyadh and held talks with the Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman.

Following the talks, Saudi Arabia had agreed to provide \$4.2 billion worth of assistance to Pakistan, out of which \$3 billion was to be transferred as deposit in Pakistan's central bank. PTI

Office of the Superintending Engineer
1st Circle, Public Works Department, Almorah
Phone/Fax: 05962-230295 Email: sepwdalm@rediffmail.com

Letter No. : 8370/ Nivida-01/2021
Dated : 03/12/2021
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (E-Tendering)
E-TENDER NOTICE
The superintending Engineer, 1st Circle, Public Works Department, Almorah 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 Helipad to Heliport at Falsima Tatrck Near District Head Quarter Almorah.	Rs. 5000.00 + 18% GST	4.44 Lakh	60 Days	15 Months	Category "B" & above in Building works

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, Second Floor, Vikas Puri, Delhi- 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

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER , CONSTRUCTION WING, UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM
DURGAPAL GARDEN NEAR SINTHIYA SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL, PILIKOTHI ROAD, BARI MUKHANI HAL DWARI, DISTT- NAINITAL (PIN 263139)
Letter no. 1721/Nivida/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, Pilikothi, 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

URBAN IMPROVEMENT TRUST ALWAR
S.No. 13102/11/21
NOTICE INVITING BID-18/2021-22
Date : 26/11/2021
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.raj.nic.in>) of the state and www.uitalwar.in.

UBN No. UAL2122WSOB00213 | UBN No. UAL2122WSOB00214 | UBN No. UAL2122WSOB00215
Secretary, UIT, Alwar
Raj.Samwadi/C/9079/2021-2022

छत्तीसगढ़ 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. अभिसूचना दिनांक 14/09/2006 (यथा संशोधित) के अंतर्गत सर्व संबंधित को सूचित किया जाता है कि मेसर्स नीरोग इस्पात 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 छत्तीसगढ़ 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, छत्तीसगढ़ 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- शासकीय हाईस्कूल, ग्राम-बोरिया, तहसील-बेरला, जिला-बेमेतरा (छ.ग.) में नियत की गई है। यह भी सूचित हो कि :

1. लोक सुनवाई के दौरान सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों को फिजिकल/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 निर्वरण 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/ पटन हेतु डाफ्ट ई.आई.ए. रिपोर्ट, कार्यालयिक सार हिन्दी एवं अंग्रेजी भाषा तथा सी.डी. (साफ्ट कॉपी) डाफ्टेक्टर, 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, अरण्य भवन, नार्थ ब्लॉक, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, छत्तीसगढ़, कलेक्टर, कार्यालय कलेक्टर, जिला-बेमेतरा, मुख्य कार्यालय अधिकारी, जिला पंचायत, जिला-बेमेतरा, महाप्रबंधक, जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र, जिला- बेमेतरा, सरपंच/ सचिव, ग्राम पंचायत बोरिया, जिला-बेमेतरा, क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, 5/32 बंगला, भिलाई, जिला-दुर्ग एवं मुख्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ 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

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



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

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.

"I think attempts at preventing 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.

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 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.

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 ESI 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-run 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 ESI 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.

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



कार्यालय अधिशासी अभियन्ता, निर्माण शाखा,

उत्तराखण्ड पेयजल संसाधन विकास एवं निर्माण निगम, भिकियासैन (अल्मोड़ा)

ई-मेल :- eecd.bksain@gmail.com

पत्रांक : 1998 / सिविच-5 / 415

दिनांक : 04.12.2021

निविदा शुद्धि पत्र

इस कार्यालय की ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 1913 / सिविच-5 / 400, दिनांक 20.11.2021 जो कि दैनिक हिन्दुस्तान व द पाईनियर अंग्रेजी पेपर में दिनांक 22.11.2021 को प्रकाशित हुई थी। उक्त निविदाये तकनीकी कारणों से ई-टण्डर पोर्टल पर प्रदर्शित नहीं हो पा रही है।

अतः निविदाओं की संशोधित तिथियाँ निम्नानुसार हैं:-

Sl. No.	Particulars	Date
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. DIPK-14248/21 Dated:- 04-12-2021



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 of 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 a 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 balls.

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.

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

FAISEL FEATURES

India curtails tour of South Africa, T20Is to be played later

PTI ■ KOLKATA

The Indian cricket team's tour of South Africa will go ahead but the team's departure has been postponed by a week and T20 Internationals are no longer a part of the schedule, the two boards announced on Saturday, ending the speculation surrounding the series after a new COVID-19 variant triggered anxiety. The four T20s will be played at a later date and Cricket South Africa said it will confirm the venues for the new schedule in the next 48 hours.

The Indians were originally set to leave on December 9 but the travel plans have changed, which means that the Tests are



unlikely to start on December 17 as planned earlier.

India are scheduled to play three Tests and three ODIs dur-

ing the tour. CSA and BCCI Secretary Jay Shah's statements came as the Indian Board officials met for an Annual General

Meeting here.

"BCCI has confirmed (to the) CSA that (the) Indian team will travel for three Tests and three ODIs. The remaining four T20Is will be played at a later date," Shah said in a statement.

Cricket South Africa appreciated BCCI's commitment to the series.

"Cricket South Africa can confirm that the India Tour will continue as originally scheduled, with a few adjustment to the logistical arrangements, such as the arrival time of the India Team," the CSA said.

"...The tour is now confirmed and the arrival timings of the India team will be moved out by a week, to allow for effective

logistical planning.

"...CSA is pleased to announce that this tour will also take place under the strictest COVID-19 guidelines," it added in a statement.

South Africa's discovery of the Omicron variant has caused much trepidation as cases have soared in the country.

The Netherlands tour of the Rainbow Nation also had to be abandoned after the emergence of the new variant triggered panic all around the world with many countries imposing travel bans on the country.

CSA also had to postpone its domestic fixtures after some of the players tested positive for the virus on arrival.

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 pocket 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. The Japanese made a sort of comeback by narrowing down the gap to 11-13 but Sindhu cruised to 17-12.

Neeraj Chopra launches outreach programme

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tokyo Olympics gold medallist Neeraj Chopra on Saturday launched an ambitious outreach programme that connects India's ace athletes with school children.

On the occasion, he met with students from 75 schools and emphasised on balanced diet, fitness and sport during an interaction organised at Ahmedabad's Sanskardham School. Neeraj played

a variety of sport with the students and gave them tips on throwing the javelin. He held them in thrall with his spontaneous responses to their curious queries, his inimitable story-telling style endearing him to his attentive audience.

He drew applause when, in response to what his favourite food is, he described how he liked to cook vegetable biryani, without making it spicy, and have it with curd.

Babar Azam half-century helps Pakistan recover vs Bangladesh

AP ■ DHAKA

Skipper Babar Azam hit a half-century to help Pakistan recover from early trouble and reach 161-2 against Bangladesh on the opening day of the second test, which was halted several times for bad light and rain on Saturday. The bad light finally ended play with Babar



batting on 60 and Azhar Ali on 36. Left-arm spinner Taijul Islam (2-49) bowled brilliantly in the morning session to

put Bangladesh on top after the visitors seemed headed toward a big score.

Openers Abid Ali and Abdullah Shafique brought up 50-run partnership in the first hour as Babar elected to bat first after winning the toss.

Abid struck the first three boundaries of the day as the Bangladeshi pacers erred their length.

Star players — Retained and released!



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-offs after they finished first in the 2021 league table. Apart from Pant, DC went with Axar Patel, Prithvi Shaw, and South African pacer Anrich Nortje and left out

Shikhar Dhawan, who still has a lot to offer despite him not getting any younger, and Ravichandran Ashwin, who is India's No. 1 all-format spinner. Also, leaving someone like Kagiso Rabada, who won the Purple Cap in 2020, was a massive call.

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 respected 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.

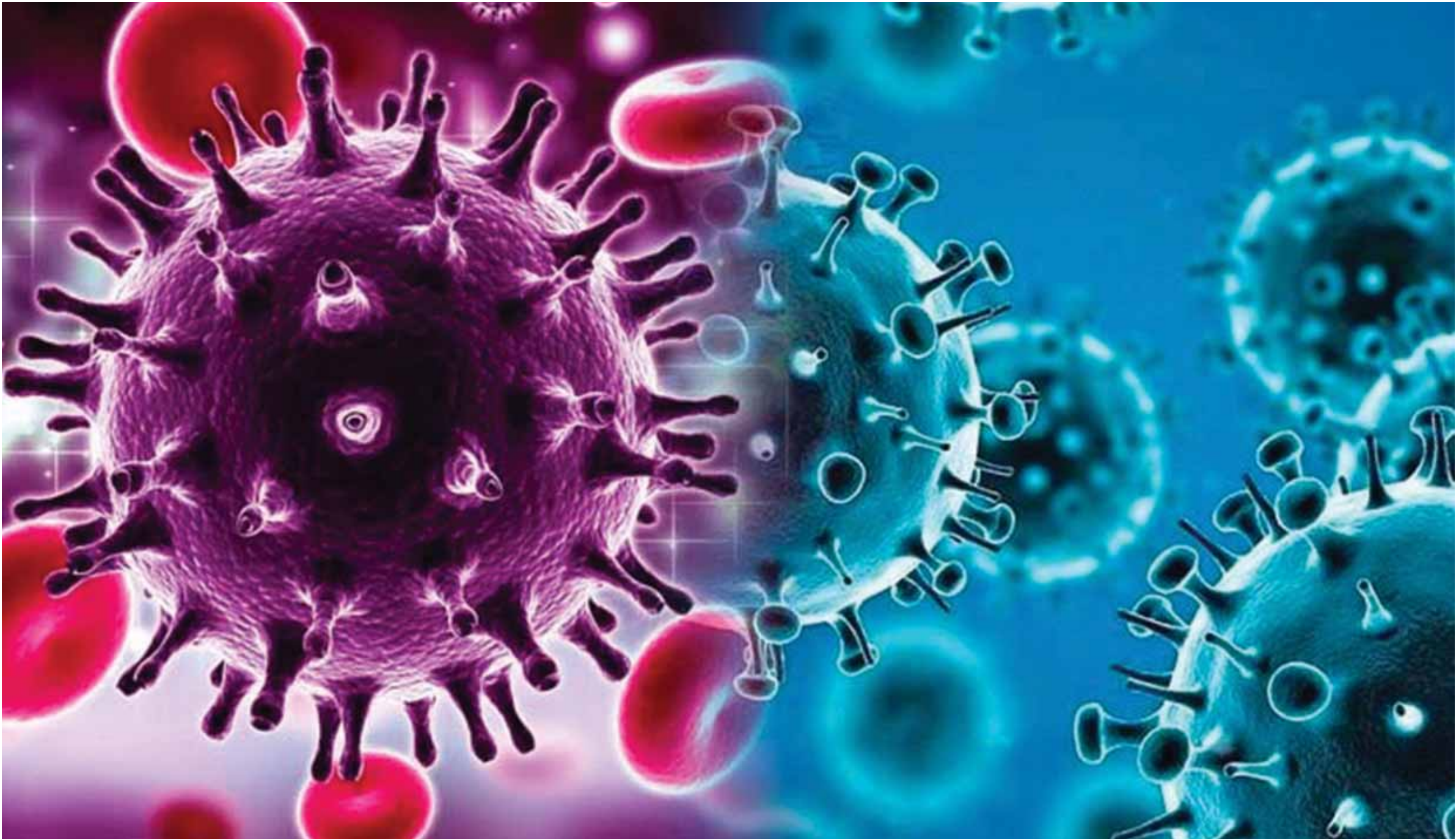
KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS: KKR turned the tables the other way round in the second half of the 2021 IPL, where they reached the final as well. Their success in the UAE was primarily built around one batsman, Venkatesh Iyer, and the Kolkata-based franchise retained their prized asset, who will now earn eight crores per season - a 3900% 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 Chakravarthi, 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.

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



After 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.

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.

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



the pioneer

agenda

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



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

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.

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 'machtarchitectur', 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 deadly 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 repute 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)



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

