

OPINION 6
A WAR FOR LIBERATION
FROM PAK REPRESSION**MONEY 9**
IIP GROWTH REMAINS LOW
FOR 2ND MONTH IN A ROW**SPORT 12**
ROOT'S RECORD HELPS LEAD
ENG AND RALLY IN ASHES

NEW DELHI, SATURDAY DECEMBER 11, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3

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LOOK: ZEENAT
11 VIVACITYLate City Vol. 31 Issue 342
*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

Omicron rise alarming, use masks, urges Govt

Omicron cases rise to 32 in India; Govt asks people to follow Covid-19 appropriate norms

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Concerned at the declining mask usage in the country to pre-second surge level, the Government on Friday warned people not to be lax and instead take a cue from increasing Omicron cases across the countries and adopt appropriate Covid-19 behaviour seriously. "WHO is warning against the decline in mask usage. The global scene of Omicron is disturbing... We are now operating at a risky and unacceptable level. We have to remember that both vaccines and masks are important," Dr VK Paul, the NITI Aayog member for Health, said at a press briefing here.

Clinically, Omicron is not yet posing a burden on the healthcare system but vigil has to be maintained, he said.

Meanwhile, two more Covid-19 cases of Omicron variant were reported in Gujarat and 7 in Maharashtra on Friday. With this, India's tally of the new variant infection rose to 32.

While in Gujarat, the wife



and the brother-in-law of an NRI man, who had been found infected with the Omicron variant of Covid-19 in Gujarat's Jamnagar a week back, were detected with the new strain, in Dharavi a 49-year-old, who returned from Tanzania on December 4, tested positive for Omicron variant. He had not

taken any vaccine but has been asymptomatic, the Government said.

"All cases have mild symptoms. Omicron cases account for less than 0.04 per cent of total variants detected," Lav Agarwal, joint secretary at the Union Health Ministry, said at a briefing.

"Since December 1, total of 93 international passengers have tested positive for Covid-19. Of these, 83 are from countries that have been designated "at-risk" given the Omicron breakout and 13 from other countries," Agarwal said.

"Two countries had reported Omicron cases till November, 24. Now, 59 countries have reported cases of Omicron. These 59 countries have reported 2,936 Omicron cases. Besides this, 78,054 probable cases have also been detected — their genome sequencing is underway," the official said.

The Centre said the treatment protocol for the Omicron variant remained the same.

Continued on Page 2

House panel asks Ministry to assess need for booster as Covid fear soars

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Following the emergence of new Covid-19 variant Omicron which is gradually spreading its tentacles across the country, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs on Friday asked the Union Health Ministry to assess the requirement of vaccine booster shots to tackle different variants of the Covid-19.

The Committee recommended that the Ministry in coordination with the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization (NTAGI) and the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for Covid-19 to assess the requirement of booster doses.

"The committee would like to know whether any research has been conducted by ICMR and other concerned institu-

tions regarding the efficacy of the vaccines that are being given or administered in the country against various variants," it said in a report tabled in the Lok Sabha on Friday.

Underlining that the nature and virulence of Covid-19 pandemic is "unpredictable", the committee cautioned that alertness and preparedness cannot be compromised at any stage.

Continued on Page 2

Omicron spreads from 2 countries to 59 in 2 weeks



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The cases of Omicron infection, a new variant of Covid-19 causing virus, have seen alarming spread in just two weeks. On November 24, only two countries had reported Omicron cases but by December 9 the number of affected countries rose to 59. These 59 countries have reported 2,936 Omicron cases. Besides this, 78,054 probable cases have also been detected, and their genome sequencing is underway.

Though the symptoms of infections are mild so far, the World Health Organization (WHO) has warned that the rate of hospitalisation resulting from infection is likely to rise, overwhelming the health infrastructure.

Cases have been reported from the UK, South Africa, Brazil, Botswana, China, Ghana, Mauritius, New Zealand, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Hong Kong and Israel.

Dr Shahid Jameel, Director, Trivedi School of Biosciences, Ashoka University and Gautam Menon, Prof of Physics and Biology, Ashoka University, on Friday said they expect the cases in India to rise by early next year.

Continued on Page 2

Democratic, pluralistic ethos ingrained in Indians: Modi

PM stresses on better cooperation among democracies for inclusiveness

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

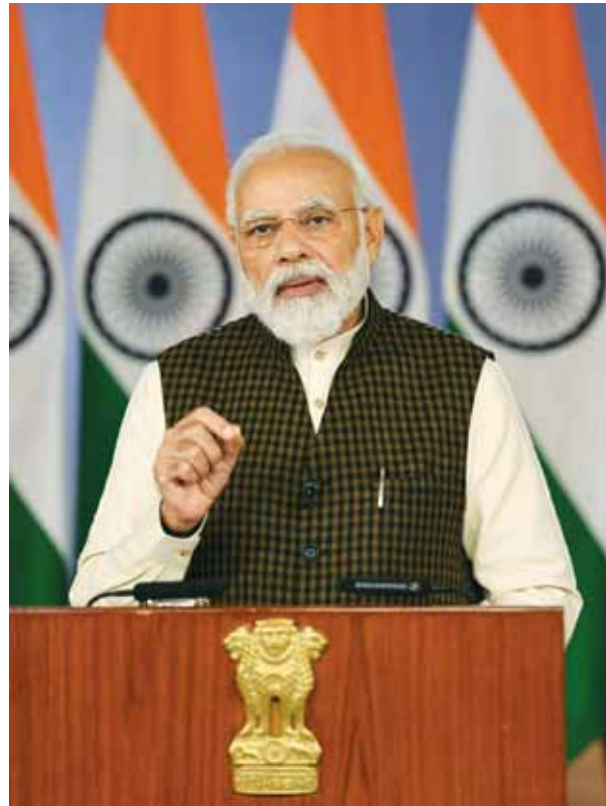
Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday called for better cooperation among democracies of the world with stress on increasing "inclusiveness and transparency" and affirmed that democratic spirit, including respect for rule of law and pluralistic ethos, is "ingrained in Indians".

The Prime Minister said India where democratic traditions go back to the centuries has shown that "democracy can deliver".

Addressing "the Democracy Summit" called by US President Joe Biden, the Prime Minister said he is proud to represent the world's largest democracy at this summit.

"The democratic spirit is integral to our civilisation ethos," said Modi reminding the summit that "elected republican city-states such as Lichhavi and Shakyas flourished in India as far as 2,500 years back. The same democratic spirit is seen in the 10th century "Uttaramerur" inscription that codified the principles of democratic participation".

"This very democratic spirit and ethos had made ancient India one of the most prosperous. Centuries of the colonial



rule could not suppress the democratic spirit of the Indian people. It again found full expression with India's Independence, and led to an unparalleled story in democratic nation-building over the last 75 years," the Prime Minister told the summit called by President Biden inviting select 110 countries to focus on democracies and ways to promote their liberal ethos and

preserve human rights.

The summit was billed by the White House as an opportunity for leaders and experts from some 110 countries to collaborate on defending against authoritarianism, fighting corruption, and promoting respect for human rights.

The countries not invited to the summit called it a subtle way of re-starting cold war.

Continued on Page 2

CAPSULE

PAK TALIBAN ENDS CEASEFIRE WITH GOVT

Islamabad: The banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan will not extend the month-long ceasefire deal negotiated with the Pakistan government, the militant group has announced, in a major setback to Prime Minister Imran Khan's efforts to secure a peace agreement with the dreaded outfit waging war against the state for decades.

INDIA BRINGS BACK 104 PEOPLE FROM AF

New Delhi: India has evacuated 104 people, including 10 Indian nationals, from Kabul in a special charter aircraft on Friday. External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said the flight was arranged under India's operation Devi Shakti.

53 DIE IN HORROR CRASH OF TRUCK IN MEXICO

Tuxtla Gutierrez (Mexico): Rescue workers rushing to a highway accident found a horrific scene of 53 deaths and injury after a freight truck jammed with as many as 200 migrants tipped over and crashed into the base of a steel pedestrian bridge in southern Mexico.

SC allows lifting ban on construction in NCR as air improves

Industries seek easing of curbs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Taking note of the improvement in air quality in the Delhi-NCR region, the Supreme Court on Friday paved the way for lifting curbs on construction activities. The court directed the commission on air quality management to take a decision on various representations seeking easing of curbs, like ban on construction activities, within a week.

A special bench comprising Chief Justice NV Ramana and Justices DY Chandrachud and Surya Kant asked Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan to comply with its earlier order to pay minimum wages to construction workers from the cess, collected by them from real estate



firms, as their work was hit due to the ban. The SC's order was for the States under the NCR region.

The Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh Governments will have to file compliance affidavits on the issue related to payment of money to construction workers, it said. "We direct the commission to examine requests of various industries and organisations about relaxation of conditions imposed by virtue of our orders or otherwise as per their circulars. We expect the commission will look into this in a week's time," the bench said.

Continued on Page 2

Resignations hit Goa Cong on day Priyanka visits State

Rift over choice of alliance partners

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/PANAJI

The Congress has plunged in a serious crisis in Goa with several party members quitting on a day party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was visiting the State. The Congress is facing rift over the choice of alliance partners in the poll-bound State.

A section of party men are also reportedly unhappy with the handling of the entire situation by senior party leader and State in-charge P Chidambaram.

A group of Congress leaders from the Goa's Porvorim Assembly constituency resigned this morning. The group, supported by Independent MLA Rohan Khaunte, claimed the Congress was not serious about contest-



AICC general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra interacts with women belonging to tribal community at Morpirla village in Goa

PTI

ing the Assembly polls likely to be held in early 2022.

AICC sources said though maintained that such problems occur before elections in every party, the spate of resignations came after differences emerged in the Congress over the nature of its understanding with the Goa Forward Party (GFP) for the Assembly polls.

Chidambaram, however, said the GFP had only extended support to the Congress and

refused to term it as an alliance at this stage.

"The Congress party does not seem to be interested in contesting the upcoming Goa elections seriously. It is a non-starter due to the attitude of some of its leaders," Gupesh Naik, a former zilla panchayat member, who led the group from Porvorim, stated. Another senior leader from South Goa Moreno Rebelo too resigned.

Continued on Page 2

State force should never be used to browbeat political opinion, journalists: SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State force should never be used to either browbeat a political opinion or journalists, the Supreme Court has said, calling for "introspection from the political class across the country" over debasement in dialogue which is taking place even as it asked scribes to be more responsible in the "twitter age".

A bench comprising Justices SK Kaul and MM Sundresh made these observations while quashing the FIRs against editors of a news web portal and others, in connection with articles published in West Bengal.

In a country which prides itself on its diversity, there are bound to be different perceptions and opinions which would include political opinions, the apex court said.

That is very essence of a



democracy, it said.

"State force should never be used to either browbeat a political opinion or the journalists suffer the consequences of what is already in public domain.

"We hasten to add that this does not take away the responsibility of the journalists in how they report the matters, more so in a "twitter age," the bench said.

Continued on Page 2

2 policemen killed in terrorist attack in J&K

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Two Jammu & Kashmir policemen succumbed to their injuries after "unidentified" terrorists opened indiscriminate firing on a police party at Gulshan Chowk area of North Kashmir's Bandipora district late on Friday.

Profusely bleeding policemen were immediately rushed to the nearby hospital where doctors present on duty declared them brought dead.

The targeted killings took place after a long gap and the same were possibly executed by the "hybrid" category of terrorists.

Security personnel in J&K term over-ground workers as "hybrid" terrorists as majority of them have no track record of any terrorist related activities and they mix up with the local population quite easily after executing their assigned task.



According to a tweet posted by the Kashmir zone police, "Terrorists fired upon a police party at Gulshan Chowk area of Bandipora on Friday. In this terror incident, two police personnel namely selection grade constable Mohd Sultan & Constable Fayaz Ahmad got injured & attained martyrdom".

Following the firing incident, security forces launched a massive search operation in the area to track down the footprints of terrorists.

Continued on Page 2

Nation bids tearful adieu to CDS Gen Rawat, his wife



Funeral procession of late Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Bipin Rawat from his residence to Brar Square in Delhi cantonment where he was cremated with full military honours in New Delhi on Friday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The nation bids an emotional farewell to first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat and his wife Madhulika as they were cremated here on Friday. Draped in the national flag, Rawat was accorded full military honours, including a 17-gun salute.

The bodies of General Rawat and his wife were placed side by side at the funeral pyre at the Brar Square, Delhi Cantonment. It was lit by their two daughters Kritika and Tarini after a brief religious ceremony. The Last Post was sounded by the Army buglers.

Befitting his rank and stature, General Rawat's body was brought to the cremation ground from Kamraj in a gun carriage. The entire five to the six-km route was lined with people who showered flower petals when the cortege passed by them. Some young men also ran the entire distance alongside the cortege shouting patri-

otic slogans.

Earlier in the day, leaders cutting across party lines paid their homage by visiting General Rawat's official residence at Kamraj Road here. Prominent leaders, who placed wreaths there, included Rahul Gandhi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, BJP president JP Nadda, Congress leader M Mallikarjun Kharge and Minister Piyush Goyal.

Kejriwal was also present at the crematorium later along with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Uttarakhand Chief Minister PS Dhami, Law Minister Kiren Rijiju and Colonel (retired) Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval had paid their respects on Thursday evening after the bodies of the victims of the crash were brought to Palam airbase here from Wellington, Tamil Nadu.

Continued on Page 2

NON-VEG FOOD ROW HC raps AMC for unfair drive

Ahmedabad: Civil rights activists on Friday lauded the Gujarat High Court for pulling up the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation over its recent drive against stalls selling non-vegetarian food, while a civic body functionary ruled out discrimination in removal of the food carts.

The court on Thursday questioned how people could be stopped from "eating what they want" outside their house, and slammed the civic body for its drive against handcars selling non-vegetarian food items on streets. Civil rights activist and lawyer K R Koshti welcomed the court's observation saying no one has the right to infringe upon fundamental right to personal liberty. "Even the Gujarat government had earlier clarified that people are free to eat whatever they want."

Article 21 of the

Constitution guarantees people's fundamental right to personal liberty, such as what to eat and what to wear. No government has the right to infringe upon people's right," Koshti said. Mujahid Nafees, convener of the Minority Coordination Committee, said the drive of removing hand-carts selling only non-veg food items was another tactic by the BJP-led government to divide the society based on the food they eat.

"I am glad that the court made some scathing remarks on it. Eventually, the AMC had to announce that there was no discrimination," he added. Devang Dani, chairman of AMC's town planning and estate committee, last month said carts selling non-veg and egg dishes along the major roads and in a 100-metre radius from schools, colleges, gar-

dens and religious places will be removed.

However, after Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel intervened, Dani clarified that veg food vendors will also face action. "That was an anti-encroachment drive only. There is no question of discrimination. We have removed carts irrespective of the food they were selling," Dani said on Friday.

He said the anti-encroachment drive was stopped after a couple of days and the municipal body is at present not carrying out any such drive against street food carts.

The court made the remarks while disposing of a petition filed by nearly 20 street vendors claiming the AMC's recent anti-encroachment drive was targeted at handcarts selling non-vegetarian food items, an allegation denied by the civic body.

At one point, Justice Biren Vaishnav, who was hearing the petition, got agitated and asked the AMC "What is your problem? How can you decide what I should eat outside my house? How can you stop people from eating what they want? Suddenly because someone in power thinks that this is what they want to do?" Street vendors from Ahmedabad, whose handcars were seized by the BJP-ruled civic body, alleged the drive against vendors selling egg and non-veg food items was launched in the city after an elected representative in Rajkot city gave a negative opinion about such food being sold on roads.

Advocate Ronith Joy, appearing for petitioners, termed the move as an act of "bigotry" and claimed the civic body has removed the hand-carts selling non-veg food on

the ground they are not maintaining hygiene.

Non-veg vendors were singled out for eviction on the ground that the food they were serving is not vegetarian food, he added. Justice Vaishnav said, "Will the Municipal Commissioner decide what I will eat? Tomorrow they will tell me not to drink sugarcane juice because it will cause diabetes. Or tell me that coffee is bad for health." Civic bodies of Rajkot, Vadodara and Ahmedabad had earlier announced to remove non-veg food carts from city roads. However, after the chief minister overruled such a move by local civic bodies, saying the state government has no problem with what people want to eat, the drive against non-veg food carts was converted into an "anti-encroachment" campaign.

PTI

Nation bids tearful adieu to CDS Gen Rawat...

From Page 1

In all, 13 passengers including General Rawat, his wife, his staff officer and the security team besides the aircrew were killed when the MI-17 helicopter carrying them crashed on Wednesday afternoon in village Kateri near Wellington. The lone survivor Group Captain Varun was now admitted to the military hospital in Bengaluru.

While the authorities managed to identify the bodies of General Rawat, his wife, and staff officer Brigadier LS Lidder, efforts were now on identifying the bodies of other killed, sources said. As the bodies suffered severe burn injuries, the DNA identification was taking time, they said.

Lidder's cremation took place at Brar Square.

Meanwhile, foreign envoys and military commanders of some foreign countries also attended the cremation of the CDS at Brar Square.

Some former Services chiefs including V K Singh, who is a minister in the union cabinet now, Deepak Kapoor and Admiral Sunil Lanba also paid their respects at the cremation site.

When the General's body was laid in state at his official residence, 12 officers (from Army, Navy and Air Force) of the rank of Brigadier and equivalent were on Vigil Duty to maintain continuous vigil over the mortal remains.

Six officers (two each from Army, Navy and Air Force) of the rank of Lieutenant General equivalent were the pall bearers. The Ceremonial Battery

of 2233 Field Regiment provided the gun carriage.

Ninety nine all ranks from the Army, Navy and Air force and 33 members of the tri-services band formed the front escort while 99 all ranks from the three Services were the Rear Escort, officials said adding a total of 800 service personnel were in attendance for the military funeral of the CDS.

As regards efforts to ascertain the cause of the crash, a court of inquiry headed by Air Marshal Manvendra Singh had started the process.

In fact, a team had reached the crash site on Wednesday. The search and rescue team also retrieved the flight data recorder or black box and it may help the investigators to find the reason for the accident.

Modi bats for joint efforts to shape global norms for social media, cryptocurrencies

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday called for united efforts to shape global norms for emerging technologies like social media and cryptocurrencies so that they are used to "empower" democracy and not to "undermine" it.

In a virtual address at the Summit for Democracy hosted by US President Joe Biden, Modi said India would be happy to share its expertise in holding free and fair elections and in enhancing transparency in all areas of governance.

Referring to Abraham Lincoln's famous quote on democracy, the prime minister also added that democracy is also about being "with the people, within the people."

"The structural features like multi-party elections, independent judiciary, and free

media are important instruments of democracy. However, the basic strength of democracy is the spirit and ethos that lie within our citizens and our societies," he said. "Democracy is not only of the people, by the people, for the people but also with the people, within the people," Modi said.

The prime minister also called for joint efforts to shape global norms for emerging technologies like social media and cryptocurrencies.

"We must also jointly shape global norms for emerging technologies like social media and cryptocurrencies, so that they are used to empower democracy, not to undermine it," he said.

This is for the second time in the last three weeks that Modi called for working together on the need to regulate cryptocurrencies.

Resignations hit Goa...

From page 1

The resignation letter by Rebelo claims he was upset after the party announced the "candidature" to sitting MLA Aleixo Reginaldo Lourenco from the Curtorim constituency "despite he working against the party". Rebelo is from Curtorim.

"Aleixo Reginaldo Lourenco, who has never participated in any party activity for the last four-and-a-half years and on the contrary only abused party leaders and yourself, worked against the official candidate of Curtorim in the recently held Zilla Panchayat election, is promoted as working president of the party and is declared as a candidate by senior leaders during a recently held convention," Rebelo said in the letter addressed to Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) president Girish Chodankar.

Senior party leader Dinesh Gundu Rao has proposed a

meeting between GFP chief Vijai Sardesai and Chodankar on Saturday.

Talking to reporters in Panaji, Chidambaram said, "So far we had one party leader Vijai Sardesai who came to Delhi and said, 'in order to defeat BJP, my party offers support to the Congress party'. Rahul Gandhi said we accept the support. All other details have to be discussed further."

Meanwhile Priyanka asked people to be aware of new parties coming into the State from "outside" in an apparent dig at the AAP. She criticised the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which is seeking to play a major role in Goa's electoral politics, holding it responsible for the air pollution in the national Capital where the Arvind Kejriwal-led outfit is in power.

"Many parties will come from outside. These days new parties are coming," she stated.

"Have they done development? I am from Delhi, the AAP is from Delhi. There is so much pollution in Delhi that you can't even breathe," she said.

State force...

From Page 1

The observations came after senior advocate Siddhartha Dave, appearing on behalf of the West Bengal government, informed the bench that the state has decided to withdraw the FIRs registered against Nupur J Sharma, the editor of English language Opindia.Com, YouTuber Ajeet Bharti and others, including its founder and CEO.

The top court said it was not inclined to let go off the opportunity of saying something which is troubling the society and the court.

"It is undoubtedly the debasement in the dialogue which is taking place which needs introspection from the political class across the country. In a country which prides itself on its diversity, there are bound to be different perceptions and opinions which would include political opinions.

"The present proceedings in a way emanate from the

same. We say so as what the petitioners have done is to reproduce what the political class has stated against each other and which is already in public domain, an aspect pointed out eminently by senior counsel for the petitioners," it said.

The bench said that no doubt by the very nature of the job required to be performed by the political class, at times their exchanges may get heated.

"But it should not explode. We are sure difference in perceptions can be expressed in better language," it said in its order uploaded.

The top court had earlier stayed further proceedings in a fresh FIR lodged in West Bengal against them.

On June 26 last year, the top court had stayed further proceedings in three FIRs lodged in West Bengal against petitioners. In their intervention application, Sharma and others had said that they are constrained to move the top court due to persistent hounding and victimisation by the

West Bengal Government, who in its endeavour to scuttle inconvenient media reports registered multiple FIRs against them.

The application had added, "That the order dated June 26, 2020, came as a respite to the petitioners whose honour, life and liberty were sought to be repeatedly undermined by the state..."

However, "it appears that the respondents are unrelenting in the efforts to persecute the petitioners/ applicants as the petitioners/applicants have recently on August 5, been served with a notice under section 41A of the CrPC from CID, West Bengal concerning FIR registered with Bhadreswar police station, it had said.

It had said the FIR relates to media reports published in 'opindia.Com' about Telenipara communal riots of May 2020 and were registered contemporaneously around the same time as FIRs, which forms the subject matter of the writ petition.

The petitioners had said

the FIR came to their notice only on the receipt of the notice under section 41 CrPC on August 5 this year requiring them to appear before the investigating officer on August 13, but later the investigating officer through an email dated August 12 asked the petitioner to appear on August 23.

They had sought a stay on the investigation emanating from the FIR registered at Bhadreswar police station and the notice issued to them for appearing before the investigating officer. They had also sought quashing of the FIR.

On June 26 last year, the apex court, while staying the three FIRs, issued notices to the West Bengal government and the Centre seeking their replies on the plea.

The main writ petition filed by Sharma and others including the founder and CEO of the news portal and the editor of its Hindi language publications claimed that the West Bengal government and its "authoritarian Kolkata Police" are misusing FIRs and "brute police powers" to intimidate journalists.

"The petitioners are constrained to invoke the extraordinary writ jurisdiction of this court under Article 32 of the Constitution against the patently extortionist and mala fide actions of the Government of West Bengal to impose illegal censorship in the state by threatening, scuttling, and gagging honest media houses through misuse of state police," the plea claimed.

The petitioners had claimed they were informed that the cause of one of the FIRs lodged by police was an article published by the news web portal on the issue of alleged hiding of data related to Covid-19.

The plea had claimed that one of the FIRs lodged pertained to a news report published by the web portal in October last year.

House...

From Page 1

The committee recommended that the Union Home Ministry may advise the States to not scale down the Covid-19 infrastructure such as testing facility, ICU beds and medical oxygen as the virus may give rise to a third wave without giving sufficient time to react given its deceptive nature and emergence of multiple variants.

"They should be kept in a dormant state so that they can be reactivated to deal with the subsequent wave of the pan-

demic that might come up," it recommended.

The committee also recommended ramping up the infrastructure for Covid-19 patients in view of the observations of experts and epidemiologists that a possible third wave may target the non-vaccinated population, especially the children.

In its recommendations, the committee also asked the Ministries of Home Affairs and Health to take up the issue of guidelines on fixation of ceiling on price of hospital beds during the pandemic and other public health emergencies.

SC...

From Page 1

The bench decided to dispose of several intervention pleas, including those filed by builders' body, sugar, rice and paper mills, against certain curbs imposed by the commission and others, including the top court, and asked the panel to decide these issues.

The bench, at the outset, said that now there is "slight improvement in the quality of air" and the commission may be allowed to decide the issues pertaining to curbs.

Senior advocate Vikas Singh said that now things have got better since the crucial period is over and sought vacation of an earlier order by which the ban on construction activities was re-imposed. "We will not entertain these intervention applications. All these applications will be considered by the commission (air quality) and in consultation with the States, the grant of relaxations will be considered," the bench said.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre and the commission, said that several long-term

measures are in contemplation to deal with the issue of air pollution. Senior advocate A M Singhvi, appearing for the Delhi Government, said the apex court had allowed construction activities in seven hospitals and urged the bench to permit construction activities in other hospitals as well.

"We cannot get into all the individual cases... I am sorry to say that if all States and the Centre took steps regarding controlling pollution then we would not have entertained this," the CJI said and asked the Delhi Government to approach the commission.

2 policemen killed in...

From Page 1

The entire area was cordoned off. Till the time of filing the report the searches were going on in the area.

Reacting to the targeted killing of policemen, Lt-Governor Manoj Sinha in a tweet said, "The barbaric action by the enemies of peace will be avenged. We are determined to completely dismantle the terror ecosystem".

"No words are strong enough to condemn the heinous terrorist attack on our brave JK Police jawans SgCT Mohd Sultan & Cf Fayaz Ahmad at Bandipora. I convey

my heartfelt condolences to the families of the martyrs. We are firmly resolved to avenge this barbaric action by the enemies of peace & determined to completely dismantle the terror ecosystem. J&K administration will extend all possible support to martyrs' families," tweeted the office of LG J&K.

Former Chief Minister and vice-president of the National Conference, Omar Abdullah, condemned the killing of policemen in a terrorist attack. "I condemn the militant attack on the police in Bandipore area of North Kashmir earlier today that resulted in the death in the line of duty of J&K police personnel Muhammad Sultan and Fayaz Ahmad", Omar tweeted.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Chowdhry Ali Jameel S/o Qamar Jameel Chowdhry R/o B-104, Sector-51, Noida, G.B. Nagar, U.P.-201301. I have changed my name Chowdhry Ali Jameel to Ali Chowdhry for all future purposes.

PD(9118)C

I, Chowdhry Qamar Jammel S/o Late Chowdhry Mazhar Jammel R/o B-104, Sector-51, Noida, G.B. Nagar, U.P.-201301. I have changed my name chowdhry Qamar Jameel to Qamar Jameel Chowdhry for all future purposes.

PD(9119)C

Omicron rise alarming, use masks, urges...

From Page 1

The Health Ministry said the overall positivity rate in the country was at 0.73 per cent last week. Less than 10,000 cases have been reported in the last 14 days.

Active cases are highest in two States -- Kerala and Maharashtra-- with over 43 per cent active cases in the former and over 10 per cent in the latter, Agarwal said.

"We are administering up to 80 lakh doses of vaccines per day and it has to be continued to cover the entire adult population," Balram

Bhargava, Director-General of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), said at the briefing.

With 8,503 people testing positive for the coronavirus in a day, India's Covid-19 tally has climbed to 3,46,74,744, while the number of active cases rose to 94,943, according to the Ministry's data updated on Friday.

The death toll mounted to 4,74,735 with the addition of 624 new fatalities, according to the data updated at 8 a.m. The daily rise in new coronavirus infections has been recorded below 15,000 for the last 43 days now. The number of active cases has increased to 94,943, comprising 0.27 per cent of the total infections, the lowest since March 2020, while the national Covid-19 recovery rate was recorded at 98.36 per cent, the highest since March 2020, the Ministry said.

Omicron spreads from 2 countries to 59 in...

From Page 1

Both the experts also called for mask-wearing, care for ventilation, physical distancing and stepping up vaccination to check the spread of the new strain and said that the responsibility for these rests as much with the individual as with the Government.

However, what has come as a relief so far is that there have been mild symptoms in the patients. According to WHO, Omicron variant has several mutations, which is why it has been tagged as "Variant of Concern".

The WHO is still studying its severity and says that "it is not yet clear whether Omicron is more transmissible (spreads more easily from person to person) compared to other variants, including Delta." However, it said that the number of people testing positive has risen in areas of South Africa affected by this variant and epidemiologic studies are underway to understand if it is because of Omicron or other factors.

The WHO also observed that it was not yet clear whether infection with Omicron causes more severe disease compared to infections from other variants, including Delta. It added that preliminary data

suggests that there are increasing rates of hospitalization in South Africa, but this may be due to increasing overall numbers of people becoming infected, rather than a result of specific infection with Omicron.

WHO also noted that understanding the level of severity of the Omicron variant will take days to several weeks.

Highlighting the concern with this variant of Covid-19, AIMS Director Dr Randeep Guleria said to a news channel that "the problem with B.1.1.529 is the unique mutation that has occurred. It has more than 50 mutations and 30 have occurred at the spike protein site, the crown-like protein on the surface of the virus that vaccines train our bodies to attack.

"So, if we will have so many mutations at that site then one is worried that will the immunity hold or will there be a higher immune escape mechanism. All this will increase chances of reinfections or getting infections even after vaccination has been done and that is the cause of worry for now with this variant," he said.

"The condition in South Africa has indicated that the cases have gone up indicating a high transmissibility, but the severity of the disease is low. However, that shouldn't result in laxity, we all need to follow all the precautions like we were doing before. We cannot afford to be careless," said Dr VK Paul, NITI Aayog member (Health).

Democratic, pluralistic...

From Page 1

Ahead of the summit, the Ambassadors to the US from China and Russia wrote a joint essay in the National Interest policy journal describing the Biden administration as exhibiting a "Cold-War mentality" that will "stoke up ideological confrontation and a rift in the world."

Biden opened the first White House summit for democracy by sounding an alarm about a global slide for democratic institutions and called for world leaders to "lock arms" and demonstrate democracies can deliver.

Biden called it a critical moment for fellow leaders to redouble efforts on bolstering democracies.

Speaking for the robustness of the Indian democracy, Modi said, "It is a story of unprecedented socio-economic inclusion in all spheres. It is a story of constant improvements in health, education, and human well-being at an unimaginable scale.

"The India story has one clear message to the world. That democracy can deliver,

that democracy has delivered and that democracy will continue to deliver."

"The structural features like multi-party elections, an independent judiciary, and free media - are important instruments of democracy. However, the basic strength of democracy is the spirit and ethos that lie within our citizens and our societies. Democracy is not only of the people, by the people, for the people but also with the people, within the people," Modi said quoting from the famous speech of the US president Abraham Lincoln in 1863.

The Prime Minister called for cooperation within democracies to learn from each other.

"Different parts of the world have followed different paths of democratic development. There is much we can learn from each other. We all need to constantly improve our democratic practices and systems.

"And, we all need to continuously enhance inclusion, transparency, human dignity, responsive grievance redressal and decentralization of power," said Modi.

The Prime Minister said in this context, the summit provides "a timely platform for furthering cooperation among democracies."

"India would be happy to

share its expertise in holding free and fair elections, and in enhancing transparency in all areas of governance through innovative digital solutions. We must also jointly shape global norms for emerging technologies like social media and crypto-currencies, so that they are used to empower democracy, not to undermine it," he said.

"By working together, democracies can meet the aspirations of our citizens and celebrate the democratic spirit of humanity. India stands ready to join fellow democracies in this noble endeavor," Modi said.

Earlier, during the closed session of the summit, the Prime Minister said the democratic spirit, including respect for rule of law and pluralistic ethos, is ingrained in Indians. The Indian Diaspora carries it too, thereby contributing to the economic well-being and social harmony of their adopted homes, he said.

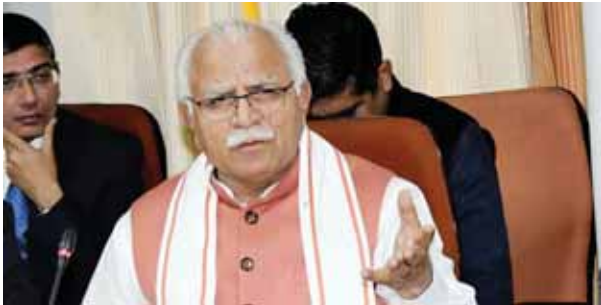
He outlined sensitivity, accountability, participation, and reform orientation as the 4 pillars of Indian democratic governance.

Through the democracy summit president Biden has made a case that the US and "like-minded allies" need to show the world that democracies are a far better vehicle for societies than autocracies.

No permission for namaz at public places: Khattar ‘Need to find amicable solution’

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

Amid the ongoing tussle over the offering of Friday Namaz in the open, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar during his visit to Gurugram on Friday asserted that the offering of Namaz in the open cannot be tolerated. "We have withdrawn the permission given to designated places for offering Friday prayers at certain sites. An amicable solution to the matter will be found in a fresh approach before the district administration," Khattar said in a statement. He further said offering public prayers is leading to clashes and that should not happen. "A solution will be found to sort out the issue," he said. Earlier the Hindu and Muslim organisations had agreed on 18 new sites for Friday prayers in the open, include 12 mosques, dargah, waqf board properties and six



public areas. However, disruptions of ‘jumma’ prayers were again reported in Gurugram. Some Hindu groups refused to allow Friday Namaz in Sector 37 industrial area on Friday, instead claiming to hold a condolence meeting for Chief of Defence Staff Bipin Rawat, his wife and other Army personnel who lost their lives in a chopper crash on December 8. Trucks, tractors and other vehicles were also found parked hap hazardously at Sector-37 and Hero Honda Namaz locations, making it difficult for

people to pray there. Meanwhile, members of the Sanyukt Hindu Sangharsh Samiti and the Muslim organisation jointly paid tributes to General Rawat in Sector-29. Namaz was also disrupted in a park located in Sector-44 by members of the Hindu Right-wing, but police presence in the area prevented any major incident. At Sector-37 Namaz location local villagers and Hindu Right-wing members said that next Friday, they will organise a family kitchen (Bhandara) at the same location.



People sit around a bonfire to warm themselves on a winter morning in Gurugram on Friday

PTI

Air quality remains very poor in city

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's air quality index (AQI) on Friday recorded in a very poor category with overall AQI recorded 310 micrograms per cubic. According to SAFAR (System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research), a unit of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), values of Suspended Particulate Matters (SPMs) – Particulate Matters (PM) 10 and 2.5 were recorded at 247 and 133. In its short-range weather and air quality forecast, SAFAR said, AQI indicated very poor air quality which has degraded

from Thursday's ‘poor’ category due to cloudy conditions and large reduction in mixing layer height. "For the next two days (10th, 11th), winds are likely to be moderate. Partially cloudy conditions and low mixing layer height (< 1 km) causing weak vertical mixing are likely to keep air quality within ‘very poor’ for today and tomorrow. From December 12 and December 14, air quality is likely to degrade to the upper end of ‘very poor’ due to relatively low wind speeds." In a health advisory, SAFAR recommended that stop outdoor activities in the

early morning and after sunset. "Avoid prolonged or heavy exertion. Go for a short walk instead of a jog and take more breaks. Stop any activity level if you experience any unusual coughing, chest discomfort, wheezing, breathing difficulty, or fatigue. If the room has windows, close them. If the air conditioner provides a fresh air intake option, keep that closed. Avoid burning of wood, candles or incense. Keep the room clean – dont vacuum. Do wet mopping to reduce dust. Masks known as N-95 or P-100 respirators may only help if you go out," it said.

Deputy CM to attend education summit in Dubai

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) education model is being appreciated widely, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia will discuss bilateral partnership on exchange of education with British Minister Mike Freere in Dubai. Sisodia will represent Delhi at a three-day RewirEd Summit in Dubai tour from Saturday onwards. According to Delhi Government officials, the Minister is likely to discuss the Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum with his counterparts of Education Ministers of Estonia, Italy, Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia. During his three-day tour of Dubai, Sisodia will also discuss bilateral partnership on the exchange of education between Delhi and Britain with British Minister Mike Freere. In this conference, Education Secretary H. Rajesh Prasad, Education Director Himanshu Gupta and Higher Education Director Ranjana Deshwal will also represent Delhi. The innovative approach adopted in the Delhi Education Model is the most important part of the Delhi Education Revolution. After preparing world class infrastructure in Delhi's Government schools, the Delhi Government worked to develop a growth mindset in children. In this direction, 3 Mindset Curriculums-Happiness Mindset Curriculum, Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum and Deshbhakti Curriculum-were launched in Delhi's public education system. The Happiness Curriculum was launched in 2018 in Delhi's schools. Its aim is to learn to be happy and emotionally strong. More than 10 lakh children practiced Mindfulness daily in Delhi's Government schools under the Happiness Curriculum. Even during the difficult period of Covid-19, these children practiced Mindfulness in their homes.

CM, Deputy CM pay tribute to CDS Gen Rawat

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his deputy Manish Sisodia paid tribute to India's first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat and his wife Madhulika Rawat inside the Brar Square crematorium in the Delhi Cantonment on Friday. After paying the tribute, CM Kejriwal tweeted: "Paid floral tributes and last respects to CDS Gen. Bipin Rawat ji. He was a brave son of Bharat Maa. May almighty bless his soul. I pray to God to give his family strength to recover from the huge loss. Om Shanti." HC directs police to periodically review security arrangements in courts PTI ■ NEW DELHI The Delhi High Court has directed the Delhi Police Commissioner to undertake periodical review of security arrangements in courts, based on security audit by an expert team, for deploying requisite number of personnel and installation of gadgets following the September 24 shootout that killed three persons inside Rohini Court. A bench headed by Chief Justice D N Patel, in its order passed in matters concerning the safety and security at court complexes, stated that while Delhi Police shall be primarily responsible for regular and continuous security-audit, deployment of adequate personnel, monitoring through CCTV cameras etc, the Delhi Government shall be responsible for making the required budgetary allocation.

AAP: Will give ₹25K to Punjab CM for every illegal sand mining case he acts against

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will reward ₹25,000 to Punjab Chief Minister Charanjeet Channi if he acts against every site where illegal sand mining is being done, party Punjab Co-incharge Raghav Chadha said on Friday. The Chief Minister of a State is always has complete information about the whereabouts of illegal mining in his state, but Channi Sahab has made a gimmick of announcing 25,000 to fool the people, he said. "Even today, illegal sand mining continues in CM Channi's assembly despite the raid conducted by the AAP. It seems that the Chief Minister himself has become the biggest sand mafia of Punjab," he added. Calling out Punjab CM Charanjeet Channi on his latest gimmick, Chadha said, "AAP Punjab CM Charanjeet Channi Sahab has made an announcement saying that anyone who contacts the Punjab Government with proof or information regarding illegal sand mining in the State

will be rewarded with ₹25,000. But I would like to point out to Channi Sahab himself, that illegal sand mining practices are taking place at various sites within his own assembly constituency Chamkaur Sahib. The AAP leader said "This 'dramebaazi' needs to stop, Channi Sahab. If you truly wanted to bring about change, it would take you no more than five minutes to round up all the officers to get information you want ready at your disposal. You will easily have a list of all such sites where such illicit stealing of sand is taking place, where all the sand mafia is operating." "The AAP exposed the illegal sand mining which has been taking place in CM's own assembly constituency, Chamkaur Sahib, in Jindapur Pind. Our raid brought the truth of the Punjab Government and CM Channi Sahab's real face to the public. However, despite such a public exposition, even at this very site the illegal mining has not been stopped. It continues, shamelessly, even today under Punjab CM Channi's own nose," he said.

Farmers' unions to honour locals who lent a helping hand to their agitation

New Delhi: After over a year of braving extreme weather, the Covid-19 pandemic and living in tents on highways, farmers' unions have decided to honour locals who helped farmers during their protest at Delhi's Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur borders. Farmers' leaders said locals offered "immense help" to the protesters in different ways such as providing electricity and water connections from their homes. They said now it is time for them to show their gratitude towards such people and honour them. The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM), which spearheaded the farmers' protest, on Thursday decided to suspend the long-drawn agitation after the government agreed to consider all its other demands, days after the repeal of the three contentious farm laws. The SKM leaders announced that the stir will be suspended and the farmers would go back home in a victory march on December 11. Farmer leader and a member of the SKM's empowered committee, Shiv Kumar Kakka said the SKM will honour

those locals who helped farmers selflessly during the course of the agitation and strengthened the movement. "We have formed a committee to make a list of such locals so that we can honour them. Before going home, a ceremony will be held at the Singhu border tomorrow to honour them. We will garland them and present shawls and sweets," Kakka told PTI. Kakka said that some local residents and traders became good friends with farmers and their bond will remain intact. He said the SKM used to hold all its important meetings at the Kajaria Tiles showroom at the Singhu border. The shop owner gave the entire space to farmers. "So we all became good friends. We can never forget this gesture," he added. Kakka said locals helped the agitating farmers in many ways such as providing water, electricity, shelter, places for holding meetings, tents and food etc. "So we have decided to thank and honour them. A similar ceremony is also likely to be held at other border points of Delhi," he said. PTI

NDMC Chairperson gives prizes to Hindi competition winners

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

To encourage the use of Hindi language in day-to-day official working, New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) Chairperson, Dharmendra distributed prizes among the 65 winners of Hindi Competition in a function organized by Hindi Department at NDMC Convention Center, While addressing the gathering on the occasion, NDMC, Chairperson, Dharmendra informed that the Constitutional Assembly adopted Hindi as a Official language in 1949 and since every year on 14th September we celebrate Hindi Diwas on that day to promote the use of Hindi in our Government offices. "Every employee uses Hindi in their life spontaneously, so that we celebrate this day as a celebration of a festival, not as an encouragement day for Hindi," he added. NDMC organised various departmental Hindi Competitions consisting of Hindi Speech, Hand writing, Noting/Drafting, Poem and Debate during the "Hindi Pakhwada" in Hindi month, September 2021. More than 1,000 employees of various levels and fields like engineering, education, administration, accounts, finance, information technology, fire & security and medical services participated in these competitions. The first, second and third prize winners of the Hindi writing competition are Anjali Bhatia, Vicky Gupta and Nand Kumar respectively. In the Hindi Noting/Drafting competition, first, second and third prize goes to Prashant Shukla, Dr. B. L. Sirvi and Namrata. While in Hindi poem competition prizes go to Rajkumar, Prashant Shukla and B. L. Sirvi first, second and third respectively.

Each winner of the competition was awarded with ₹5,000, ₹ 3,500 and ₹2,500 for the first, second and third ranks respectively. A consolation prize of ₹ 1,000 was also given to 10 participants in each category of competition. A citation along with a memento has also been distributed among winners with prize money by the Chairman NDMC.

Haryana CM lays foundation stone of MCG headquarters building, waste-to-energy plant

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Friday laid the foundation stone for the new headquarters building of the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) and waste-to-energy (WTE) plant in Gurugram. This program was organized at Vyapar Sadan located on Mehrauli Road, Gurugram on Friday. After the event, Khattar said that it is a very important day for both for Gurugram and Faridabad districts. Waste-to-energy plants are being set up for the proper disposal of waste for both major districts. "We are moving towards waste-to-wealth with new technology and Haryana's first plant to generate electricity from waste is operational in Sonapat and this plant to be set up in Gurugram will generate 6 lakh units per day and waste will be disposed of properly. Keeping in mind its capacity can be



increased further," the CM said. Regarding the MCG office building, the Chief Minister said that the civic body will soon get its building. A new building of MCG will be constructed at Vyapar Sadan, Sector-14, at a cost of about ₹117 crore. The new building will be on the lines of state-of-the-art and green building and its construction work will be completed in about 2 years. This building will be of 11 storeys including ground and provision has also been made for 3 basements. The basements will have a parking capacity of 466

Taking down tents to rebuild somewhere else: Farmers plan protest monuments in villages

New Delhi: For over a year, a 2,400-square-foot tent at the Singhu border was home to Gurinder Singh, Butta Singh Shadipur and their fellow villagers who were protesting the contentious farm laws. On Friday, the two friends pulled down this pavilion of protest but said they intend to rebuild it at their village in Punjab's Bhatinda district to keep the memories of the movement alive.

As the farmers prepare to leave their protest sites on Delhi's borders on Saturday after the government repealed the farm laws and acceded to their other demands, many say they will reinstall their tents in their villages as a symbol of their long, arduous struggle. When Gurinder Singh, Butta Singh Shadipur and 500 others from their Ram Nawas village reached the Singhu border on November 26 last year, they had to unroll their mattresses on the floor and sleep under the open skies. Over the next few months, the two built a makeshift structure that has three rooms, a bathroom and a meeting area together measuring 2,400 square feet. They used bamboo for partitions and tinsed for roof. Around 70-80 people would sleep in the meeting area and the three rooms every night. They then brought television, cooler, gas stove, a small fridge -- everything they needed for a comfortable stay at what would be their home till the government conceded their demands of repeal of the three contentious farm laws and a panel on legal guarantee for minimum support price for crops among others. Now, the two friends plan to rebuild the

structure in their village to keep the memories of the movement alive. "We spent around Rs 4.50 lakh on this structure. We had everything we needed. Now, we plan to shift it to our village and rebuild it," Gurvinder Singh said. Butta Singh Shadipur said the structure will also serve as a memorial to those who died during the farm movement. "We will also keep some of our pictures in it to remind us of the time spent here," he added, recalling the initial days of the movement when they faced tear gas shells, water cannons and batons. Bakshish Singh, who managed a 10-bed 'Kisan Mazdoor Ekta Hospital' at the protest site, rode a wave of conflicting emotions as the protest draws to an end. The smiles and hugs hide the pain of parting, Bakshish said. The 30-year-old man from Patiala said the Life Care Foundation-run makeshift hospital started with one stool and medicines to control sugar and blood pressure. "We scaled it up seeing that a large number of farmers, especially the elderly, had some health issues or other," Bakshish said. The hospital recorded over a lakh OPD visits in the last one year and local residents accounted for more than 50 per cent of them, doctors said. Free diagnostic tests were conducted at the facility for dengue, malaria, chikungunya, typhoid, etc. "We got a lot of cases of heart attack and seizure. I can say the number of deaths during the protest would have been higher had the hospital not been there," the supervisor said. PTI

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Narendra Modi

Prime Minister

PM did about-turn in Glasgow, says Opp

By setting a ‘Net Zero’ target of 2070 at climate summit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Opposition on Friday charged Prime Minister Narendra Modi of doing a "volte-face" by setting a 'Net Zero' target of 2070 at the climate summit in Glasgow and questioned the rationale behind it.

"Even a week before the COP 26, the Government of India did not show any inclination to announce Net Zero target. Actually, the Environment Secretary had ruled it out in the media," said TMC MP Saugata Roy said in Lok Sabha during a discussion on climate change.

"What prompted and under what pressure the Prime Minister did a volte-face in Glasgow and announced Net Zero target in 2070? Is there any credible research available to vindicate the 2070 Net Zero target? Was any discussion carried out on the Net Zero target," Roy asked. DMK MP Kanimozhi initiated the debate.

NK Premachandran (RSP) accused the developed nations of diluting their climate com-



mitments over the past three decades since the 1992 Rio conference. "The principle of equity has been diluted and lost over the last 30 years. 'Common but differentiated responsibility' has become an insignificant part of the Glasgow declaration," he said referring to the concept first accepted at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 at Rio de Janeiro.

He rued that even the concept of developed and developing countries had been changed at the COP 26 climate

summit at Glasgow and accused the rich countries of hiding behind poor countries in tackling the challenges posed by climate change.

During a brief intervention, Environment, Forest and Climate Change Minister Bhopender Yadav said that Central Government is working towards making use of stubble in making biofuels and manure in an exercise aimed at reducing incidents of its burning, seen to be a source of air pollution in the region, including the national capital.

Yadav was replying to

Akali Dal MP Harsimrat Kaur Badal who alleged that Punjab farmers were being "defamed" for stubble burning and asked the central government to provide them with resources to deal with it. NTPC had recently procured 3,000 tonnes of stubble and the Government will review its result to see how it can be used for biofuels, said Yadav.

Ramesh Bidhuri (BJP) lauded the Prime Minister's initiatives to popularise use of energy-efficient LED bulbs as an alternative to traditional lighting solutions and offer

LPG subsidies which, he claimed, has reduced the dependence on firewood for cooking. Hasnain Masoodi (NC) there is a need to shift towards sustainable development so that nature is protected. He said that Pollution Control Boards are becoming facilitators of pollution instead of preventing it. It is the time to act now to protect the climate, said Benny Behanan (Cong) said during the debate on Climate Change in Lok Sabha. The attitude of both states and Centre is negative on climate change, he observed.

Jagdambika Pal (BJP) said "we should not indulge in blame game... All states irrespective of their political affiliation should work together on the issue of climate change and environment protection." Tapir Gao (BJP) suggested that there is a need to bring in environmental awareness from the school level. There is also a need to tighten laws around environmental protection so that there is deterrence for the exploitation of nature, the BJP member said.

Why huge stagnation of constables, subordinate officers in their ranks, Centre asks para forces

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI



The Union Home Ministry has directed the Central paramilitary forces to find out the actual reasons for "huge" stagnation of the constables and Subordinate Officers in their ranks and provide practical suggestions to remedy the same after reviewing the issue and consultations with a cross-section of the ranks.

Stagnation refers to actual time taken for next promotion in General Duty/operational cadre from Constable to Inspector.

As per the inputs received by the Ministry from the CAPFs (Central Armed Police Forces or paramilitary forces) and AR (Assam Rifles), the time taken for next promotion in the GD cadre in the rank of Constable to Inspector is 13 to 22 years from Constable to Head Constable, six years to 12 years for being promoted from Head Constable to Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI), six to 10 years from ASI to Sub-Inspector and five to 10 years from SI to Inspector.

While a Constable in the CRPF is promoted from

Constable to Head Constable in 17 years, such promotion in BSF and Assam Rifles takes 21-22 years followed by 10 years in CISF, 13-14 years in ITBP and 13 years in SSB.

Likewise, the duration for promotion from Head Constable to ASI is six years in the case of CRPF, 11-12 years in BSF and ITBP, 10 years in SSB, 11 years in CISF and five to six years in Assam Rifles.

For a promotion from ASI to SI, it takes eight years in CRPF, nine to 10 years in BSF and ITBP and six years in SSB, CISF and Assam Rifles.

For being promoted from SI to Inspector, it takes nine years in CRPF followed by eight to nine years in BSF, six to seven years in ITBP, five years in SSB and Assam Rifles

and 10 years in CISF.

"From the above, it is observed that, there is huge stagnation in Constable and Subordinate Officers level in the GD cadre of CAPFs and Assam Rifles. The actual reasons for such stagnation are required to plug the gaps," reads an order of the Home Ministry.

"Competent Authority has desired to request that all CAPFs and AR (Assam Rifles) may kindly constitute a Committee to review the present status and to give practical suggestions to improve the situation," the order underscored.

A report of the review exercise by the respective paramilitary forces and Assam Rifles is expected to be submitted by December 15.

Study on effectiveness of vaccines on Omicron underway, Centre informs LS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Friday said in the Lok Sabha that the study on the effectiveness of the vaccines on the new Covid-19 variant Omicron is underway and once the experts give their opinions, a decision on the booster dose will be taken.

He also said that the country trusts its scientists and the booster policy will go ahead based on their suggestions following appropriate research.



Responding to a question

during the Question House in the Lower House, he also said that the Omicron surfaced on November 1 and on November 24 this was reported in South Africa. The new variant has been found in 59 countries so far and every country has been studying the effectiveness of the existing vaccines.

"We have initiated a study immediately and as of now, there are 36 labs in India where the 'Genome Sequencing' has been done. These labs can do 30,000 genome sequencing

every day and also we have been trying to tie up with private labs to increase the capacity", Mandavia informed the House.

Responding to the question of Revolutionary Socialist Party (RSP) MP N.K. Premachandran, the Minister further said, "We all want the country to achieve 100 per cent vaccination and we all (MPs) should make people aware about getting vaccinated."

He also said that India has done "best" while comparing

the vaccination rates to other countries as 'our country has completed 86 per cent of the first dose'. He also requested all stakeholders to participate in getting the vaccination drive faster as soon as possible.

Replying to a question asked by the BSP Member Ram Shiromani Verma about the impact of Omicron on children, the Health Minister said that the study on Omicron is underway and once the experts give their opinion, the government will decide on

vaccination for children below 18 years.

Mandaviya also informed the House that there are 23 cases of suspected Omicron under observation, and the expert teams have been interested everyday on the response and treatment and they are also studying the hospitalisation status of other countries where this new variant has been reported in large numbers.

Responding to Premchandran's query on

Kerala Covid status, the Minister also said that he also visited the state personally when over 30,000 cases were reported and also sent an 'expert team' to the state and visited many hospitals and suggested the state government to take various containment measures, therefore, the health protocol and guidelines issued by the Health Ministry from time to time must be followed to arrest the Covid 19 cases at low rate.

Replying to a question of

Congress MP Manish Tewari, who wanted to know whether any study has been made on the side-effects of the Covid 19 vaccination, the Minister said that no such study has been made so far. He also explained that with "great difficulties, the people have come out from vaccine hesitancy, so we do not want to get a study as of now barring some exceptional cases. We want to get the vaccination of all eligible populations with both doses as soon as possible," he added.

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A housing loan facility was granted pursuant to a loan agreement entered into between ICICI Bank Limited ("Secured Creditor, which term shall include its successors and assigns) and the borrower & co-borrower, mentioned below ("Borrower(s)", which term shall include his/ its/ their respective [successors, assigns, heirs]). The undersigned being the authorized officer of the Secured Creditor ("Authorized Officer") under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("Act") and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, ("Rules") has issued demand notices under Section 13(2) of the Act calling upon the borrowers / co-borrowers mentioned below to repay the amount payable pursuant to the loan agreement and as specifically mentioned in the said respective demand notices within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notices.
The borrowers / co-borrower, having failed and neglected to repay the amount as claimed in the said demand notices, a notice is hereby given to the borrowers / co-borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13 (4) of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Rules. The details including date of symbolic possession of the properties are as mentioned below

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.	Vijay Kumar Chouhan / Vimla Devi / Hemant Chauhan/ LBDEL00001445929	Plot No. 85, BLK-D, Sec-49, Noida./ December 07, 2021	July 23, 2021 Rs.19,95,786/-	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.

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2.

Sl No.	DISTR ICT	Name of Work	Estimated cost (Rs in Lac)	Bid Security (Rs. in lacs)	Cost of tender documents including GST (In Rs.)	Time of completion of the work (including rainy season)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	मुरादाबाद	जनसह भूखण्डन से भूखण्डन प्राप्त भूखण्डनधारक भवन परिसर मार्ग सड़क-148 के बीच सड़क के खुदरा का कार्य।	18.40	0.00	854.00	1 Month
2	मुरादाबाद	जनसह भूखण्डन से भूखण्डन प्राप्त की जायदादधारक का निर्माण कार्य।	11.25	0.00	766.00	1 Month

● Bidding documents shall be available online on website <http://etender.up.nic.in> from 13-12-2021 to 27-12-2021 upto 17:00 hrs and the same can be downloaded submitted from 10:00 Hrs of 13-12-2021 to 17:00 Hrs of 27-12-2021. Technical bid shall be opened online on 28-12-2021 at 12:00 Hrs in the office of undersigned.
● Tender cost should be deposited online by Net Banking as per Column 6 in the table.
● As per Go No 480 / दिनांक-7-2021 दिनांक 12-04-2021 पर प्रमुख अधिसूचना, लोकप्रतिष्ठ, सचका के पत्रांक 385/एनपीडी/ सचका सं/ 60/एनपीडी/ 2020 दिनांक 23-04-2021 L-1 Contractor shall be upload an undertaking regarding to deposited earnest money as per earlier after opening of financial bid in case undertaking not uploaded with the bid documents then tender will not be consider.
● More information's of Tender are available at website <http://etender.up.nic.in>. Rules/conditions & details of the tender are available at website <http://etender.up.nic.in>. Bidder have to login Prahari URL <http://wsm.upwd.gov.in/prahari/> and upload their documents as per G.O. No. 879/1/23-7-2020, Dated 25-08-2020 and E-N-C (Vikas) and Head of the department letter no. 4650/AN-LC/2020, Dated 27-08-2020.
(Pranod Kumar)
A.E. Executive Engineer,
Construction Division-1, P.W.D., Moradabad.
Mob. No. - 9950993399
E-Mail - cd1pwmdb@gmail.com

UP-171070 Dt. 9.12.21
विज्ञापन सेवकादर www.upgov.nic.in पर उपलब्ध है।

Edu Min warns parents against adverse impact of online gaming on kids

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Education Ministry on Friday issued an advisory to parents warning against the adverse impact of online gaming on the mental and physical health of children.

The Ministry said that online gaming has many downsides. Playing online games leads to a serious gaming addiction which has been considered a gaming disorder. The game is designed in a way that each level is more complicated and complex than the previous one. This causes a player to push themselves to the limit in order to progress in the game.

"Therefore, playing online games with no restriction and self-limits leads many players to become addicted and are eventually diagnosed with gaming disorder. The gaming companies also emotionally compel the child to buy more lev-

els and almost force in-app purchases," the Ministry highlighted in its advisory.

The ministry said it has recommended vjay in-game purchases should not be allowed without parental consent. To avoid in app purchases; OTP based payment methods may be adopted as per RBI's guidelines, it said.

It also talked against avoiding credit/debit cards registration on apps for subscriptions. Place an upper limit on expenditure per transaction.

It further said do not let children buy directly from the laptop or mobile they use for gaming.

"Advise children not to download software and games from unknown websites. Tell them to be beware of clicking links, images, and pop-ups in the websites as they may contain a virus and harm the computer, and may contain age-inappropriate content," it said

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one girl namely **Anam**, D/o **Mohd. Yameen**, R/o: H.No. B-238, Gali No. 4, Chandu Nagar, Bahajanpura, Delhi, **Age: 17 years, Height: 5'4", Complexion: Fair, Face: Long, Built: Thin, wearing Surmi colour Burka, White colour Nakab, White colour Kurta & Pajama and Bare feet**, has been missing/kidnapped from inside Jama Masjid Gate No. 01, in the area of P.S. Jama Masjid since 29.11.2021. In this regard a **FIR No. 285/2021 U/s 363 IPC, dated 29.11.2021 has been registered at P.S. Jama Masjid, Delhi.** Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the girl but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about her please inform undersigned.

Website : <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639
Ph. No. : 011-24368638, 24368641
DP/1124/CD/2021 Ph. No.: 011-23261625, 23269777

SHO
P.S. Jama Masjid,
Delhi

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED LADY

General Public is hereby informed that one lady (depicted in the photo) namely **Manila Kumari W/o Lal Bhadrur Parsad R/o H. No. 194, Billa Ka Makan, Gali No.5, Kapashera, New Delhi Aged-29 years** has been reported missing/kidnapped since 24.11.2021 at 11:00 AM from her residence vide **DD No.38A Dated 30.11.2021** registered at Police Station Kapashera, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:-
Complexion: Fair, Height: 5'1", Face: Round, Built: Thin, Wearing: Blue coloured suit, red coloured salwar and slipper in feet.
Any person having any information/Clue about this missing/kidnapped lady, may inform SHO, Kapashera, Delhi at E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in or website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
Tele No. : 011-24368638 or 24368641
FAX No. : 011-24368639
SHO, Kapashera, Delhi
DP/946/SW/2021 Tel.: 011-25063758, 25066105

CH. CHARAN SINGH UNIVERSITY, MEERUT
SIR CHHOTU RAM INSTITUTE OF ENGG. & TECH. (SCRIET)
INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS STUDIES (IBS)

Notice for Registration/Admission Through open merit. Session 2021-22 on vacant seat

Applications are invited for admission to B. Tech. 1st year Branch (ITE, ECE,CHE, ME & AGE), B.Tech 2nd year lateral entry (ME, CHE, ECE, AGE, EIE), MBA, through the open merit, against seats which are vacant after UPCEET-2021 counseling. To get registration log in at <http://ccsuniversity.ac.in>/Last date for registration 13-12-2021.
For more details visit:
Official web portal www.ccsuniversity.ac.in/scriet
Contact: (0121)2770083, 2774974, 7579685826, 7579685819

REGISTRAR

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.B. Nagar (U.P.)
Website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tenders are invited from firms/contractors registered with for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com & <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these website for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

(A).

S.No	Jobs no/Work Name	Amount
1	225/D(H)/DD(H)-I/2020-21, D/o Park with five year maintenance (Open gym) Kanshiram Colony Sector-45, Noida.	Cost Rs. 30.84 Lacs

Which can be uploaded by date 20.12.2021 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-Qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 21.12.2021 at 11.00 AM.

(B).

S.No	Jobs no/Work Name	Amount
1	39/D(H)/DD(H)-II/2021-22, D/o Green Belt in sector-75 & 117 with Five year Maintenance.	Cost Rs. 56.01 Lacs
2	40/D(H)/DD(H)-II/2021-22, M/o RSP in sector-117 & 118 with Two year Maintenance.	Cost Rs. 31.65 Lacs
3	41/D(H)/DD(H)-II/2021-22, M/o Green Belt in sector-118 with Two year Maintenance and all type civil work.	Cost Rs. 40.13 Lacs

Which can be uploaded by date 27.12.2021 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-Qualification shall be opened/downloaded on date 28.12.2021 at 11.00 AM.

Office Sector-39
Director (Hort.)
Noida
CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

Court convicts 8 in IED recovery, explosion at Bodh Gaya in 2018 case

New Delhi:The NIA Special Court, Patna on Friday convicted eight Jamat-ul-Mujahideen (JMB) terrorists in the case of IED recovery and explosion at Bodh Gaya in 2018.

"Today (10.12.2021), NIA Special Court Patna pronounced judgement against 08 accused persons in RC-04/2018/NIA-DLI and convicted them on pleading guilty under various sections of law," the NIA said in a statement.

Those convicted u der Indian Penal Code sections, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and Explosive Substances Act are Paigambar Sheikh, Ahmad Ali, Nur Alam Momin, Adil Sheikh, Dilwar Hossain, Abdul Karim alias Korim, Mustafizur Rahman alias Shaheen alias Tuhin and Arif Hussain.

The case registered on February 3, 2018 pertains to planting of three IEDs in and around the premises of Bodhgaya temple complex. The first IED was detected at the Gate No. 5 of Kalchakra Maidan and it had exploded while it was being secured.

Two more live IEDs were recovered near Srilankan Monastery and at the stairs of Gate No-4 of Mahabodhi temple.

"Investigation had established that the accused persons had hatched a conspiracy by



way of planting improvised explosive device at Bodh Gaya Temple complex, during visit of the His Holiness Dalai Lama and His Excellency the Governor of Bihar. Accused persons had contacted each other, travelled together, conspired and procured explosives, fabricated and planted these three IEDs at Bodh Gaya temple complex on 19.01.2018," the agency said.

Charge-sheet was filed against three arrested accused Paigambar Sheikh, Ahmad Ali and Nur Alam on September 27, 2018 and supplementary chargesheet was filed on January 28, 2019 against six accused Adil Sheikh, Dilwar Hossain, Abdul Karim alias Korim, Mustafizur Rahman, Jahidul Islam alias Kausar and Arif Hussain.

Quantum of sentence against the eight accused convicted during the day would be pronounced on December 17 by the NIA Special Court Patna, it added. **PNS**

Nawab Malik tenders apology to HC

Court had issued show cause notice to Min for breaching undertaking

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra Minister Nawab Malik on Friday tendered 'unconditional apology' to the Bombay High Court for 'breaching' his undertaking to the court that he would refrain from making statements against Dhyandev Wankhede, father of NCB zonal director Sameer Wankhede, and his family members.

In an affidavit filed by him in response to an explanation sought from him on December 7 as to why a contempt of court notice should not be issued against him for deliberately breaching his assurance to the court, Malik tendered an "unconditional apology" to Justice S. J. Kathawalla and Justice Milind Jadhav for breaching an undertaking given to the court.

"I tender my unconditional apology to this Honourable Court in respect of the breaches of my undertaking given to this Court as recorded in the orders dated November 25 and November 29, 2021. I had no intention to disrespect, dishonour, overreach or breach the said order," Malik said.

Malik told the court that the statements were made dur-

ing the course of media interviews with journalists on several topics over a considerable period of time. He said that the journalists had asked him some specific questions and in response he had made such statements

The Minister said that the responses given by him during the course of interviews were made with a belief that they were not covered by the undertaking given by him to the High Court.

Malik, however, told the court in his affidavit that henceforth during the pendency of the defamation suit against him that "even if further questions are posed to him by the media in respect of Dhyandev Wankhede or his family, he shall not respond or give any comment on it."

"I however believe my statement will not prevent me from commenting on the political misuse of central agencies, and the conduct of their officers in the course of performance of their official duties hereafter," Malik said in the affidavit.

On his part, Sr Wankhede's counsel Birendra Saraf urged that the Minister must not misuse the (above) statement to



continue making defamatory utterances against Sameer Wankhede.

After taking the minister's affidavit on record, the HC bench said that as a minister, Malik ought to use proper forums to raise grievances. "He is a minister not a layman. You also knows and we also know what this is," the Bench commented.

The direction to Malik to file an affidavit had come after petitioner Dhyandev Wankhede - who has filed a Rs 1.25 crore defamation suit against the former - brought to the notice of the court that the minister had given interviews during which he allegedly continued with his tirade against the Wankhede family.

It may be recalled that Malik had on November 25 given an undertaking to the high court tha he would refrain from making any defamatory

statements till the interim application filed in Wankhede's defamation suit was reheard by a single-judge of the High Court.

Bringing to the HC bench's notice that the minister had breached his assurance, Wankhede's senior Advocate Birendra Saraf filed an affidavit showing the instances where Malik made defamatory statements after the order of November 25.

On its part, the HC bench had wanted to know if what Malik had made statements in his personal capacity or as a Minister. "If he is giving in his individual capacity then we will call him here right now," the bench said.

On instructions, Malik told the court that he had made those statements as spokesperson of the NCP.

The HC bench made a prime facie observation that Malik had breached the statement made before the Court.

The HC bench said that before proceeding to take any action against Malik, it deemed it fit to direct the minister to file an affidavit setting out why action contempt of court should not be taken against him for wilfully breaching the statement

recorded in the order.

In a Rs 1.25 crore defamation suit filed on behalf of Dnyandev Wankhede, Advocates Divakar Rai and Saurabh Tamhankar told the court: "Defendants have caused irreparable loss, damage, harm, prejudice to the name, character, reputation and societal image of Plaintiff and his family members."

Sr Wankhede filed the suit in the high court after Malik shared Sameer Wankhede's purported birth certificate on his twitter handle which allegedly stated that the latter's father was a Muslim.

The petitioner alleged that Malik had unleashed a "tirade" against his son after the NCB arrested his son-in-law Sameer Khan under NDPS in January this year.

The petitioner among other things urged the high court: to declare the statements made by Malik are "tortious and defamatory in nature", to pass permanent injection order restraining Malik from publishing or making statements in any kind of media, including his social media accounts and to delete any statements, press releases, tweets released by Malik.

7 more Omicron cases in Maha, tally reaches 17

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

After a lull of four days, seven more cases of Covid-19 variant Omicron were detected on Friday, thus taking the total number of cases to 17 in the State.

While three cases were reported from Mumbai, four cases recorded in the areas coming under the jurisdiction of the Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC)The three patients who have tested positive for Omicron are men aged 48, 25 and 37 years who have recent history of travel to Tanzania, UK and South Africa- Nairobi respectively.

The other four new patients from the PCMC are contacts of Nigerian women who have already confirmed as a Omicron case in previous reports.

"Of the 7 persons tested positive for Omicron today, four have been vaccinated. One patient has received a single dose of the vaccine while another patient has not been vaccinated. One patient is three

and a half years old and is not eligible for vaccination. While four patients are asymptomatic, the three remaining patients are showing mild symptoms," a statement issued by the State Public Health Department said.

Meanwhile, the authorities said the total number of passengers who arrived at Mumbai, Pune and Nagpur airports since December 1 was 61,439 (9768 from At-risk countries and rest 51,761 from other countries), while passengers whose RT-PC tests have been done are 10,927 (9678 from high-risk countries and 1249 were other countries). Similarly, RT-PCR positive and samples sent for genomic sequencing was 25 (20 at-risk countries and give from other countries

Additionally, field surveillance of all international passengers who have arrived since 1st November is underway.

"Through airport and field surveillance, 89 samples have been sent for genomic sequencing. We have so received the results of 47 patients," the daily health bulletin said.

Aryan moves HC to seek relief from weekly reporting at Mumbai NCB office



Mumbai: Aryan Khan, son of Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan, on Friday approached the Bombay High Court seeking modification of a condition imposed on him when he got bail in the drugs-on-cruise case.

Aryan's application sought waiver of the condition that he shall appear before the Narcotics Control Bureau's (NCB) south Mumbai office every Friday to mark presence.

As the investigation has been now transferred to a Special Investigation Team of Delhi NCB, the condition that he appear at the Mumbai office could be relaxed, said the plea.

The application also said that he has to be accompanied by police personnel every time he visits the NCB office here due to the large number of mediapersons waiting outside.

The application is likely to be heard by the high court next week, his lawyers said.

Aryan Khan was arrested by the NCB on October 3 on charges of alleged possession, consumption and sale/purchase of drugs following a raid on a cruise ship off the Mumbai coast.

He was granted bail by the high court on October 28.

The high court also imposed 14 conditions on him. He was asked, among other things, to appear before the NCB each Friday, not to leave Mumbai without informing the agency and not to leave India without permission from the special NDPS court. **PTI**

Covid-19 unabated while doctors continue strike

Kerala sees over 3K fresh Covid cases with death toll crossing 42K mark

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Kerala's worries due to Covid-19 are far from over as the State on Friday diagnosed 3,972 persons with the

pandemic while death toll reached 42,579 till date. Government doctors in Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam said the number of cases have been brought down only by reducing the number of samples being tested on a daily basis.

Health Minister Veena George said in a release that 66,788 samples were tested during the last 24 hours. A senior doctor in the Department of Health said the State has been alerted about the

high number of Covid-19 cases by the Union Ministry of Health. "Though the State administration maintains an all is well façade, the truth is entirely different. Count the number of ambulances speeding to hospitals blaring their sirens and you can feel what truth is," said the doctor who did not want his name to be quoted.

Elsewhere in the State doctors owing allegiance to Kerala Government Medical Officers Association, an umbrella orga-

nization of all State Government doctors continued in their stand-up agitation for the third day in succession. Hundreds of Government doctors staged a 10 to 5 demonstration in front of the Secretariat at Thiruvananthapuram demanding at least minimum facilities befitting that of medical doctors in other States and restoration of their salaries and allowances which have been slashed by the Administration.

"The ministers describe doctors as frontline warriors and other such praiseworthy terms. But more than that, what we need is good working conditions and salaries which would allow us to lead reasonably safe life. Our demands are limited and justifiable," said Dr G S Vijayakrishnan and Dr T N Suresh, president and general secretary of KGMDA.

They also disclosed that the stand-in agitation would be continued indefinitely till the Government accepts the demands by them.



Priyanka to rope in Cong leaders from other States for UP polls

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

After roping in the majority of senior leaders from Uttar Pradesh, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra now plans to bring party leaders, parliamentarians and legislators from other states to help revive the grand old party and campaign for it in the poll-bound Uttar Pradesh which goes to polls in the next few months.

To give a final shape to her plan, Priyanka Vadra held a meeting with leaders of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Delhi and Haryana in the national capital on Thursday. Congress leader Deepender Singh Hooda and UP Congress Committee chief Ajay Kumar Lallu were also present in the meeting.

Sources said that Priyanka Vadra shared the 'blueprint' with the leaders and asked them to get ready to shoulder the responsibility of ensuring the victory of Congress candidates in UP. She has already

shortlisted hundred assembly constituencies which the leaders believe to be the party's strongholds and she will entrust one constituency to each senior leader, and party MP or MLA from other states.

Recently, during the protests by Congressmen at several places in UP over Lakhimpur Kheri incident, Priyanka Vadra was accompanied by the chief ministers of Chhattisgarh and Punjab and these two states had also given compensation of Rs 50 lakh (total Rs 1 crore) to the farmers killed allegedly by Ashish Mishra, son of Union Minister of State for Home, Ajay Mishra 'Teni, and his colleagues.

After the meeting with Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Congress MLA from Chhattisgarh, Arun Vora, said, "There was a wave of enthusiasm in the meeting. The whole country is looking towards Congress. Chhattisgarh MLAs will work with their full strength and will form the Congress government in Uttar

Pradesh." He said that he would work as Priyanka's associate.

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has already been made the observer for UP assembly elections by Congress.

Another party MLA from Chhattisgarh, Kuldeep Juneja, said that all Congress workers would fight together to form the party's government in Uttar Pradesh.

"Everyone has been called to Lucknow on December 15, and then it will be decided who will be given which assembly constituency. We will have to stay in Uttar Pradesh for two and a half months and work for the party," Juneja said.

UPCC president Ajay Kumar Lallu said that a meeting of observers had been held.

"Priyanka is fighting on the roads and giving the direction. Candidates have to work hard. There are signs of change. Congress workers are fighting, even Priyanka Gandhi was sent to jail four times.



Bollywood actors Akshay Kumar and Sara Ali Khan during the promotion of their upcoming movie 'Atrangi Re' in New Delhi on Friday

Mullaperiyar Dam haunts Keralites as CPM, Congress leaders maintain silence over issue

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Mullaperiyar Dam is brewing up as a major controversy in Kerala as politicians and spirituals cautioning the State Government about the possibilities of the 126 year old reservoir caving in becoming more vocal from the local communities. P C George, seven-term member of the Kerala Legislative Assembly who is also a veteran farmer expressed his anguish over the silence maintained by the CPI(M) and Congress leaders in the State and their failure to speak to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin about the safety aspects of the dam.

Swami Chaitanyaananda Saraswathi, a monk of Sree Vyasa Ashram in Idukki exhorted Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan to effectively use his Constitutional power to convince the Tamil Nadu Government about ground realities.

"There is a strong feeling about the population in Kerala that the leaders of the CPI(M)

and the Congress are hiding something from the people. The silence of Kerala Chief Minister Vijayan and Leader of the Opposition V D Satishan is shocking. They are afraid of their Tamil Nadu counterparts," said George.

He said Tamil Nadu has nothing to lose in the eventuality of a disaster in Mullaperiyar. "But 45 lakh people residing in the five districts of Kerala will perish in the resultant deluge. It is a reality that stares at us," said the popular politician.

Last week and early this week saw Tamil Nadu opening the shutters of the dam without informing the Kerala authorities. Since the onset of the North East Monsoon, most days see heavy downpour in the catchment area of Mullaperiyar Dam and the lakhs staying along the banks of Periyar River are in a state of fear.

The Mullaperiyar Dam, owned and operated by Tamil Nadu Government is situated well inside Kerala territory.

The dam was built in 8600 acres of forest land belonging to the then princely State of Travancore. Modern historians arue of the view that the agreement between the then British Government and the Maharaja of Travancore was a fraud committed on the latter by the former. "The lease period of the dam constructed as per the 1886 agreement was for 999 years which itself is dubious," said P Sujathan, historian and seasoned commentator.

Tamil Nadu Government's refusal to allow the release of the internationally acclaimed film "Dam 999" speaks volume about the concern of the Dravidian politicians in hiding the truth, said George. "The move was released all over the world except Tamil Nadu in 2011. The State administration is extending the ban on this movie under the pretext of law and order issues," said George. The producer of the movie Sohan Roy told The Pioneer that efforts were on to release the Tamil version through OTT platform.

PM to launch Saryu canal project in Balrampur today

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Saryu Nahar National Project, constructed at a cost of Rs 9,800 crore, in Balrampur on Saturday.

The project will benefit around five million farmers in nine districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh (Purvanchal). Governor Anandiben Patel and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath along with other ministers will be present at the Friday's function.

After the inauguration of the project, the prime minister will also address a public meeting around 1 pm.

Balrampur is the political ground of former prime minister late Atal Bihari Vajpayee from where he was elected to the Lok Sabha for the first time in his political career in 1957. While he lost from Balrampur in 1962, he managed to emerge victorious again in 1967.



The Saryu Nahar National Project has been constructed at a total cost of more than Rs 9,800 crore, out of which more than Rs 4,600 crore was provisioned in the last four years. The project also involves the interlinking of five rivers -- Ghaghara, Saryu, Rapti, Banganga, and Rohini -- to ensure optimum usage of water resources of the region.

Once complete, it will provide water for irrigation to over 14 lakh hectares of land and benefit about 29 lakh farmers of over 6200 villages in eastern UP districts like Bahraich, Shravasti, Balrampur, Gonda, Siddharthnagar, Basti, Sant Kabir Nagar, Gorakhpur, and Maharajganj.

The farmers of the region, the worst sufferers of the delay in project, will now immensely benefit from the upgraded irrigation potential and will be able to grow crops on a larger scale and maximise the agri-potential of the region.

Yogi meets kin of martyred IAF officer Chauhan, announces aid, job

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited the Agra Residence of Wing Commander Prithvi Singh Chauhan, who was martyred in a helicopter crash along with Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat at Kunoor district of Tamil Nadu a couple of days back.

After meeting the martyr's family and expressing his condolences at their home at Saran Nagar in Dayalbagh area, the chief minister said that the government was firmly with the martyr's family.

"The entire country is majorly hurt by this unfortunate accident and today all Indians stand with the martyrs," he said.

Yogi also announced that the UP government would provide Rs 50 lakh to the kin of the martyr and a government job to a member of the family.

"Central and the state governments will give full cooperation to the martyr's family," he said.

Union minister of state Prof SP Singh Baghel also accompanied the chief minister to the martyr's house.

Earlier, Yogi flew to Delhi to pay his last tributes to late CDS General Bipin Rawat and his wife Madhulika Rawat.

Gorakhpur to be Special Education Zone soon: Pradhan

PNS ■ GORAKHPUR

Union Minister of State for Education, Skill and Entrepreneurship Development, Dharmendra Pradhan, announced to make Gorakhpur a 'Special Education Zone'.

"Developed as a knowledge city through three functional and one under-construction universities, Gorakhpur, will be made 'Special Education Zone' on the lines of 'Special Economic Zone' as per requirement of the new National Education Policy. The idea behind the 'Special Education Zone' is to groom students as global citizens and address problems of the world through academic pursuits and Maharana Pratap Education Council and its students would play an important role in achieving this," the Union minister said while addressing the concluding programme of the 89th Founder's Week celebrations of Maharana Pratap Education Council as the chief guest on

Friday.

Pradhan said that the new Education Policy under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi had been prepared in line with the strategic changes in the global scenario. He said that the new education policy aimed at making India the number one country in the world and the children of India as global citizens.

Describing Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath as an epitome of successful leadership, Pradhan said that the former's leadership never bothered about issues and instead always looked at solutions.

"Under his (Yogi's) leadership, eastern Uttar Pradesh has got the gift of a fertiliser factory from the prime minister," he added.

Appreciating the Gorakhspeeth for its yeoman social service along with religion and spirituality, Pradhan said that whenever there was a calamity, the peeth went ahead and awakened the society.

Cop thrashes Class IV employee at Akbarpur; suspended

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Infamous for human rights abuse, a police inspector was seen thrashing a Class IV employee with a stick even as his minor daughter wailed in trauma and shock during an agitation outside the district hospital at Akbarpur in Kanpur Dehat on Thursday. As the police tried to detain the man, another officer was seen pulling the child away as the father clung to her.

Ironically, the local officers initially tried to hush up the abuse claiming that the action was "necessary" but later as a video of the police brutality went viral on social media, the accused cop was suspended and a probe was ordered against him.

The police action came after some agitating staff of the district hospital staged a dharna and put locks on the OPD on Thursday morning. As the cops led by Inspector Vinod Kumar Mishra tried to reason, the situation deteriorated after which a staff allegedly locked up the cops in a room. Later the cops zeroed in on one of the staff and beat him up. The local police officials initially came out in support of their junior colleagues.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Glass ceiling

There are reasons for renewed hope for women's quota in Parliament, an issue pending since 1996

Not many in the media picked up an interesting situation that developed during Zero Hour in the Lok Sabha on Thursday. Out of the blue, Speaker Om Birla specifically asked the women members to raise their issues. He would allow as many or all of them to speak. The DMK's Kanimozhi took the lead, questioning the delay in the women's reservation Bill becoming a law. The Speaker agreed that it was a serious issue. Several women MPs addressed the House on matters of their concern. The Speaker never explained the rationale for his sudden decision to encourage the women members to speak, but the incident reminds us of a bitter reality that vexes Indian Parliament since 1996: The inability of the constitutional body to institutionalise a quota for women in the Lower House. Interestingly, only a few days earlier, Law Minister Kiren Rijiju said in a written response in the Lok Sabha that the Government was toying with the idea of consulting political parties to build a consensus on bringing the women's Bill before Parliament. Should the two incidents raise hopes of women after 25 years of continuous disappointment? It was in 1996 that Parliament had its first brush with the Bill, brought by the Deve Gowda Government, to reserve one-third of the seats in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. The Rajya Sabha passed it in 2010, but the Lok Sabha never did. The regional parties and critics within the BJP and Congress stalled its passage for various reasons that women's rights groups attribute, among others, to the clout of patriarchy.

At the extreme right is the patriarchal argument that bringing more women into politics might destroy the age-old concept of the ideal family that revolves around women whose main job is to rear children and take care of the house. A patronising argument is that women entering Parliament with the help of a quota would not be perceived to be competing on merit. A third argument defending patriarchy is that the principle of seat rotation in the women's reservation Bill would not incentivise men to work for their constituencies because they may not be around for re-election the next time. On the other hand, women have not justified being satisfied with only a 33 per cent reservation when they are breaking glass ceilings even without quotas and on merit in all spheres. Why settle for a third when the constitutional amendments in 1993 to increase women's participation in decision-making at the panchayat level provided a 50 per cent reservation? Yes, the patriarchy opposed the amendments at that time, saying they would only promote proxy politics, that is elected women being rubber stamps of their husbands. True, but in all these years, we have seen women's awareness and their representation in the local bodies only grow in the rural areas. It is for women, not the will of patriarchy, to decide how they will break the country's biggest glass ceiling: Parliament.



A fisherman sails his boat across the Hooghly during sunset, in Nadia

Caution ahead

Hoping to defeat Omicron or the third wave is futile without suitable body armour

Prevention is better than cure. More so when you have little idea what you're fighting against. And with the emergence of the Omicron variant — which has marked its frightening presence in at least 59 countries already — caution becomes even more critical. India has registered nearly 32 cases of Omicron but that's not the cause of worry because the bigger threat still remains to be our lousy behaviour towards the virus. People continue to flout the COVID protocols with impunity and that only sets the seal on the onset of another deadly wave. The NITI Aayog has warned that people are operating at a "very risky and unacceptable" level. According to it, mask usage is declining in India. It stresses that both vaccines and masks are important and we should learn from the global situation. Pointing to the speed of the Omicron spread, Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, said that only two countries had reported Omicron cases till November 24 but the number has surged to 59 in just two weeks.

A similar trend was witnessed when the Delta variant — which wreaked havoc during the second wave — was emerging in India. People neglected repeated warnings from the Government and world health bodies, which led to an unprecedented explosion in the COVID-19 cases tally. An IIT Kanpur professor had a few days ago claimed that a third wave could peak in India between January and February next year. While some experts had predicted that the third wave could be avoided, the new mutations and our irresponsible behaviour only spell danger. Though the majority of the Indian population has now developed some sort of resistance against the virus either through vaccination or their own immune response, it does not provide guaranteed protection from Omicron or other mutations that might appear in the future. Even fully vaccinated people have been found COVID-positive with Omicron. Therefore, face masks and social distancing norms along with the vaccination become our best bet. The Government should now ramp up the vaccination drive and, in a stern way, deal with vaccine hesitancy. The citizens must realise that it's not just the Government's responsibility to deal with the virus but theirs, too. Any further lapses would only hamper the country's health, education, economy and employment which had barely begun to pick up.

A war for liberation from Pak repression

The Bangladesh Liberation War was a turning point in history; the cause was supported by India after Pakistan unleashed intensified repression

The publication of Manash Ghosh's book, *Bangladesh War: Report from Ground Zero* (Neogi), could not have been timed better — shortly before December 16, 1971, when the Pakistani military in what is now Bangladesh, surrendered to their Indian counterparts in Dhaka. Thus ended a war which had begun on December 3, 1971, with Pakistan attacking India, and which was one of the turning points in the history of the 20th century, which has seen several momentous developments. The list is formidable. It includes World War I and II; the rise of Nazism and Fascism; the Bolshevik and Chinese revolutions; the emergence of weapons of mass destruction and the dropping of atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki; India's Independence and the process of decolonisation that followed globally; the beginning, waxing and end of the Cold War; the rise of non-alignment as a global phenomenon; the dissolution of the Soviet Union and human forays into space and landing on moon.

The India-Pakistan war deserves to be in the list because India's comprehensive victory led to the emergence of a new nation, Bangladesh, and the end of one of the most monstrous periods of repression in history, during which the Pakistani occupation regime and its military killed three million Bangladeshis and raped over 400,000 women, besides devastating vast stretches of the country. The emergence of Bangladesh, about to celebrate 50 years of its existence, came as the culmination of developments that began immediately after the creation of Pakistan and stemmed from the sustained exploitation of the eastern wing, called East Bengal until 1955, when it was christened East Pakistan. Besides economic exploitation, there was a systematic effort to erase the eastern wing's cultural and linguistic heritage and identity, and keep it in a state of political subjugation. The attempt to impose Urdu as the sole official language of Pakistan at the expense of



Bengali led to the historic language movement, which turned the swelling anger of people in the direction of a liberation struggle spearheaded by the Awami League under the leadership of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, who announced his historic six-point programme, outlining a far-reaching blueprint for autonomy and parliamentary democracy, on February 12, 1966.

The Government's response was intensified repression. It arrested Rahman under the Public Safety Act in May 1967, and, in June 1968, initiated the Agartala Conspiracy Case against 35 people, including him, for conspiring to engineer East Pakistan's secession from Pakistan with India's help. A massive wave of public anger swept East Pakistan and assumed tidal proportions after a devastating cyclone hit the province's southern coastline on November 11, 1970. One of the most severe natural disasters ever, it swept 500,000 people into the sea and caused widespread devastation and misery. The Government, slow in issuing warnings about the cyclone, deliberately dragged its feet in providing relief. Referring to the consequences, Ghosh writes: "Never in the recent history of liberation wars did

BESIDES ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION, THERE WAS A SYSTEMATIC EFFORT TO ERASE THE EASTERN WING'S CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC HERITAGE AND IDENTITY, AND KEEP IT IN A STATE OF POLITICAL SUBJUGATION

a natural disaster trigger such a popular upheaval as it did in East Pakistan. The upheaval snowballed into Bangladesh's Liberation War, leading to the breakup of Pakistan." Events moved towards a head after the elections to Pakistan's National Parliament on December 7, 1970. The Awami League swept the polls in East Pakistan, winning 160 of the 162 seats for which elections were held, thus gaining an absolute majority in the 300-seat strong House. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party won 81 of the 138 seats in West Pakistan. As Rahman remained firm on the demand for autonomy and his right to form Government, and President Yahya Khan appeared accommodating as a ploy, Pakistan's ruling junta, in alliance with Bhutto, planned a crackdown. Launched in the night of March 25, 1971, and codenamed 'Operation Searchlight', its sheer savagery, which has few parallels in history, led to resistance, which turned into a liberation war with India's assistance. An incensed Pakistan attacked India on December 3, 1971. The rest is history. Manash Ghosh's book narrates, lucidly and coherently, the unfolding of the entire chain of events from the origins of the Bangladeshis' alienation to the struggles leading

to the crackdown, the liberation war waged by the Mukti Bahini, trained and equipped by India, Indira Gandhi's efforts to mobilise global support against the Pakistani Government and military's reign of terror that led to the arrival of 10 million refugees (nearly double the number, according to unofficial estimates) in India and, finally, the liberation of Bangladesh. Information ferreted out from sources and daring direct reportage from the ground, both during the pre-war period of resistance to Pakistani forces and the war, combine to portray in vivid detail a gory as well as heroic chapter of contemporary history. Some details in this unputdownable book are chilling. Ghosh cites Yahya Khan reminding Pakistan's Dhaka commanders on the eve of the launch of 'Operation Searchlight' of what he had told them in February when the plan for it was being conceptualised: "At least three million Bengalis must die such a terrible and violent death that the rest of the population would be forced to eat out of our hands." Pakistan's military did kill three million Bangladeshis but could not prevent the liberation of Bangladesh. (The author is Consulting Editor, *The Pioneer*. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FARMERS' PROTEST REAPS HARVEST

Sir — After braving scorching heat, a bitter cold winter and even a deadly second wave of COVID-19 for 378 days, the protesting farmers reached a deal on a raft of demands that had sparked year long agitation by farmers. People wonder why Prime Minister Narendra Modi softened his stance and apologised to the nation that his Government would repeal the laws. Interestingly, the Government also agreed to provide compensation to the families of the farmers who died during the protest, while the Government had earlier told Parliament that it had no record of the number of farmers who died during the protests.

This change of stance by the Government is nothing but an attempt to woo the voters ahead of the upcoming Assembly elections in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. After the Government assurance, the SKM suspended the agitation but they will hold a review meeting on January 15. If the Government doesn't fulfill its promises, they may resume the protest. Interestingly, for our Opposition leaders, particularly for Mamata Banerjee, to become the face of Opposition, they should open their eyes to learn from the SKM's powerful move which led to the victory for farmers and successfully challenged the arrogant Government.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

EXAMS SHOULD BE FAIR AND LIBERAL

Sir — The Central Board of Secondary Education is known for its rich education and innovation in teaching process and its student-friendly approach when it comes to academic and co-curricular matters. During the Coronavirus pandemic, the CBSE truly cared for lakhs of its students giving priority to the safety of students by taking measures like cancelling examinations and going for alternative methods to award marks to students. The board's foresightedness was much appreciated when it came out with the plan of two terms for classes tenth and twelfth this year.

However, the board's current objective type exams have brought in a lot of criticism from students as these were very

Diversity also means inequality



It is ironic that despite being one of the leading developing economies in the world, the recently released World Inequality Report has put India into the category of the poorest and the most unequal countries in the world. In fact, India's widespread poverty is not caused by shortage of resources but by the most unequal ways of distribution of wealth among people. One-third of the country's wealth is accumulated in the hands of 1 per cent of the population. The wealthiest 10 per cent of the pop-

ulation holds two-thirds (65 per cent) of the total wealth of the nation. It is worrisome that 90 per cent of Indians are forced to manage with just 35 per cent of the total wealth.

We can draw reasonable inferences from this. One, there is a wide gap between wealthy and deprived sections of the population. Two, as years go by, the gap is widening. Substantial inequality that exists in Indian society calls for critical analysis by policy makers and experts. Diversity, one of the distinctive features of Indian society, could be one of the reasons behind this great inequality. Faulty economic model that India follows is another reason for this. Instead of focusing on overall growth, India must focus on the welfare of individual people. It must follow the best economic models. The Report must make us analyse the situation and improve. Our leaders must recognise the reality and transform the country into an equitable one.

Venu GS | Kollam

tricky, confusing and stress-inducing. Students of class twelfth got the shock of their lives when the English exam had them bewildered because of its confusing nature. Mathematics also had them tense as it was lengthy. The problem was even raised in Parliament and a request was made to the Education Ministry to make evaluation liberal. The MP who raised a very genuine issue also urged the education ministry to consider making the evaluation process a little more "liberal". He also expressed anguish as students were totally depressed and mentally down and this could affect their future prospects also.

M Pradyu | Kannur

RBI TO GO WITH THE FLOW, FOR NOW

Sir — The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has decided to leave key interest rates untouched and continue with its accommodative stance for now in order to sustain growth which is not showing signs

of picking up strength and momentum. The MPC continues to be optimistic on the growth front, pegging it at 9.5 per cent in the ongoing fiscal. While the expectation is supported by most early indicators, its sanguineness on the inflation perhaps is not.

Although transmission from policy interest rate signals to the retail consumer level has been quite sluggish in the past, a sharp tightening could have a disproportionately larger impact on retail borrowers who have been bailing out the banking sector on the credit growth front after the easing of lockdown restrictions. With a future COVID-19 wave not ruled, the timing could prove awkward for lay consumers. Anyway, it is a right step in the direction in the present circumstances.

Gundu K Mani | Ghaziabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

The Opposition demanded 1-2 minutes for each MP to pay tribute to Gen Bipin Rawat but we were not allowed. It is unfortunate.



Congress leader — Mallikarjun Kharge

Congressman John Lewis was a champion of democracy and civil rights and took inspiration from great leaders like Gandhi and Mandela.

US President — Joe Biden

You can also help the poor by being a dancer. Being a doctor isn't important. Become who you really want to be.

Actor — Asha Parekh

Domestic cricket in India is a great place to play in; it challenges you in every sense.

Indian batsman — Mayank Agarwal

If your son wants to become an IAS officer, I shall be there to help you as your family member.

Delhi Chief Minister — Arvind Kejriwal

FIRST COLUMN

NUCLEAR DEAL IS DEAD,
LONG LIVE DETERRENCE!

Iran survived American sanctions for three years, and believes further sanctions won't matter much



GWYNNE DYER

We reviewed the proposals ... carefully and thoroughly and concluded that Iran violated almost all compromises found previously in months of hard negotiations," said the German Foreign Ministry spokesperson on Sunday. As a funeral oration, it lacked in elegance, but it did the job: the 2015 treaty curbing Iran's nuclear ambitions is dead. It was last week's meeting in Vienna that dealt it the death blow. Officially Iran and the six guarantors of the treaty (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States) were there to revive the deal that Donald Trump tried to kill when he unilaterally pulled the US out in 2018, but the new Iranian government overplayed its hand. When Joe Biden replaced Trump last January it looked like reviving the deal would be simple. Washington would drop all the sanctions Trump had slapped on Iran, Tehran would undo all the cautious steps it had taken on enriching uranium beyond the treaty's



limits to bring pressure on America and its allies, and everybody would live happily ever after. But the government of President Hassan Rouhani, which originally negotiated the treaty, wanted Biden to cancel the sanctions first, since it was the US that had reneged on the deal. Biden wouldn't do that, and wanted Iran to roll back the uranium enrichment first. A typical bazaar haggle, but the clock was ticking.

Rouhani had reached the two-term limit, and in this May's presidential election in Iran he was replaced by a hard-line nationalist, Ebrahim Raisi. The new president can see that Iran has survived the renewed American sanctions for three years, and he clearly believes that further US sanctions would hit diminishing returns. He may well be right. When Raisi's representatives returned to the table in Vienna last week, they brought his new demands: all the compromises that had been agreed in the talks last spring, when Rouhani was still president, were cancelled, and Iran wanted a promise (impossible for a US president to make) that sanctions would never be reimposed. Game over. Iran goes nuclear. So what should everybody else do now? We may assume that the people who guide Israel's nuclear strategy know that a few Iranian nuclear weapons are not a mortal threat to Israel. Ten nuclear weapons could wipe out half the Israeli population if they hit the major population centres, but this is not some special problem Israel faces because it is small. The United States has 330 million people and spans a continent, but it could also lose half its population in an all-out Russian nuclear attack. This is not great, but it is also not fatal because the United States can strike back and kill half the Russians (or the Chinese or whoever it was that attacked). It's called nuclear deterrence, and it's not absolutely foolproof, but it has protected us all from nuclear war for 75 years. Iran has 80 million people, but it could lose half of them in an Israeli nuclear attack. The majority of the world's people have to live this way, and quite a lot of them (including the Iranians) have done so for two or three generations by now. The only way Israel could claim exemption from this aspect of the human condition was to claim that the Iranians were murderous lunatics who could not be deterred by the threat of massive nuclear retaliation. That was never true, and now Israelis may have to get used to living under the nuclear threat too. Or maybe the Iranians will stop at 'threshold status', which would be nice. But I wouldn't count on it.

(Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'The Shortest History of War'. The views expressed are personal.)

Tourism sector can go places with new ideas

Contrary to popular perception that international tourists bring in all the lucre, it's actually domestic travellers who set the cash registers ringing

Tourism, along with travel, is one of the largest service industries in India, estimated to be worth over \$200 billion in 2018. However, being one of the most contact-intensive and socially active sectors, tourism has been among the hardest hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. The consistent rise in the number of infections and mortalities and consequent protection measures like lockdowns, quarantines, and curtailment of travel through most of 2020 and the first half of 2021 wrought havoc on the industry.

The criticality of the tourism sector for India's economy is evident from the fact that it directly contributed an estimated 2.7 per cent to GDP and 6.7 per cent to the employment of the country in 2019-20. And if the indirect shares of related services were to be included in these estimates, the corresponding shares would go up to 5.2 per cent and 15.3 per cent, respectively. These numbers are also substantiated by international assessments of the vast economic potential of one of India's sunrise industries. And we are talking of really large numbers. According to the estimates based on the structure of India's Third Tourism Satellite Account prepared by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), tourism is expected to have exclusively generated Gross Value Added to the tune of Rs. 5.18 lakh crore (or \$70 billion) and supported nearly 34.83 million jobs in India in 2019-20.

The latest Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report (TTCR), released in 2019, also ranked India 34th out of 140 countries overall. As per this report, India improved its ranking in tourism competitiveness by six places in just two years, which was the greatest improvement among the top 25 per cent of the countries ranked. The TTCR, which is published by the World Economic Forum, ranks selected nations according to the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index, which scores from 1 to 6 the tourism-related performance of a given country in three sub-indices, viz., regulatory framework; business environment and infrastructure; and human, cultural, and natural resources.

In view of these remarkable growth figures achieved by the tourism industry in recent years, Covid-19 has undeniably acted as a huge dampener. Although tourism has seen a marginal revival post the decline in Coronavirus cases after the ebbing of the second wave during April-June 2021, the emergence of the latest variant of the virus, Omicron, again threatens to neutralise the gains of the last few months for the industry. In this context, it is important to take stock of the current situation and examine the potential gains and losses for the tourism industry to enable it to chart a roadmap for recovery and renewed profitability in the long run.

Another recent study by NCAER shows that the overall economy saw a



TODAY, THE GOVERNMENT'S PRIORITIES HAVE CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY. THE CURRENT TOURISM POLICY, IN LINE WITH THE 'ATMANIRBHAR' INITIATIVE, FOCUSES PRIMARILY ON PROMOTING DOMESTIC TOURISM TO REVITALISE THE SECTOR THROUGH MEASURES SUCH AS THE 'DEKHO APNA DESH' CAMPAIGN AFTER THE SUSPENSION OF INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL DUE TO COVID-19

(Poonam Munjal is Senior Fellow and Anupma Mehta is Editor at NCAER. The views expressed are personal.)



decline of 20.1 per cent in the first quarter of the fiscal year 2021, and of 5.1 per cent in the second quarter, but rebounded to record a growth of 4.3 per cent in the third quarter, all in nominal terms. In contrast, the tourism economy or Tourism Direct Gross Value Added (TDGVA) saw correspondingly much greater declines of 42.8 per cent and 15.5 per cent in the first and second quarters, and continued negative growth even in the third quarter of 2021, recording a fall of 1.1 per cent. Commissioned by the Ministry of Tourism to assess the actual impact of the pandemic on India's tourism sector in terms of loss of incomes and employment, the NCAER study also outlines the need for key policy measures to restore growth in the industry and offers recommendations for its renaissance, as it were.

The decline in tourist activity is largely driven by the near-complete halt in arrival of international tourists that caused the TDGVA to plummet by as much as 61.7 per cent in the first quarter of 2020-21 from the corresponding level of the previous year. However, NCAER finds that the fall in TDGVA resulting from a slump in domestic tourist arrivals has been much more conspicuous and 20-30 percentage points higher than the decline in foreign tourist numbers.

It is thus obvious that contrary to the perception that international tourists bring in all the lucre, it is actually domestic travellers who set the cash registers ringing for the industry. NCAER projects that domestic tourism, through sheer volumes, will primarily drive the recovery in the tourism economy,

enabling it to regain its pre-pandemic level by 2024-25. However, given its huge volume in terms of the number of trips, the total tourism expenditure incurred by domestic tourists is well over 70 per cent higher than the total international tourism expenditure.

It seems that we have come a long way from the genesis of tourism as a global industry in 1937 when the League of Nations, the precursor of the United Nations, defined the term 'tourist' as 'one who goes to another country for pleasure or business or for reasons of health'. The Government of India too accepted the definition, categorising a 'tourist' as 'a foreigner who comes to India for reasons of pleasure or sightseeing or in a representative capacity to attend a conference of an international character'. This was reflected in India's first tourism policy in October 1956 when the Estimates Committee of the Ministry of Tourism and Transport tabled a report before the Lok Sabha Secretariat, highlighting the need to promote India as a global tourist destination as the annual foreign exchange earnings brought into the country by international travellers had gone up from ₹7.1 crores in 1951 to ₹10.1 crores in 1955.

Today, however, the Government's priorities have changed significantly. The current tourism policy, in line with the 'Atmanirbhar' initiative, focuses on primarily promoting domestic tourism to revitalise the sector through measures such as the 'Dekho Apna Desh' campaign after the suspension of international travel due to COVID-19. Prime

Minister Narendra Modi too has urged all Indians to visit at least 15 destinations within India by 2022 to keep the spirits of the industry alive.

Speaking at the recent Travel, Tourism and Hospitality e-Conclave organised by FICCI, the Secretary, Tourism, Government of India, Arvind Singh, revealed plans to promote unknown tourist spots and lesser-known facets of popular tourist destinations in the country. A uniform policy engaging with all States to lift travel restrictions and boost domestic travel while following Covid-related protocols is on the anvil. This would be part of a new national Tourism Policy focusing on promoting sustainable and responsible travel for MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions) tourism as well as for wellness and eco-tourism. Accordingly, massive vaccination drives are reportedly being undertaken in tourist hotspots throughout the country, where travel and hospitality staffers are being treated as frontline workers.

The NCAER study also recommends the introduction of innovative measures in pandemic times to entice potential outbound tourists to visit 'Swadeshi' locales instead, and furthering the concept of 'working holidays' or 'work from home' by travelling to an interesting destination, engendered by lockdowns and office shutdowns. As they say, every adversity nurtures a hidden opportunity. It remains to be seen if India's tourism industry will rise to the occasion by uncovering this opportunity to rejuvenate itself while successfully deflecting the challenges posed by the virus and its mutations.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

THE BSF WILL DO WHAT IT IS MANDATED TO DO. LAW AND ORDER IS A STATE SUBJECT AND IS IN THE DOMAIN OF THE POLICE. —WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER MAMATA BANERJEE



MAMATA BANERJEE'S STANCE HAS SENT DISTURBING SIGNALS AND IS POTENTIALLY ALARMING FOR FEDERAL POLITY AND NATIONAL SECURITY. —WEST BENGAL GOVERNOR JAGDEEP DHANKHAR

The passing away of Gen Rawat is India's shared grief

We are reminded of a distinguished soldier of the nation in whose mind nothing stood higher to the cause of our collective security

A decorated soldier and a strategist par excellence, General Bipin Rawat, the first CDS and a "go-getter" in his words and by his actions, is no more. I did not share camaraderie with Gen Rawat but I had the pleasure of meeting him on a number of occasions; one such being on August 2 this year at his South Block office in New Delhi. Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), which I head as its Chairman, had conceptualized making the world's largest National Flag made of Khadi fabric. Making the flag of a huge dimension — 225 feet long, 150 feet wide and weighing 1400 KG — was not a challenge for KVIC artisans, but displaying it with full honour



VK SAXENA

The writer is Chairman, Khadi & Village Industries Commission. The views expressed are personal.)

and dignity definitely was. I reached out to Gen Rawat seeking his advice and army support to display the flag in all its glory.

Upon reaching his office, I was received by Brig LS Lidder, the Defence Advisor to the CDS who also lost his life by the side of the CDS yesterday, who took me to Gen Rawat. In no time, Brig Lidder impressed me with his deep knowledge and love for Khadi.

The meeting with Gen Rawat started by introducing the concept of the Monumental National Flag, its dimensions and significance in the celebrations of the 75th year of Independence. I gave him a few ideas. Gen Rawat appreciated the ideas and quickly said "You just



prepare the Flag and give it to us; I take the responsibility of displaying the flag across the country with full honour". The sheer hard work of the artisans that had gone into making this flag and its symbolism in the 75th year of Independence was deeply appreciated by Gen Rawat, who instantly offered to become the custo-

dian of the monumental National Flag. Gen Rawat fully understood this flag would play an essential role in instilling the feeling of nationalism in the youths and boosting the morale of the defence forces.

In the same meeting, it was decided that the flag would drape a hilltop in the borderlands of Leh. He also promised to display the flag on Air Force Day, Navy Day and Army Day. Gen Rawat also suggested displaying the flag in Arunachal Pradesh along the Indo-China border and also cruising it all along the Indian coastal stretch using naval ships. KVIC handed over the flag to the Indian Army on September 19, at Mumbai.

In my other meeting with

Gen Rawat, I was surprised to know that in just 15 days, he got examined all my suggestions for displaying the flag and explained to me at length the feasibility of displaying the flag at Signature Bridge in Delhi, Bandra-Worli Sea Link in Mumbai, and flying it over Rajpath. Trials of displaying the Monumental National Flag were conducted in the air as well as on the sea. He knew the significance of this large national asset and exuded unparalleled commitment and dedication to the cause. The flag was airlifted from Mumbai to Leh where it was unveiled on October 2 to commemorate Gandhi Jayanti. The flag was later taken to the Hindon Airbase at Ghaziabad on October 8,

to mark the celebration of Air Force Day.

I requested him to display the flag at the Red Fort in New Delhi on completion of 100 crore vaccinations in the country, which he readily accepted. The next destination was the Western Coast in Mumbai, where the Indian Navy displayed the flag on 4th December to celebrate the Navy Day.

All through this, I was constantly in touch with Gen Rawat over phone and every time I spoke to him, I discovered the depth of his patriotism.

I can say with full authority that without the personal vision and support of Gen Rawat, thousands of people of the country would not have watched their flag com-

mand some coveted national spaces in Delhi, Mumbai and on several other proud monumental locations. The world's largest national flag will continue to fly and drape many more national monuments across the country during this year. And every time we display it to the world, we are reminded of a distinguished servant of the nation in whose mind nothing stood higher to the cause of our collective security.

KVIC joins me in expressing deep condolences on the passing away of General Rawat, his wife and all other defence personnel who lost their lives by his side. We wish peace to a soul that helped the citizens of this nation for four decades to live in peace.

53 die in horror crash of truck smuggling migrants in Mexico

Tuxtla Gutierrez (Mexico): Rescue workers rushing to a highway accident found a horrific scene of death and injury after a freight truck jammed with as many as 200 migrants tipped over and crashed into the base of a steel pedestrian bridge in southern Mexico.

The migrants inside the cargo trailer were flipped, tossed and crushed into a pile that mingled the living and the dead.

By late Thursday, the death toll stood at 53, and authorities



said at least 54 people had been injured.

It was one of the worst single-day death tolls for migrants

in Mexico since the 2010 massacre of 72 migrants by the Zetas drug cartel in the northern state of Tamaulipas.

Volunteer rescuers hauled bodies off the pile by their arms and legs, while some migrants scrambled and limped to extract themselves from the twisted steel sheets of the collapsed container.

One young man, pinned in a heap of unmoving bodies, wriggled to free the lower half of his frame from the weight of the dead piled atop him, his face wrenched into a grimace of life extracting itself from the clutches of death.

PTI

Pak Taliban ends ceasefire with Govt, to resume attack

Islamabad:The banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) will not extend the month-long ceasefire deal negotiated with the Pakistan Government, the militant group has announced, in a major setback to Prime Minister Imran Khan's efforts to secure a peace agreement with the dreaded outfit waging war against the state for decades.

The Pakistani Taliban has been behind many major attacks on Pakistani security forces and civilians over the last 14 years, including the attack on an Army school in Peshawar in 2014 that killed over 150 people, mostly children.

A statement issued by the TTP on Thursday accusing the Pakistan government of failing to honour the decisions, including the release of their fighters.

It gave out details of the six-point agreement reached with the government under the aegis of the "Islamic Emirate of

Afghanistan" (IEA) on October 25, 2021, the Dawn newspaper reported.

The two sides, according to the agreement, had accepted that the IEA would play the role of a mediator and that both sides would form five-member committees each which, under the supervision of the mediator, would discuss the next course of action and demands of each side.

Both sides, it said, had also agreed to observe a month-long ceasefire from November 1 to November 30, 2021, and that the government would release 102 "imprisoned mujahideen" and hand them over to the TTP

through the "IEA and that both sides would issue a joint statement regarding the ceasefire on November 1, 2021", the report said.

According to the statement, the government not only failed to implement the decisions reached between the two sides but on the contrary, the

security forces conducted raids in Dera Ismail Khan, Lakki Marwat, Swat, Bajaur, Swabi and North Waziristan and killed and detained militants.

"Under these circumstances, it is not possible to extend the ceasefire," the TTP said.

Earlier in an audio message, TTP chief Mufti Noor Wali Mahsud announced an end to the ceasefire and asked his fighters to resume attacks past 12 am. The ceasefire had come into effect on November 9, the report added.

In the message, Mufti Noor can be heard as saying that since the TTP has not heard back from the mediators or the government, therefore, past midnight, his fighters reserve the right to resume attacks wherever they were.

The TTP decision to end the ceasefire is a big setback to the government's efforts to secure a peace agreement with the militants waging war against the state for decades.

PTI

UK court overturns denial of US request to extradite Assange

London: A British appellate court has opened the door for Julian Assange to be extradited to the United States by overturning a lower court ruling that found the WikiLeaks founder's mental health was too fragile to withstand the American criminal justice system.

The appellate court ruling handed down Friday is likely to be appealed.

A lower court judge earlier this year refused an American request to extradite Assange to the U.S. To face spying charges over WikiLeaks' publication of secret military documents a decade ago. District Judge Vanessa Baraitser denied extradition on health grounds, saying Assange was likely to kill himself if held under harsh U.S. Prison conditions.

The United States appealed, challenging the notion that Assange's mental health made him too vulnerable to withstand the U.S. Judicial system.

PTI

PUBLIC NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Pushkin Kapoor, Neelam Kapoor, Credit Suisse, Bank Dfg- Gate Building, Dubai, Dubai A/c No:- LBDEL00004878207	Plot No.10, Block D, Village Rangpuri Nangal Dewat, Delhi	01/09/2021 Rs.6,98,04,538/-	11/01/2021
2.	Sunita Sharma, Rajeev Sharma, Rishi Sharma, House No-292 First Floor Block-R Greater Kailash-1, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00004972023	Plot No R-292, 1st Floor Block-R, Greater Kailash Part-1, Delhi,	02/09/2021 Rs. 2,40,04,375/-	27/01/2021
3.	Vinod Kumar, Preeti Singh & Suranti, H-1105 Stellar Jeevan G Noida Extension Surajpur, Uttar Pradesh, Noida A/c No:- LBNOD00004194722	Villa No, Type-A, Ground Floor Mahagun Meadows Block Yorks, Sector-150 Tower Lancashire Street, Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar Uttar Pradesh	02/09/2021 Rs. 2,07,62,559/-	06/05/2021
4.	Vishal Chawla, Pooja Chawla, Pooja Sales C-149, Near Adrsh Public School, Vikaspu, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00003943312	Flat No-149, First Floor, Block C, Vikash Puri, Delhi 110058	30/08/2021 Rs.1,84,40,535/-	11/06/2021
5.	Pankaj Anand, Pooja Anand, Jmj Fashions Pvt Ltd, Fabraw Textiles Pvt Ltd, H No.43 Sector -31-32 Vill Jharsa, Haryana, Gurgaon A/c No:- LBGUR00002470837	Apartment No-J-1202, 12th Floor, Tower J, Oyster Grande, Village Khedi Mazra, Sector 102/102A, Gurgaon Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs. 1,81,06,080/-	30/04/2021
6.	Saqib Khan, Shweta Verma, Idea Cellular Ltd, A 68 Sec 64, Uttar Pradesh, Noida A/c No:- LBFDB00002888181	Flat No- 1103, 11th Floor, Tower-A, Godrej Summit Sec-104, Gurgaon Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs.1,66,52,186/-	06/05/2021
7.	Jyoti Luthra, Rajiv Luthra, H No-31 2nd Floor, Block-BH, Shalimar Bagh East, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00004493010	Property No-31, Second Floor, Block- BH East Shalimar, Bagh, Delhi	30/08/2021 Rs.1,61,59,396/-	11/05/2021
8.	Vijay Sharma, Sushila Sharma, F-24/B Kanchan Janga Apartment Sec- 53 Noida, Noida, Uttar Pradesh A/c No:- LBNOD00003353092	Plot No-45, Block-A, Sector-53, Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar Uttar Pradesh	02/09/2021 Rs. 1,48,18,741/-	30/04/2021
9.	Nikhil, Nimisha Ahuja, Chandra Shekhar, Plot No.1005 Tower-A6, Saviour Green H-11 Crossing Republic, Ghaziabad A/c No:- LBAGN00002958474	Appartment No-1501, 14th Floor Tower-K, Godrej Summit, Sector-104, Gurgaon Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs. 1,60,93,683/-	30/04/2021
10.	Nagender Kasana, Virender Kasana, Kamlesh, Dharam Pal, H.No- 619/ 20/ 11 Devli Village, Delhi A/c No:- LBFDB00004689638	House No-1516, Sector-28, Urban, Estate, Faridabad Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs.1,44,65,502/-	31/05/2021
11.	Avinash Rathi, Davinder Kumar Wadhwa, Varinder Kumar Wadhwa, Davinder Kumar Wadhwa, E 462, G K-2, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00002369978	House No-E462, Greater Kailash II, Delhi 110048	30/08/2021 Rs. 1,49,49,872/-	07/06/2021
12.	Rajbir Singh, Meena, Aquilite Impex Private Limited, H No-A-1784 First Floor Front, Green Felid Colony, Gate No-5 Amar Nagar, Haryana, Faridabad A/c No:- LBFDB0000576082	Plot No- 823, Ground Floor Sector- B, Greenfields, Sarai Khawaja, Faridabad Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs. 1,41,25,012/-	06/05/2021
13.	Rupinder Kaur, Amardeep Singh Chugh, Abm Travels and Tours P Ltd, Balwant Singh Chugh, B-5/805 Sahara Grace, Behind Sahara Mallm G Road, Haryana, Gurgaon. A/c No:- LBDEL00003164146	Flat No B4/ 804, 7th Floor, Sahara Grace, MG Road, Gurgaon Haryana	30/08/2021 Rs. 1,35,96,954/-	11/06/2021
14.	Vishakha Khatrri Rana, Narendar Singh, H. No. 1458A Sector B Pocket 1 Vasant Kunj, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00005124606	Flat No-1458A, Ground Floor, Sfs- Cat-II, Pocket-1 Sector-B, Vasant Kunj, Delhi	02/09/2021 Rs.1,29,75,229/-	06/05/2021
15.	Rupinder Kaur, Amardeep Singh Chugh, Abm Travels and Tours P Ltd, Balwant Singh Chugh, B /5 805 Sector-29, Haryana, Gurgaon. A/c No:- LBDEL00003164145	Flat No B4/804, 7th Floor, Sahara Grace, MG Road, Gurgaon Haryana	30/08/2021 Rs. 1,31,53,409/-	11/06/2021
16.	Amit Sinsinwal, Neelam Sinsinwal, H No. 8 Ground Floor Marvel Heights, Plot No-17 Sector-61, Uttar Pradesh, Noida A/c No:- LBDEL00002406217	Flat No- 1202M, 12th Floor Tower- I, Cloud-9, Plot No- R-C 1/2, Sector- 1, Vaishali, Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh	02/09/2021 Rs. 1,26,99,174/-	06/05/2021
17.	Sandhya Aggarwal, Nirmala Mittal, Amit Mittal, Ishwar Chand, RZ 174 B/16 Tughlakabad Extnsion, Delhi A/c No:- LBFDB00004862225	Plot No-185, Block No- A Villa No- 44, Sector-41- 42 Urban Estate, Green Valley, Faridabad Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs. 1,24,21,105/-	07/06/2021
18.	Anuj Sharma, Sonia Sharma, Altius Auto Solutions Pvt Ltd, M 12 Second Floor West Patel Nagar, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00003618393	Flat No- CGG-174, Tower-G, 17th Floor, Wing-4, Phase-1, Plot No.15, DLF Capital Green Moti Nagar Shivaji Marg, Delhi	02/09/2021 Rs. 1,21,65,240/-	11/06/2021
19.	Rajni Narula, Kalakar Prints, Sumit Narula, Seema Narula, Park Drive 20, Malibu Town Sohna Road, Haryana, Gurgaon A/c No:- LBGUR00004047129	Plot No.20, Park Drive Road, Village Fatehpur, Malibu Town, Gurgaon 122001	02/09/2021 Rs. 1,15,07,457/-	07/06/2021
20.	Prashant Mishra, Devika Sharma, House No- 51 and 52 First Floor, Pocket-6 Sector- 25 Rohini, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00005044172	Flat No-1402, 14th Floor Sun Shine, Helios-Tower-B, Plot No- GH- 005B, Sector-78 Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar 201301	02/09/2021 Rs. 1,04,33,847/-	11/06/2021
21.	Aditya Mehra, Gopal Mehra, 1210/26 Indira Colony Kailash Puri Road, Krishna Ganj Ajmer, Rajasthan, Ajmer A/c No:- LBDEL00005053751	Flat No-F-304, 3rd Floor, Tower-F, Ninex City, Sector-78, Gurgaon Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs. 1,01,73,613/-	07/06/2021
22.	Saurav Kumar, Anjali Sehrawat, B 502, Heritage One, Sector 62, Haryana, Gurgaon A/c No:- LBGUR00003334697	Flat No-K-1706, Tower- K and D 16th Floor, Godrej Summit, Sector-104, Gurgaon Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs. 1,06,08,597/-	30/04/2021
23.	Neeraj Patodiya, Vandana Patodiya, C-191 2nd Floor Anand Vihar, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00001845744	House No:-A-236, Entire 2nd Floor, New Friends Colony, New Delhi	02/09/2021 Rs.1,09,90,195/-	10/06/2021
24.	Anita Yadav, Rakesh Kumar, House No- 260, Sector 10A, Haryana, Gurgaon. A/c No:- LBGUR00003625311	House No-260, Sector-10 A, Urban, Estate, Gurgaon Haryana	30/08/2021 Rs.98,19,714/-	06/05/2021
25.	Rajesh Singh Chauhan, Shivendra Singh Chauhan, Flat No. 09062 Ais Green Paradiso Chi-04, Uttar Pradesh, Noida A/c No:- LBDEL00002713157	D-703, 7th Floor, Tower D, Godrej Summit, Sector-104, Gurgaon	02/09/2021 Rs. 93,41,006/-	31/05/2021
26.	S K Nanda F & B Food Centre, Rama Nanda, Vijay Parkash Nanda, Veena Nanda, Narendra Prakash Nanda, Pratik Nanda, Surinder Prakash Nanda, S K Nanda F & B Food Centre 57 Mayapuri industrial area Phase 1, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00005314811	Ground & 1st floor, Plot No- C-2, Vishal Enclave, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi	27/08/2021 Rs. 88,11,711/-	30/04/2021
27.	Vinod Kumar, Preeti, H-1105 Stellar Jeevan GH 03 Sector- 01, Uttar Pradesh, Noida A/c No:- LBNOD00003101385	Flat No-2621, 26th Floor Ferrara in NXIPL, Mahagun Mezzarria, Plot No GH-01/A Sector-78, Noida Uttar Pradesh	02/09/2021 Rs. 91,69,300/-	06/05/2021
28.	Empiru Entertainment Private Limited, Abhimanyu Boken, Ramesh Arora, Narendar Singh Boken, Sco No.389 390, Near Ifico Metro Station, Haryana, Gurgaon A/c No:- LBGUR00004149915	Plot No.224, Sector 14, Urban, Estate, Gurgaon 122001	02/09/2021 Rs. 87,87,659/-	31/05/2021
29.	Savita Bajaj, Bajaj Holographics India Pvt Ltd, Hemraj Bajaj, Kapil Bajaj, Plot No-14 Hope Apartment Sec 15 Part- 2, Haryana, Gurgaon A/c No:- LBMNJ00003460942	Flat No- Gaa-014, Tower-A, 1st Floor, New Tow Heights, Dlf-II, Sec- 86, Gurgaon	02/09/2021 Rs. 89,27,026/-	31/05/2021
30.	Bipin Joshi, Pradeepti Mehta, 5A 12 Opp Police Station, Tilak Nagar West, Delhi A/c No:- LBGUR00002889353	Flat No.504, Tower-D 5th Floor, Sector-104, Godrej Summit, Gurgaon Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs.90,73,564/-	30/04/2021
31.	Tarun Jain, Shikha Jain, Usha Jain, Av Exports, K 20 First Floor Green Park Extn, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00002357857	Property No-9A, (old) K-20 (New), First Floor, Green Park Extn, New Delhi	02/09/2021 Rs.87,97,007/-	06/05/2021
32.	Anita Yadav, Rakesh Kumar, House No-260, Sector 10A, Haryana, Gurgaon. A/c No:- LBGUR00003625324	House No-260, Sector-10 A, Urban, Estate, Gurgaon Haryana	30/08/2021 Rs.86,31,186/-	06/05/2021
33.	Pranjit Talukdar, Bhaben Talukdar, Mirinalini Rachel, B- 47 D3 Third Floor Gangotri Enclave Alaknanda, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00002263653	Flat No-A-282, 28th Floor, Tower-A Raheja Revanta, Sector- 78, Gurgaon	02/09/2021 Rs. 82,51,138/-	06/05/2021
34.	Ashwani Kumar Sharma, Shweta Sharma, E 2/A E Block East Vindo Nagar New Delhi, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00003142349	Flat No-C-104, 10th Floor, Tower-C, The Peaceful Homes, Sector-70A, Gurgaon	02/09/2021 Rs.80,39,192/-	11/06/2021
35.	S K Nanda F & B Food Centre, Rama Nanda, S K Nanda F & B Food Centre 57 Mayapuri industrial Area Phase 1, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00004713455	Ground & 1st Floor, Plot No- C-2, Vishal Enclave, Rajouri Garden, New Delhi	27/08/2021 Rs. 80,82,933/-	30/04/2021
36.	Atul Kirpal Gupta, Poonam Gupta, GH- 14 Flat No-956, Paschim Vihar, Delhi A/c No:- LBDEL00002458960	Flat No:- B-003, Ground Floor, Aakriti Shantiniketan, Plot No- GH- 01B, Sector- 143 B, Noida	02/09/2021 Rs. 82,93,741/-	07/06/2021
37.	Parveen, Sajjan Arora, 10524 Bagichi Peer Ji Opposite, Metro Pillar 100, Vikrant Nagar Sadar Bazar, Delhi A/c No:- LBNOD00004133251	House Situated at Plot No 38/9, Ground Floor, Sakti, Nagar, Delhi-110007	02/09/2021 Rs. 80,54,669/-	06/05/2021
38.	Vishal Verma, Punita Devi, U 22/76 First Floor Dlf Phase 3, Haryana, Gurgaon A/c No:- LBGUR00004739168	House No- U 22/76, First Floor and Second Floor, Dwelling Unit, Dlf Phase- 3, Gurgaon Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs. 79,04,594/-	07/06/2021
39.	Vijay Singh, Naosad Ali, 7/11 Sector-2 Rajender Nagar, Sahibabad, Uttar Pradesh, Ghaziabad A/c No:- LBNOD00005127509	Plot No-179, First Floor, Abhay Khand-1, Indrapuram, Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh	02/09/2021 Rs. 79,79,193/-	07/06/2021
40.	Anmol Sethi, Sneha Lata Sethi, Tower- 15 Flat No- 703, The Close South Nirva Country, Haryana, Gurgaon A/c No:- LBGUR00002443068	Shop No- C- 3, 308, Third Floor Block C, Nirvana Court Yard South City-II Sec- 50, Gurgaon, Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs. 75,17,012/-	06/03/2021
41.	Neeraj Priyadarshi, Usha Priyadarshi, Xion Progressive Educational Society, D-135 Sushant Lok Dlf Phase-3, Haryana, Gurgaon A/c No:- LBGUR00002251005	Florence Villa- D-135, Sushant Lok, Phase-III, Gurgaon, Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs. 78,53,810/-	07/06/2021
42.	Neeraj Priyadarshi, Usha Priyadarshi, D-135 Sushant Lok Dlf Phase-3, Haryana, Gurgaon A/c No:- LBGUR00002251006	Florence Villa- D-135, Sushant Lok, Phase-III, Gurgaon, Haryana	02/09/2021 Rs.77,65,177/-	07/06/2021
43.	Pravi Kapoor, Kunjita Kapoor, A 58 Gf Flr, Sector 61, Uttar Pradesh, Gautam Buddha Nagar A/c No:- LBNOD00002445736	Flat No- AM- K-904, 9th Floor Tower-K, Ajnara Ambrosia Gh-01, Sector-118 Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar 201301	02/09/2021 Rs. 72,00,137/-	11/06/2021
44.	Iqbal Haider, Sayed Saleem Haider Naqvi, Accurate Engineering Works, 3/161 Rajendra Nagar Sector-2 Sahibabad, Uttar Pradesh, Ghaziabad. A/c No:- LBDEL00004187498	House No- 3/161, Block-3, Sector-2, Rajender Nagar, Ghaziabad, UP	30/08/2021 Rs. 77,08,571/-	06/05/2021
45.	Vishal Chawla, Pooja Chawla, Pooja Sales C-149, Near Adrsh Public School, Vikaspu, Delhi. A/c No:- LBDEL00005048478	Flat No-149, First Floor, Block C, Vikash Puri, Delhi 110058	30/08/2021 Rs.65,43,882/-	11/06/2021

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : December 10, 2021
Place: Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

IMPORTANT NOTICE

It is notified for the information of all concerned that Railways have decided to re-number the following Superfast Express Train as under:-

Train Name	Existing Train Number	Revised New Train Number	With Effect From
Jodhpur Jn - Delhi Jn Superfast Express	12461	22996	01.04.2022
Delhi Jn - Jodhpur Jn Superfast Express	12462	22995	01.04.2022

REST OF INFORMATION WILL HOLD GOOD
Note: All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19 may please be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

For any kind of information such as timings, composition and stoppages enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

Visit RailMadad Website :- www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in Download RailMadad app.

RailMadad Helpline No. 139

Please join us on 75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Your Convenience - Our Concern
Visit us at : www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Punjab State Power Corporation Limited

(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001)
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in
Mobile No. 96461-07205 E-mail: se-hq-ggsstpr-ropar@pspcl.in

E-Tender Enq. No. 350/P-3/EMPW-11896 dated 06-12-2021
Dy. Chief Engineer/ Headquarter (Procurement Cell-3) GGSSTP, Roopnagar invites E-Tender ID No. 2021_POWER_78512_1 for the work of Breakdown/ preventive mtic. of ID/ FDI/PAJ Seal Air Fans, ESPs, Ducting, Dampers and Gates including overhauling of PA, SA fans of 4x210 MW BHEL make units at GGSSTP, Ropar. For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to: <https://leproc.punjab.gov.in> from 07-12-2021 from 05.00 PM onwards.

Note:- Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at <https://leproc.punjab.gov.in>

RO 76155/12/57/3021/11093 RTP-41/21

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Corrigendum

Sub: Corrigendum for "Leasing of SLR parcel space".
Ref: (i) Tender published date: 24.11.2021 and Tender opening date: 16.12.2021.
(ii) Tender published date: 30.11.2021 and Tender opening date: 23.12.2021.

It is to inform all concerned, that in the NIT for leasing of SLR parcel space which was published on 24.11.2021 in various English & Hindi newspapers, scheduled to be opened on 16.12.2021 through IREPS portal i.e. www.ireps.gov.in "FSLR compartment of train no.12826 Ex. ANVT to RNC (item no 22 of NIT) is withdrawn due to administrative reasons".

Also, another NIT for leasing of SLR parcel space which was published on 30.11.2021 in various English & Hindi newspapers, scheduled to be opened on 23.12.2021 through IREPS portal i.e. www.ireps.gov.in "F-I & F-II compartments of train no.12618 Ex. NZM to ERS (item no 28 & 29 of NIT) are withdrawn due to administrative reasons".

Other Information of both NITs shall remain unchanged. 2896/21

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Office of the Superintending Engineer
3rd Circle, Public Works Department, Pithoragarh

Letter No. : 7805/ 962 C-03/2021 Dated : 09/12/2021

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (E-Tendering)

Short Term E-Tender Notice

The Superintending Engineer 3rd Circle, Public Works Department Pithoragarh invites tender through E-Tendering (**Two Bid System**) on behalf of Hon'ble Governor of Uttarakhand for following works. All other information will be available from date 14-12-2021 & onward on website <http://www.uktenders.gov.in>

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Earnest Money (in Lac)	Cost of Tender (in Rs.)	Validity of Tender	Period of Completion	Contractor's Category of Registration
1	Improvement and Hotmix work of Dangoli-Sailani-Darimkhet-Dharamghar-kotemanya-Pankhu-Thal Satsiling Motor road (S. H. - 60) in km 112.00 to 114.00 in Vidhan Sabha Constituency, Gangolihat Dist- Pithoragarh under State Sector	5.74	5000.00 + 18% GST	120 Days	12 Month	Category 'A' and Above for Road works in State Govt./ Govt. of India / Govt. Undertaking
2	Improvement and Hotmix work of Dangoli-Sailani-Darimkhet-Dharamghar-kotemanya-Pankhu-Thal Satsiling Motor road (S. H. - 60) in km 115.00 to 117.00 in Vidhan Sabha Constituency, Gangolihat Dist- Pithoragarh under State Sector	5.70	5000.00 + 18% GST	120 Days	12 Month	Category 'A' and Above for Road works in State Govt./ Govt. of India / Govt. Undertaking

Public Notice

This is to inform general public that Mrs. Kamala Devi is owner of Property bearing No. N-198 area measuring 50 sq. yds. out of Khassra No. 212/41, situated at Village Khyala Delhi State Delhi, Gali No. 9, Vishnu Garden, Block-N, New Delhi vide Sale Deed dated 23/06/2021, executed by Mrs. Kamala Devi as GPA of Mrs. Jarna Devdani Now, Mrs. Kamala Devi is intending to sell the above said property/Floor to Mr. Razi Khan. Further Mr. Razi Khan is envisaging the above said property/floor with Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd. & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 07 days of this publication to Mr. Muneesh Dhawan/ Mr. Sudhir Jain/ Mr. Razi Khan is envisaging the above said property/floor with Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd. & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 07 days of this publication to Mr. Muneesh Dhawan/ Mr. Sudhir Jain/ Mr. Razi Khan is envisaging the above said property/floor with Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd. & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 07 days of this publication to Mr. Muneesh Dhawan/ Mr. Sudhir Jain/ Mr. Razi Khan is envisaging the above said property/floor with Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd. & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 07 days of this publication to Mr. Muneesh Dhawan/ Mr. Sudhir Jain/ Mr. Razi Khan is envisaging the above said property/floor with Fullerton India Home Finance Co. Ltd. & in case anyone has any objection, the same

IIP growth remains low for 2nd month in a row

New Delhi: India's industrial production growth remained subdued for the second straight month and expanded by 3.2 per cent in October, mainly due to the waning low base effect while mining, power and manufacturing sectors performed well.

The manufacturing sector, which constitutes 77.63 per cent of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), grew two per cent in October, according to data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) on Friday.

The mining sector output rose 11.4 per cent in October, while power generation increased 3.1 per cent.

The factory output record-

ed double-digit growth in the four months from May to August this year. Then it slipped to 3.3 per cent in September this year and further to 3.2 per cent, mainly due to waning low base effect.

In October 2021, the IIP stood at 133.7 points compared to 129.6 points in the same month last year. The index stood at 124 points in October 2019, as per the NSO data.

Thus, the data showed waning of the low base effect. The IIP growth witnessed double-digit growth from May onwards this year, mainly due to the lower base effect.

The IIP had grown by 4.5 per cent in October 2020.

During April-October this

year, the IIP grew 20 per cent against a 17.3 per cent contraction in the same period last year.

The data showed that industrial production recovered in September 2020 and surpassed the pre-pandemic level of September 2019. The IIP had grown by one per cent in September 2020.

Industrial production plunged 18.7 per cent in March last year following the COVID outbreak and remained in the negative zone till August 2020.

With the resumption of economic activities, factory output rose 1 per cent in September 2020 and grew 4.5 per cent in October. **PTI**

200 notices issued to e-tailers during Jan-Nov for violation of ‘country of origin’ norm: Centre

New Delhi: The Government has issued 200 notices to e-commerce players during the January-November period this year for violations of declaration of the "country of origin", Parliament was informed on Friday.

Minister of State for Consumer Affairs Minister Ashwini Kumar Choubey, in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha, said around 2,116 cases have been booked for violations related to the declaration, including the Country of Origin, by the state governments during this year.

"For violations of declaration of the country of origin by e-commerce companies, 200 notices during the period of January 1 to November 30, 2021, have been issued by the

Legal Metrology Division, Department of Consumer Affairs," the Minister said.

About ₹38,70,000 in the form of compounding fees has been realised from e-commerce companies, he said.

The minister informed the Upper House that the Government has amended the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules 2011 wherein as per Rule 6(1)(aa) the name of the country of origin or manufacture or assembly in case of imported products should be mentioned on the package.

This has been done to facilitate the consumer in taking an informed and conscious decision based on the country of origin of the product, he said. **PTI**

Markets end flat as bulls take a breather; log weekly gains

Mumbai: Equity benchmarks snapped their three-session winning run to close modestly lower on Friday as investors stayed on the sidelines ahead of the release of key macroeconomic data.

A depreciating rupee and subdued trend in global markets also weighed on sentiment. After a choppy session, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 20.46 points or 0.03 per cent lower at 58,786.67. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty slipped 5.55 points or 0.03 per cent to 17,511.30.

Titans were the top laggard in the Sensex pack, shedding 1.39 per cent, followed by HDFC, Axis Bank, Kotak Bank, HCL Tech and Tech Mahindra.

On the other hand, Asian Paints, SBI, M&M, TCS, Bajaj Finserv and ICICI Bank were

among the winners, spurring as much as 3.25 per cent.

According to market experts, participants were in

wait-and-watch mode ahead of industrial production data domestically, as well as US inflation numbers. **PTI**

Rupee tumbles 18 paise to 75.78 against USD on forex outflows

Mumbai: The rupee dropped by 18 paise to an over 16-month low of 75.78 against the US dollar on Friday amid consistent foreign fund outflows and growing concerns about inflation.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened lower at 75.65 a dollar and later tanked to the day's low of 75.85 in line with a lacklustre trend in equity markets.

Gold gains ₹61; silver declines ₹ 615

New Delhi: Gold prices in the national capital on Friday gained ₹ 61 to ₹47,013 per 10 gram amid rupee depreciation, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had settled at Rs 46,952 per 10 gram.

Silver, however, declined by ₹615 to ₹59,273 per kilogram from ₹59,888 per kilogram in the previous trade.

The Indian rupee declined by 18 paise to close at 75.78 on Friday.

No impact of omicron variant so far on property market: CREDAI

New Delhi: Realtors body CREDAI on Friday said that there has been no impact of the new Omicron variant on the property market so far and growth in sales volumes is likely to continue.

"There has been no significant impact of the new Omicron variant on India's realty market and the growth momentum post festive sales is expected to continue," CREDAI said in a statement.

As many as 25 cases of Omicron variant of Covid-19

have been reported so far in India.

For the time being, CREDAI said it is not expecting any disruption in project construction pace. The deliveries of projects will also remain unaffected unless there is a significant rise in the infections in the months to come.

Creдай President Harsh Vardhan Patodia said: "Developers have learnt from the previous two waves of the pandemic and are fully prepared to manage any disruption pertaining to supply chain and labour supply to a large extent." **PTI**

RBI grants approval to LIC to up stake in IndusInd Bank to nearly 10%

New Delhi: Private bank IndusInd Bank on Friday said the RBI has given approval to Life Insurance Corporation to increase its stake in the bank to nearly 10 per cent.

The bank has received an intimation from the RBI on December 9, 2021, that it has granted its approval to LIC, a shareholder of the bank, to acquire up to 9.99 per cent of the total issued and paid-up capital of the bank, the bank said in a regulatory filing on stock exchanges.

The state-run insurer holds 4.95 per cent of the total issued and paid-up capital of the bank.

The RBI approval is subject to compliance with the direction on 'Prior Approval for Acquisition of Shares and Voting Private Sector Banks' as well as regulations of the SEBI and any guidelines or regulations. **PTI**

US consumer prices soared 6.8% in past year, most since 1982

Washington: Prices for US consumers jumped 6.8% in November compared with a year earlier as surging costs for food, energy, housing and other items left Americans enduring their highest annual inflation rate since 1982.

The Labor Department also reported Friday that from October to November, prices jumped 0.8%. Inflation has been intensifying pressure on consumers, especially lower-income households and particularly for everyday necessities.

It has also negated the higher wages many workers have received, complicated the Federal Reserve's plans to reduce its aid for the economy and coincided with flagging

public support for President Joe Biden.

Fuelling the inflation has been a mix of factors resulting from the swift rebound from the pandemic recession: A flood of government stimulus, ultra-low rates engineered by the Fed and supply shortages at factories in the US and abroad.

Manufacturers have been slowed by heavier-than-expected customer demand, Covid-related shutdowns and overwhelmed ports and freight yards.

Employers, struggling with worker shortages, have also been raising pay, and many of them have boosted prices to offset their higher labour costs, thereby adding to inflation. **PTI**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Known to all that my client Mohit is purchasing the property i.e. plot area measuring 50 sq. yds., khasra no. 206/7min., village Akbarpur, Bahrampur, Loni, Ghaziabad from Bhule and mortgaging the same with DMI Housing Finance Pvt. Ltd. Registry of this plot is being done directly from Khatooni, and Bhule is the owner of subject property by virtue of Bhumidar right & his Name is reflected in revenue record along with other co-sharer i.e. Dupty singh, Bablu Yadav, Rohtas, Bati, Kiran Pal, Amber Singh, and Bhule & Bhule is selling the Property without partition with other co-sharer. If any person having any claim, right in said property then he may contact and handover the same and apprise his claim to undersigned within 8 days of this publication.

AD REM LEGAL SOLUTION
Ch. No. 760, Dwaika Court Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75
M:-9899013918

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that My Client Mr. Nishant Sharma R/o Villa No. 91 Ground Floor, Block-3, Eros Garden, Surajkund Road, Faridabad-121049 has disowned his father Sh. Yograj Sharma, S/o Rudermani Sharma, R/o Villa No. 91 Ground Floor, Block-3, Eros Garden, Surajkund Road, Faridabad-121049 from all his movable/ immovable properties/assets and has severed all his relations both legal and social with the same. Any person doing any kind of dealing with Sh. Yograj Sharma shall be doing so at her/his own risk and that my client shall not be responsible for the same.

Authorised Officer:
Mrs. Nareesh Batra
MOB:8930507166

(Advocate Bhawani) E-301, East of Kaishlsh ND-65

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that My Client Mr. Neeraj Sharma R/o Villa No. 91 Ground Floor, Block-3, Eros Garden, Surajkund Road, Faridabad-121049 has disowned his father Sh. Yograj Sharma, S/o Rudermani Sharma, R/o Villa No. 91 Ground Floor, Block-3, Eros Garden, Surajkund Road, Faridabad-121049 from all his movable/ immovable properties/assets and has severed all his relations both legal and social with the same. Any person doing any kind of dealing with Sh. Yograj Sharma shall be doing so at her/his own risk and that my client shall not be responsible for the same.

Authorised Officer:
Mrs. Nareesh Batra
MOB:8930507166

(Advocate Bhawani) E-301, East of Kaishlsh ND-65

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that My Client Mrs. Veena Sharma R/o Villa No. 91 Ground Floor, Block-3, Eros Garden, Surajkund Road, Faridabad-121049 has disowned her husband Sh. Yograj Sharma, S/o Rudermani Sharma, R/o Villa No. 91 Ground Floor, Block-3, Eros Garden, Surajkund Road, Faridabad-121049 from all her movable/ immovable properties/assets and has severed all her relations both legal and social with the same. Any person doing any kind of dealing with Sh. Yograj Sharma shall be doing so at her/his own risk and that my client shall not be responsible for the same.

Authorised Officer:
Mrs. Nareesh Batra
MOB:8930507166

(Advocate Bhawani) E-301, East of Kaishlsh ND-65

PARADIP PORT TRUST

e-TCN No. EM/IOHP-43/2021

Name of the work : **“Repair/ Restoration of existing Dust control system in IOHP”** Estimated cost: **Rs. 2,39,24,853/- excluding GST**. Last date & time of submission of bid: **27.12.2021 upto 18.00 Hrs**. Refer our Website for details : **https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app**.

Executive Engineer(Mech.)
Iron Ore Handling Plant
PPT/PR/128/21-22, DL 10/12/2021

PUBLIC NOTICE

I /M/S ALPS PRINTERS through its Partners **Sh. Sandeep Sirpal** son of Late Sh. J.K. Sirpal, R/o H.No. B-75 B, Near H.D.F.C Bank, Kalkaji, New Delhi and **Sh. Puneet Sirpal** son of Late Sh. R.K. Sirpal R/o H.No. B-76 B, Kalkaji, New Delhi from lease hold to free hold in DDA, That my original allotment letter, possession letter, site possession slip, Perpetual Lease Deed and NOC water and electricity etc. in respect of Shed No.C-30, Okhla Industrial Area, Ph-I, N.Delhi has been lost or misplaced by me and is not traceable inspite of my best efforts. I have lodge a FIR in Police Station Crime Branch, New Delhi vide L.R. No. 549078/2021 dated 06.08.2021. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write /contact with above named person at above address within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice or personally inform or write to Director (CE) or Dy. Director (CE), Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi.

सेन्ट्रल बैंक ऑफ़ इंडिया
Central Bank of India

1911 से सेन्ट्रल आपके लिए CENTRAL TO YOU SINCE 1911

Regional Office: JAWAHAR MARKET, MODEL TOWN, NEAR D-PARK, ROHTAK-124001 (HARYANA)

E-Auction Sale Notice

E-Auction Sale Notice of Immovable Assets under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorized Officer of Central Bank of India, will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is What is" and "Whatever there is" basis on date 28.12.2021, for recovery of dues to the Central Bank of India from below mentioned Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s). Reserve Price & Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and other details are mentioned below.

Branch	Name of the Borrower/Guarantor	Details of Property	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount of Notice	Reserve Price EMD
VAKMI Bahadurgarh	Smt. Chandewati Yadav W/o Sh. Lalji Yadav Residential Property (House) bearing No. 868/18	74/3/35 situated in colony Rajender Singh Lakra Marg Mundka Extn. Village Mundka Delhi, as per registered Sale Deed no. 15132 dated 15.10.2003 registered with Sub Registrar Sub Div-II Delhi West Distt. Delhi. Bounded as: East: Others Plot, West: Others Plot, North: Others Plot, South: Road	11.12.2019/ Rs. 27,79,320/- as on date of demand notice + intt. & Charges	Bid Increase Amt. 37.12 Lakh 3.72 Lakh 0.10 Lakh

Authorised Officer:
Mrs. Nareesh Batra
MOB:8930507166

Last Date & Time of submission of EMD and Documents (Online) on or before 28.12.2021 up to 11.00 A.M. Date and Time of e-Auction: 28.12.2021 from 12.00 Noon to 05:00 P.M. with Auto Extension of 10 minutes.

Bidder will register on website <https://www.msfccommerce.com> and upload KYC documents and after verification of KYC documents by the service provider, EMD to be deposited in Global EMD wallet through NEFT/RTGS/transfer (after generation of challan from <https://www.msfccommerce.com>). The auction will be conducted through the Bank's approved service provider "<https://www.msfccommerce.com>"

For detailed terms and conditions please refer to the link provided in www.centralbankofindia.co.in

Date: 10/12/2021
Place: Rohtak

AUTHORISED OFFICER
CENTRAL BANK OF INDIA

HDB FINANCIAL SERVICES LIMITED

Ground Floor, Zenith House, Keshavrao Khadye Marg, Mahalaxmi, Mumbai - 400034 Tel No.: +91 22 49116300

FINAL AUCTION CUM SALE NOTICE FOR GOLD ORNAMENTS

The borrower(s) (whose details are provided in the table herein below), in particular, and the public, in general, are hereby informed that the below mentioned accounts are overdue, and the borrowers/account holders have not responded /complied with the communication, and notice sent by HDB Financial Services Limited (the "Company") requesting the borrower to clear his/her/their dues as per the documents in respect of the loan mentioned loan signed/accepted by the borrower(s) (such documents, collectively "loan agreement") and therefore defaulted in terms thereof. The Company has in exercise of its rights as a pledgee, decided to enforce the pledge and therefore hold a public auction of the gold ornaments pledged to the company as security for the loan for the purpose of selling the same and realizing/recovering the dues owned by the borrower(s) to the company. The auction will be conducted on **16-12-2021** at the below mentioned local branch of HDB Financial Services Limited from 11.00 am onwards on the date and branches mentioned in the below table:-

S. No.	Loan No.	Customer Name	Date Of Loan	Overdue Amount Rs.	Branch Name
1	9860509	Waseem Akhtar	03/12/2019	6971.78	Delhi- Bhajanpura
2	9446929	Radhey Singh	30/10/2019	9492	Delhi- Bhajanpura
3	13084796	Irshad Ali	07/11/2020	22089	Delhi- Bhajanpura
4	13697100	Bharat Bhoochan	30/12/2020	39186.32	Delhi- Bhajanpura
5	13730007	Mohd Mubarak	30/12/2020	65379	Delhi- Bhajanpura
6	4969310	Bhav Singh	31/07/2018	25333.92	Delhi- Bhajanpura
7	5032035	Mehboob Ali	13/08/2018	17570.03	Delhi- Bhajanpura
8	6170823	Jitendra J	24/12/2018	19288	Delhi- Bhajanpura
9	8708742	Ganesh Singh	31/08/2019	22196.62	Delhi- Bhajanpura
10	12258142	Jyoti Kumari	25/08/2020	12018	Delhi Ncr - Burari
11	13842669	Kumher Singh	11/01/2021	12224	Delhi Shahdara
12	10062460	Mohd Aslam	20/12/2019	54893.84	Delhi Shahdara
13	8940265	Mohd Aslam	24/09/2019	28333.01	Delhi Shahdara
14	11065638	Krishan Kumar	29/02/2020	472096.93	Delhi Uttam Nagar
15	133056261	Irfan Khan	09/12/2020	12500	Delhi-Adarsh Nagar
16	5372440	Ashish Kumar	26/09/2018	12368	Delhi-Adarsh Nagar
17	12208962	Ajay Kumar Sagar	20/08/2020	28815	Delhi-Anand Parbat
18	9657538	Hardyal H	20/11/2019	36094.08	Delhi-Anand Parbat
19	9759765	Hardyal H	23/11/2019	58339.55	Delhi-Anand Parbat
20	12071012	Alok Kumar Mishra	07/08/2020	36240	Delhi-Badarpur
21	4756047	Digamber Gupta	01/07/2018	27126	Delhi-Badarpur
22	12471571	Ravindra Tomar	14/09/2020	4460	Delhi-Chandni Chowk
23	10718324	Mohammad Yameen	29/01/2020	14528.71	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
24	10500104	Pramod Kumar	18/01/2020	7072.77	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
25	10500314	Pramod Kumar	18/01/2020	5734.26	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
26	11898431	Kiran Pal	17/07/2020	59041	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
27	12536358	Prince Srivastav	19/09/2020	66177	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
28	8772912	Iqar Khan	06/09/2019	23632	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
29	6832452	Aslam Istiyak	07/03/2019	21788.62	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
30	6132355	Farha Naz	18/12/2018	19057.93	Delhi-Dilshad Garden
31	13433179	Poonam Sharma	04/12/2020	40648	Delhi-Hari Nagar
32	12478621	Manish Jain	16/09/2020	28224	Delhi-Jagatpuri
33	12818190	Pyare Lal	16/10/2020	2991	Delhi-Jagatpuri
34	12635838	Manoj Laxminarayan	29/09/2020	20536	Delhi-Jagatpuri
35	14149982	Latita Bansal	04/02/2021	5178	Delhi-Jagatpuri
36	5465600	Manoj Kumar	09/10/2018	18322.88	Delhi-Jagatpuri
37	12042901	Alok Nath	04/08/2020	27184	Delhi-Kailash Nagar
38	13569848	Varun Kumar Jain	16/12/2020	39360	Delhi-Kailash Nagar

The auction shall be conducted on an "AS IS WHERE" and "AS IS WHAT IT" basis and the Company is not making and shall not make any representation or warranties as regards the quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments. It shall be the sole and absolute responsibility of the potential purchaser to verify, examine and satisfy themselves about the quality, purity, caratage, weight or valuation of the said gold ornaments prior to placing their bid and for such purpose it shall be open to potential purchasers to examine, at their sole cost and expense, and at the address set out herein above, the gold ornaments whether with or without expert advice 45 minutes prior to the time stipulated for the conduct of the auction. All the bid shall be subjected to such minimum reserve price as the company may deem fit to fix in this regards. The auction process and sale (if any) pursuant to such auction shall be subjected to such further terms and condition as the company may at sole discretion deem fit to impose.

If the borrower(s) mentioned above pays the amount due to the Company in terms of the loan agreement in his individual loan account in full before the auction as mentioned above, the pledged ornaments securing the said loan may be withdrawn from the said auction without further notice. Please note that it is the absolute discretionary power of the undersigned authorized officer of the company, either to postpone or to cancel the auction proceeding without prior notice and without assigning any reason thereof and to reject any or all the bids or offer without assigning any reason for the same.

Place : DELHI
Date : 11-12-2021

Authorised Officer
(HDB Financial Services Ltd)

ICICI Bank

Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Dinesh Arora, Chetna Arora, 618, Block-GH 5 And 7, Paschim Vihar, Delhi. A/c No:-LBDEL00005332891	Flat No- 182 1st Floor, Lig Dda Pkt Gh 5 And 7, Paschim Vihar Delhi 110087	08/10/2021 Rs.1,44,368/-	11-05-2021
2.	Deepak Baweja, Poonam, Ward No-9 Anta Colony, Safidon Jind, Jind, Haryana. A/c No:-LBDEL00005335489	Khewat No-1760 Khata No-2045 Khasra No-n76 Killa No-29, Shiv Colony Safidon Jind Haryana	23/09/2021 Rs. 1,39,818/-	06-04-2021
3.	Abhishek Wadhwa, Satya Wadhwa, BW-85 B SFS Flat Shalimar Bagh, Delhi. A/c No:-LBDEL00005335844	Flat No-85B 1st Floor, DDA SFS Cat-III Block-BW, Shalimar Bagh Delhi	23/09/2021 Rs.5,04,301/-	06-04-2021
4.	P Amith Kumar, Parmanand Yadav, E 24 Shivlok Apartments, Plot No 6 Sector 6 Dwarka, Delhi. A/c No:-LBDEL00005337409	Flat No-E-24 Fourth Floor Shiv Lok CGHS Ltd, Plot No -06 Sector-06 Dwarka	22/09/2021 Rs. 5,52,377/-	08-05-2021
5.	Vicky, Manju Gandhi, House No 792, Ground Floor, Sec 9A, Gurgaon, Haryana. A/c No:-LBDEL00005438802	Property No-792 Basement And Ground Floor Sector-9A Urban Estate Gurgaon Haryana	22/09/2021 Rs.9,31,448/-	07-06-2021
6.	Sunder Singh, Sunil Kumar, Plot No-380, 1st Floorgate No-1, Sector-15A, Haryana, Faridabad. A/c No:-LBFD00005200019	House No-772, Sector-15A Faridabad Haryana	04/10/2021 Rs. 93,49,890/-	05-07-2021
7.	Rahul Gupta, Dinesh Kumar Gupta, E 28 Beta 1 Gr Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, Noida, Uttar Pradesh. A/c No:-LBGHZ00004308675	Flat No-30, Plot No C06, Delta 1, Kaveri City Center Greater Noida Uttar Pradesh	22/09/2021 Rs.35,86,974/-	06-05-2021
8.	Manoj Kumar, Anshul Sharma, Flat No B607, Tower-B Ajanra Homes, Sector 16-B, Noida, Uttar Pradesh. A/c No:-LBGHZ00004861411	Unit No B-607, Tower-B 7th Floor Ajanra Homes Plot No GH 03 Sector 16 B Noida Uttar Pradesh	23/09/2021 Rs. 15,53,111/-	07-06-2021
9.	Jai Prakash Chauhan, Sutapa Chauhan, Kambojs Hospitality Pvt Ltd, Sears-1602 Omaxe, Twin Towers, Noida. A/c No:-LBGHZ00004959349	Unit No 1602, 16th Floor Tower Sears Omaxe Twin Towers Plot No F 21 Sector 50 Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar	22/09/2021 Rs. 65,64,836/-	30-04-2021
10.	Jai Prakash Chauhan, Rohtash Chauhan, Sears -1602, Omaxe Twin Towers, Sec-50, Noida. A/c No:-LBGHZ00004959353	Plot No 3, Block- CH Sector 116 Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar	22/09/2021 Rs. 56,91,051.36/-	30-04-2021
11.	Jai			

TRAVELBUG



JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF EARTH

AMBICA GULATI discovers a whole new world of stalactite, stalagmite and centuries past as she goes caving in Meghalaya



Thud, thud, thud... My heart was beating so fast. I thought it would burst out of my chest. The forest was silent while the breeze was whistling through the trees though not a bird was in sight. The dry leaves rustled as I stepped on them, treading slowly to avoid loose rocks. Every few metres, there was a short climb and my heart would lurch into my mouth. I wasn't fit for this, I told my guide, who was patiently guiding me back to the road. I was the last person left in the forest. There was no way out except the path we were on — "no short cut," he said. And he was the only human in sight. He couldn't jump, skip and run over the rocks and the narrow forest path because I was struggling with my breath.

I was wearing special rubber boots because we were coming back after exploring the fabulous Krem Krung Krang Muhabon (krem means cave) near the village of Lakadong. Besides the adventure, it housed evidence of all the climatic changes Earth had gone through thousands of years. But right now, my focus was on reaching the road because I needed water.

Everything was a novelty—the forest walk, the green trees, the silence, the free spirit and the beautiful sky. The special suit was now tied around my neck. It was too hot to walk in the suit that had a strong resemblance to what the astronauts wore (or in the present context the hazmat suit) — guarding against branches, rocks and tiny particles and insects who didn't like humans. It was not a good idea to leave without a water bottle, I said aloud. I took a few deep breaths every few metres.

It had been close to seven hours since I had drunk even a sip. I didn't have a watch with me, but the movement of the sun showed that day would soon be engulfed by night in a couple of hours. I would soon hit the road but, for Earth, light and darkness didn't matter. Despite the slow progress



and the seemingly long route, I was elated. With every deep breath, I patted myself for ticking off caving from my wish list. After all, this trip was thanks to the first-of-its-kind Meghalayan Age 2020 festival, curated by E-factor Entertainment under the aegis of Meghalaya Tourism.

THE UNDERWORLD

Geologists' measure geologic time scale, defined by Wikipedia as "a system of chronological dating that relates geological strata (stratigraphy) to time. It is used by geologists, paleontologist, and other Earth scientists to describe the timing and relationships of events that have occurred during Earth's history".

Just to give a bigger picture, we are in the geological epoch called the Holocene, which began about 11,650 years ago. This is divided into three parts—beginning with Greenlandian, going to Northgrippian and then comes the present Meghalayan Age, which can be traced to the last 4,200 years. The evidence of this time scale lies in the caves of Meghalaya. Hence, the name.

Going through the dummies guides on the web, I read that this definition was given in 2018 by the International Commission on Stratigraphy (ICS), a subcommittee of the International Union of Geographic Sciences. This geologic time scale is based on the study of chemical signa-



tures in stalagmite in the Meghalayan caves. As per data collected by experts, a mega drought, lasting almost two decades, caused the end of global societies close to 4,200 years back.

Did I know this when I was crawling over loose rocks of Krem Krung Krang Muhabon? No! I didn't even realise that stalagmite and stalactite were giving us a clue about the planet's history and the events that it had seen. I just knew it was an adventure for a curious traveller. And I knew that this treasure needed to be preserved for everyone who loved Nature.

Cavers love this abode of the clouds. For obvious reasons — it is a treasure trove of caves that lie unexplored. On the website, indiancaving.org.uk, I found a wealth of information about life in the caves, the species that thrive here and the rivers that flow through it. And I kept thinking, I should have explored Krem Krung Krang Muhabon at a slower pace with a scientist. Maybe the caves will call again but till then these few hours made me feel like a child with a trophy of being part of this planet.

All through the exploration, the guide instructed us not to touch anything, as the formations would stop growing. Nature is delicate and fragile. While I had seen these formations in documentaries, seeing them in person makes for an absolutely different, almost surreal, experience. Just for

the record, a stalagmite means dripping and this rock formation rises from the floor due to the accumulation of material deposited from ceiling drippings. I gazed studiously at the white crown near my foot. It had been a hero's journey, going down through a non-existent path into the dark to see these magnificent things. I was dressed in the suit, wore rubber boots so that I wouldn't slip and there was a small light on my helmet. Yes, cavers need to be ready for this.

It had taken me precisely five minutes to reach the bottom but for the guide it was a matter of few seconds. I groped for ways to crawl down. He later told me this was a continuation of this. During this, the team found more new caves and mapped close to 15.3 km of new cave passage. While we had seen just a tiny bit of the cave with time being short and the group being large, Krem Muhabon's exploration had revealed the cave's length to be close to 1,248 metres.

Cavers have been exploring these in Meghalaya for almost 23 years. There are said to be over 1,580 caves in the state and 970 have been fully or partially explored. These cave systems comprise river-cave passages mixed with massive and richly-decorated relics along with magnificent clean-washed shafts. Only serious cavers can go into some as there are vertical drops and waist-deep water, besides bats.

EXPEDITION 2015

I was part of a big group for this caving experience and the guides were natives, well-versed with the state's awesome past and adept at living with Nature. What looked like uncharted, unmapped, secret spaces to me, were actually explored spaces.

In February 2015, an expedition, 'Caving in the Abode of the Clouds', had been organised to study the ancient landscapes. This comprised 32 cavers from Austria, Poland, Romania, Netherlands, Switzerland, US, UK and members of the Meghalaya Adventurers' Association. Accompanying them were five scientists from India, Switzerland and the UK, who conducted bio-speleological studies of the area. In 2014 also, Jaintia Hills had been explored and 2015 was a continuation of this. During this, the team found more new caves and mapped close to 15.3 km of new cave passage. While we had seen just a tiny bit of the cave with time being short and the group being large, Krem Muhabon's exploration had revealed the cave's length to be close to 1,248 metres.

Cavers have been exploring these in Meghalaya for almost 23 years. There are said to be over 1,580 caves in the state and 970 have been fully or partially explored. These cave systems comprise river-cave passages mixed with massive and richly-decorated relics along with magnificent clean-washed shafts. Only serious cavers can go into some as there are vertical drops and waist-deep water, besides bats.

My concept of caving changed in a matter of hours. These were not mere rocks but living beings that thrived when undisturbed. It wasn't just another adventure activity; it was a meeting with Mother Earth. And I came back with a promise to train myself for these exhilarating territories.

TOTAL RECALL

In this abode of clouds, rocks and stones are synonymous with time. Meghalaya does mean abode of clouds in Sanskrit. From caves to monoliths, Meghalayan Age 2020 festival was an eye opener of sorts.

Meghalaya was carved out of the erstwhile state of Assam in January 1972. It is the wettest region in the country with 70 per cent forest cover. All the modern amenities are available but the smaller, quieter parts still run on cash and word of mouth. The three main regions are Khasi, Garo and Jaintia hills. We glamped it out at Jaintia Hills for this cultural extravaganza comprising dance performances, musical nights and sightseeing tours.

"The society here is matrilineal," explained Phang who had travelled with us to the cave in Lakadong area. This young guide talked about the popular adventure sports here, giving me new goals like canyoning, not meant for the weak-hearted or weak-bodied. In Meghalaya the

youngest daughter inherits everything and looks after the parents too. The children carry the mother's surname. It truly is a futuristic society, living in perfect harmony with the mother principle of nourishment. Natives speak Khasi but English is common here. Of course, in the interiors, the Khasi dialect varies and even townies have a problem understanding that, as I discovered during a market tour with Priyanka Mawrie, another young guide.

Shillong, the capital, has many pubs and a vibrant life. "Meghalayans love rock music," said Phang. I had been to Shillong, Mawlynnong, Dawki and the living root bridges on an earlier trip. But Jaintia Hills were a different ballgame. With Priyanka leading me, we explored the serene Tyrshi Falls and Nartiang Monoliths.

"The monoliths were a meeting ground," she said, "and marked the rites of passage of the Jaintia kings. People would gather to have tea here. Even now a festival is held annually to celebrate the Jaintia kings and these monoliths." Now, we could call them a graveyard of sorts. The sun sets early in the northeast and we were short on time. We just about managed to catch the fantastic view for a few seconds and hurriedly walked through the 100m complex. These monoliths are said to be the tallest in the world.

Most of the place looked like a round table with chairs all around. Later, I came to know that the tall upright stones were known as 'mehris' or 'Ki Moo Shynrang', represent the male. The flat table stone was 'Ki Moo Kynthai' or the female. Folks say that people in that era were as strong and tall as giants.

Nartiang was the summer capital of the Jaintia rulers. Some experts are of the belief that the monoliths marked the establishment of the market from Raliang to Nartiang. There is a legend that explains this. On a rainy afternoon Luh Lyngshkor, a Jaintia ruler was caught in a heavy shower and sought something to save himself. He approached an old woman at Raliang, a village near Nartiang, for a bamboo to protect himself. Eyeing the well-built ruler, the woman told him to use a giant stone Oslab at the market as cover. Luh went to the market, picked the giant stone slab and reached Nartiang. And the place where he kept the giant stone slab became the market. Eyeing the big stone, I thought, it didn't seem plausible. But then legends are not based on visual truth.

The sun had set and we realised that we couldn't make it to the Durga Temple in the neighbourhood. But we had seen a weekly market on the way and decided to explore that. The rain had left behind slush and the market was closing. The dark skies made it difficult to see much. However, Priyanka took us inside with the help of a young girl who had come there with her parents to sell some spices and vegetables.

Lakadong area is very well known for its turmeric. And black sesame is also used a lot in Khasi cuisine, so we bought small packets of these two. We also tasted a black bean sauce which certainly is an acquired taste, locally made muffins and lots of green shoots. The vendors came from the neighbouring villages and the market offered everything from vegetables, meats, to household goods, bamboo baskets and sitting stools or muras. I would have liked to bring these back to Delhi along with the ferns plants, but I didn't know the airport rules.

All too soon the dream where evenings and mornings were spent under a beautiful sky, with amazing people gorging on food that is low on calories was over. But there still remained the promise of more adventure sports and a fitter me to achieve that goal of canyoning the next time around.

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NEGOTIATING THE GAP

GHAZALA WAHAB's *Born A Muslim: Some Truths About Islam in India* won the Book of the Year Award at the Tata Literature Live! Festival for the year 2021 in the non-fiction category. In a conversation with SAIMI SATTAR, she talks about the reasons for the demonisation of the community, the history of institutionalising violence and more

I had heard of Ghazala Wahab, the person — long before her book, *Born A Muslim: Some Truths About Islam in India*, started making waves — through a common friend. And not surprisingly, when we connect over a concall, the name comes up as the ice breaker. But other connections hover beneath the obvious and the stated (co-religionist woman from a small-town middle-class family who does not harbour fundamentalist thought) make what she says easy to comprehend while creating parallel narratives in my head.

Wahab, a journalist with many years behind her, has woven a personal narrative with a historical perspective. The intensely personal account seeks to understand how Islam, which has put down its roots in the country, has become so reviled by a section of the right-wing. This quest has been awarded the Book of the Year at the Tata Literature Live! Festival for the year 2021 in the non-fiction category the work.

Excerpts from the interview:

What prompted you to write the book?

The origin of the book was in my writing on terrorism. It was here that I came a lot across what we call Jihadi or Islamic terrorism. And these terms used to bother me as I was also sold out on the idea that there was indeed terrorism in the world. One of the threats that India faces is terrorism and I completely agreed with the idea that a lot of terrorists were Muslims. So, my approach was researching what is in the religion that prompts Muslims to engage in these acts of violence. And that's how I got interested in the subject. But my entire perspective on terrorism changed. This was the starting point.

Coming to an understanding is one thing but reaching out to a larger audience by putting this on paper is another. Did that happen organically or was it a conscious decision?

The conscious part was that I wanted to write about what I thought was a misconception about Islam among Muslims. How they understood a lot of verses and how they should not be taken out of context as these were revealed at a particular time answering to a particular problem and should not be taken to be directions for perpetuity were the issues that I was looking at. Then, there was the *hijab* and full-face covering... issues that I felt strongly about which I felt needed to be criticised. It was a conscious decision to write this and reach out to as many Muslims as I could. Telling them how they had misunderstood their religion and how due to this misunderstanding and their doggedness, they have allowed their religion to become a subject of ridicule.

When I started reaching out to a cross-section of society, I realised that my approach was one-sided. I enlarged its



scope because this idea of identity politics or the community sticking to an identity largely stemmed from insecurity. So, I realised that the sources of this insecurity had to be understood. Were there internal or external reasons? And that is how the scope of the book continued to grow. What you see is the result of this.

There is a chapter about your family facing police action post riots. There were riots in North East Delhi and it has been alleged that the police action was one-sided. Would you say there are parallels?

If you just draw a parallel with NE Delhi riots then it would be reducing the subject to just one particular incident. We have had a history of communal violence in India. A lot of times we call them communal riots but, more often, it is one-sided violence. What had happened to us was not particular to us. A lot of people had faced attacks on lives and property and were subjected to police action

against them in the name of maintaining law and order. This has been a trend. So, there have been various incidents of violence post-Independence. This is a playbook that has not changed with time. These have happened time and time again. It is unfortunate but true.

Has this violence become more institutionalised now?

No, I wouldn't say that. It was already institutionalised in the manner in which law enforcement agencies would blink and look the other way for a few hours till a particular mob or community could vent their anger. They would let the 'milk boil over', so to say. If some people lose their lives or properties are burnt during the time, it was considered to be a small price to pay. I've forgotten the resource right now but Indira Gandhi has recorded in the case of Hindu-Muslim violence that there are certain occasions where you have to let the events take their course before the police can intervene. I don't remember the context in which

she said this but it is on record. ("One has to let such events take their own course before stepping in," said the former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, while replying to *Financial Times* when asked why she had not acted earlier to stop the violence during Assam's Nellie massacre of February 18, 1983, when the State was under President's Rule.) The worst part of this institutionalised 'look the other way approach' by the law enforcement agencies is that you don't question law enforcement agencies as you worry or fear that it will affect or impact their morale. Commissions are instituted but the police hierarchy is not held accountable. Charge sheets are filed against unknown people. This idea of holding people accountable is just not there and it is nothing new.

What we have now are a lot of vigilante groups that are doing the dirty work. This has created a pervasive sense of fear which was not there earlier. I have not grown up with it. When I was growing up or people I have spoken with

say that the violence was a periodic event. Things would heat up and then they would calm down. Things would go back to usual. It did not lead to any wholesale relocation or fissures. People would move to Muslim majority areas because there is security in numbers but a permanent fissure in society, where you have to constantly watch your back, did not exist. If you had business interests, which were inter-community, you would go back to working with them. All that has changed to some extent.

As you point out, you had not experienced this kind of discrimination or violence but people lower down in economic and social status did. Was it easier writing it as an outsider-insider?

I wouldn't say it was easier though it did give me the advantage of access. People did talk to me as I was an insider and from the community as well as a journalist who had not written on the community but had a larger perspective on national issues as I had a large body of work out there in the public domain. This put me at an advantage. I wouldn't say it was easier because writing about violence never is or maybe I am a little sentimental about these matters. When I write on warfare or terrorism, I bring a certain human element to these issues. I do develop a certain emotional connection. When I was writing about communal violence and tracing its history post-Independence, it was a very disturbing experience. Writing this tract was the most difficult part of the book. I did not sleep for many many nights after writing this chapter

You've been the editor of *Force*, a magazine for Defence, for a long time. Did that change your perspective given that not very many Muslims are a part of the armed forces?

No. I had not done any work on the community except for writing on terrorism. I have not really engaged with the Indian Muslim community before I started work on the book. It did not prepare me for anything when I started writing this book. As for not many people being in the armed forces but there are not many Muslims in any of the mainstream Government organisations whether it is Civil Services or others. The numbers are very limited.

Treating Muslims as a monolith who are not patriotic is something that has gained credence despite evidence to the contrary... Where did the community go wrong which led to the building of this narrative?

When a narrative is built, it has little to do with the community. It is being built by others. Treating Muslims as a monolith is just facilitating stereotyping. If you go into details and diversities, the stereotype will just fall flat. That is deliberate.

The community cannot be held

responsible as a Muslim cannot do anything to change perspective. They are doing whatever they can or whatever anyone in India has done. Even today when you pick up the newspaper and you see someone selling a defence secret, I think, a lot of Muslims scroll down immediately to check the name of the person and are relieved to see that he is not a co-religionist. I am also guilty of doing that. Despite all this, being accused of being fifth columnists or not being patriotic enough is a perception created by vested interests. And unless it is reversed by those who have created this perception or by the majority community who stand up and say this is false and we won't go by it, Muslims can't do much about it. They are the victims here.

Was your book aimed at changing these perceptions?

Yes (a very thoughtful one). And I have said that in my introduction that it allays a lot of misconceptions both among the Muslims and also among the non-Muslims. I hope that people can sift between the myths and realities of the community in India. And that they start talking to each other and understand each other better.

Would you say that the kind of violence Muslims face has changed over the years?

It has become more widespread. Big events of communal violence may have reduced but everyday incidents of violence have actually increased. The consequence of this is that an increasing number of Muslims are not getting a place in the mainstream and are rather relinquishing the space to recede to their ghettos. A non-Muslim professor told me that many of his colleagues who had properties in south Delhi have sold these, often at a loss, to go back to Okhla and Jamia because they felt that they will be safer and more comfortable there. Ideally, that should not be happening. They should not be ceding these places which have been acquired with much difficulty. But if you are so insecure, it is unfortunate and should not have happened.

Did you anticipate the book would win a prize?

No, I didn't it was a very very pleasant surprise.

What did you hope the readers would carry back?

They apply the rational part of their mind rather than the emotional and they would realise that the answers are all there in the public domain. They would realise what they are told is not correct and it is not difficult to find the truth.

Any more books coming up?

I am working on one book ad it would be out in a year and a half or two years.



Travelling back in time

Actress ZEENAT AMAN revealed, on the sets of *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*, that DEV ANAND had suggested that she should don a hippie look for *Dum Maaro Dum*. By TEAM VIVA

Zee TV's *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* 2021 show started with a bang and the talented contestants of this season have already managed to impress the audience. However, viewers are in for a special treat as legendary actress Zeenat Aman will appear as a special guest.

While each contestant entranced her during the shoot, it was Laj, Ananya, and Yumna's power-packed performance to *Hare Ram Hare Krishna's* title track and *Dum Maaro Dum* that left her spell-bound. The song also made the veteran actress so nostalgic that she shared several anecdotes about the song. Ananya also asked Aman about her iconic look for the song *Dum Maaro Dum* and to everyone's surprise, the actress revealed an untold story about how Dev Anand was the one who decided her look for this song.

Talking about the same, Aman revealed, "When the song was being shot, Dev *sahab* was in two minds about it. He wasn't sure if we should use it for the movie, but he was convinced about it finally. After the song was locked, my look became a topic of discussion. With the song being so personal to my character, I decided to give it a personal touch with straight, long hair with a middle partition. But Dev Sahab felt that my character should wear shades and have a hippie look since the song is being shot around hippies as well. She should also be care-free and not really bothered with anything and be very *bindaas*. So, we basically collaborated to finalise this iconic look for the song."

(Tune into *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* this Saturday and Sunday at 9 pm, only on Zee TV.)



Zee TV is all set to present Indian audiences with a first-of-its-kind devotional singing reality show — *Swarn Swar Bharat*. It celebrates Indian values and takes us back to our roots through a unique blend of insightful and relatable stories narrated in verse and soulful devotional music cutting

The celebrity couple tied the knot at a private ceremony in the Six Senses Fort Barwara Hotel, Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan, with friends and family in attendance. The initial photographs show Vicky Kaushal following Katrina Kaif and then the two waved at the paparazzi gathered at a distance from the venue.

Kaif wore a bridal lehenga crafted by ace designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee for her special day, Kaushal is said to have worn a beige sherwani after his *sehrabandi*.

The couple also made it official that they would soon host a reception in Mumbai for those who were not invited to the very private marriage ceremony at Sawai Madhopur.

Kaushal headed to the *mandap* in a vintage car with his *baraatis*, including brother Sunny Kaushal, good friend Angad Bedi and members of his family. The couple took the *phas* in the tra-

One of its kind

ZeeTV launches a new and unique devotional singing reality show *Swarn Swar Bharat* with poet, KUMAR VISHWAS, singers, KAILASH KHER, SURESH WADKAR, as judges and actor RAVI KISHAN as the host. By TEAM VIVA

across all demographics. The show is produced by Fathom Pictures and Kailasa Entertainment Pvt Ltd.

Renowned poet Dr Kumar Vishwas and veteran singers — Padmashree Kailash Kher and Padmashree Suresh Wadkar will be seen as judges, evaluating performances of the contestants on param-

eters of *sur*, *bhaav* and *saar* while popular actor Ravi Kishan will be the host of the show.

Swarn Swar Bharat is a humble contribution to the Prime Minister's initiative Azaadi ka Amrit Mahotsav — the 75th anniversary of Indian independence, that endeavours to celebrate our rich cultural heritage across the world.



Fairy-tale wedding

KATRINA KAIF and VICKY KAUSHAL have been pronounced man and wife after one of the most celebrated marriage ceremonies of the year

ditional way, thus bringing to an end the celebrations that took off on December 7.

After a lot of hush hush, the couple took to Instagram to share their intimate wedding photographs.

—IANS



Viewing life in lyrics

Actor and poet, PIYUSH MISHRA, joined a multi-language blogging platform, Koo, and shared a couplet in Hindi to engage with fans. By TEAM VIVA

Renowned actor, writer, musician and poet Piyush Mishra has joined the multi-language micro-blogging platform, Koo. Mishra will leverage the self-expression platform to engage with fans and share his poems, lyrics and thoughts in Hindi.

Kooing from his handle @itspiyushmishra, the actor posted a couplet in Hindi —
*Thoda nazara, chatpat baatein
Yahi kahani, aate jaate
Thodi hasi hai, thode latifein,
Thoda tarana, chatpatein baatein
Bas yaaro yahi baatein, kahaniya, tarane aur latifein ab Koo par karenge*

A graduate of the National School of Drama (NSD), Mishra started his career as a theatre actor and made his Bollywood debut in 1998 in Mani Ratnam's *Dil Se*. He has acted in films like *The Legend of Bhagat Singh*, *Maqbool*, *Gulaal*, amongst others.

Welcoming Mishra to the platform, a Koo spokesperson said, "We are elated to have the veteran actor, writer, poet and musician Piyush Mishra on our platform. We are certain that Piyushji, who is also well-known for his poetic and literary talent, will not only leverage our platform to connect with his fans and followers but be an inspiration to upcoming actors and performers across India."

As an inclusive platform that empowers Indians to express online in their mother tongue, the Koo App is well represented by popular actors like Anupam Kher, Kangana Ranaut, Kriti Sanon, Shraddha Kapoor, Tiger Shroff, who actively engage with fans across a slew of native languages.

Root's record helps lead an England rally in Ashes opener

AP ■ BRISBANE

Joe Root set a record for most runs in a calendar year by an England test batter and shared an unbroken 159-run stand with Dawid Malan on Friday to lead a rally in the Ashes series opener against Australia.

Root was ubeaten on 86 and Malan was 80 not out when England reached 220-2 at stumps on Day 3.

The England skipper has 1,541 runs so far in 2021, beating Michael Vaughan's record of 1,481 runs in 2002. Mohammad Yousuf holds the test record with his 1,788 runs in 11 matches for Pakistan in 2006. England is still 58 runs behind. But after being dismissed for 147 on Day 1 and conceding a 278-run first-innings deficit, the third-wicket pair finally gave England a session of dominance.

Root faced 158 deliveries, hit 10 boundaries and was one run shy of his highest previous score in an Ashes test Down Under. Malan faced 177 deliveries as the pair got through almost two full sessions.

Malan said the only way for England to go forward was to for-

get the first innings, not be "sitting ducks" and just take the attack back to the Australian bowlers. But he said the job was only half done, and England needed at least another 250-300 runs to pressure Australia.

With Root still there, it's possible.

"He seems to somehow find a way of putting the pressure back on the bowlers," Malan said. "It's great signs for us as a team that Joe is playing well out here and leading from the front."

Australia resumed Friday at 343-7 and added 82 for the loss three wickets in the morning session, with Travis Head bowled for 152 by Mark Wood to end the innings at 425.

England's openers survived to reach 23 without loss at the first interval but both were out early in the afternoon session and the total was 61-2 when Root joined Malan at the crease.

Opener Rory Burns narrowly avoided an unwanted pair, getting a reprieve after being given out lbw to Mitchell Starc without scoring in the first over of England's second innings two days after being bowled out by the Australian left-arm pace-



man on the first ball of the series. This time, a successful review showed the ball may have gone over the stumps.

But he was out in the first over after lunch without addition to his score or the England total when he was caught behind of Australia captain Pat Cummins for 13.

Haseeb Hameed compiled 27 from 58 deliveries before he gloved a legside catch off Starc to wicket-keeper Alex Carey in the only other England wicket to fall on Day 3.

Conditions were perfect for batting on the middle day at the Gabba, which started with Head marshalling Australia's lower order.

He put on 85 for the eighth wicket with Starc (35) and 29 for the ninth with Nathan Lyon (15) to prolong Australia's innings and keep England in the field in subtropical humidity.

Lyon was out to Mark Wood when Head was on 147 and Australia was on 420, leaving No. 11 Josh Hazlewood to hang around long enough to help his teammate cross 150.

Head reached the milestone with a boundary against left-arm spinner Jack Leach, his innings

including 15 fours and four sixes. It also took Leach beyond 100 runs conceded in 12.1 overs.

But with the batters trying to keep the run-rate up, paceman Wood bowled Head to finish the innings and return 3-85. Ollie Robinson had figures of 3-58 and Woakes had 2-76. Stokes, playing his first test match since March, had 0-65 off 12 overs and appeared to be struggling with his fitness.

Veteran Australian opener David Warner didn't field on Friday after being hit in the ribs while posting his 94 in the home team's first innings of 425. Team officials said his absence was because of bruising.

Marnus Labuschagne, who scored 74 in Australia's innings, said it was important for the home team to keep building pressure and get wickets with the new ball, due after 10 overs on Saturday.

England hasn't won a test in Australia in a decade and hasn't won a test at the Gabba since 1986, while Australia's loss to India here in January was its first at the Brisbane venue since 1988.

"We know the Gabba," Labuschagne said. "We know the template here."

Delhi's Yash Dhull to lead India U-19 squad in Asia Cup

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi batter Yash Dhull will lead a 20-member India squad in the upcoming Under-19 Asia Cup scheduled to be held in the UAE from December 23, the BCCI announced on Friday.

There will be a preparatory camp in Bengaluru ahead of the tournament and the governing body also named a 25-member squad for the same, which includes five standby players.

"The All-India Junior Selection Committee has picked a 20-member India U19 squad for the upcoming ACC U19 Asia Cup to be played in the UAE from 23rd December," the governing body said in a statement.



"The selectors have also announced a 25-member squad for a preparatory camp at the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru from December 11th-19th ahead of the ACC event."

Dhull was a leading run-getter in the Vinoo Mankad Trophy earlier this year. He averaged 75.50 for his 302 runs for the DDCA in the five matches that the team played during the tournament.

The Board, however, said that India's squad for the U-19 World Cup slated for January-February next year in the West Indies will be announced later.

Two-time defending champions India have won the ACC U-19 Asia Cup six times in the last eight editions, while sharing the trophy with Pakistan in 2012.

India U-19 Asia Cup squad: Harnoor Singh Pannu, Angkrish Raghuvanshi, Ansh Gosai, S K Rasheed, Yash Dhull (Captain), Anneswar Gautam, Siddharth Yadav, Kaushal Tambe, Nishant Sindhu, Dinnesha Bana (wk), Aaradhya Yadav (wk), Rajangad Bawa, Rajvardhan Hangargekar, Garv Sangwan, Ravi Kumar, Rishith Reddy, Manav Parakh, Amrit Raj Upadhyay, Vicky Ostwal, Vasu Vats (subject to fitness clearance).

Standby players who will attend preparatory camp at NCA: Ayush Singh Thakur, Uday Saharan, Shashwat Dangwal, Dhanush Gowda, PM Singh Rathore.



Mulyo Handoyo, Tan Kim Her set to return as India's badminton coaches

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indonesia's Mulyo Handoyo and Malaysia's Tan Kim Her are set to return as India's singles and doubles badminton coaches with the national federation hoping to finalise their appointments by the end of this month.

Tough taskmaster Mulyo, who has coached Athens Olympic gold medalist Taufik Hidayat, had a brief stint in India and is credited for the success of men's singles players like Kidambi Srikanth, B Sai Praneeth and HS Prannoy in 2017.

Tan Kim Her, on the other hand, is the man responsible for forging India's best doubles pair of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, who under his guidance won the Commonwealth Games silver, played a vital role in the team gold in 2018 and also broke into world's top 20. "Mulyo and Tan Kim Her are among the few top names who applied for the posts after we advertised for it and BAI (Badminton Association of India) wants to avail their services as they have prior experience of working with our Indian players," BAI secretary Ajay Singhania told PTI.

BAI had advertised for the coaches' posts on November 18 after men's singles coach Agus Dwi Santoso departed last month, few weeks before the completion of his contract. "Mulyo and Tan have been in the Indian set up so we are favouring them and we are hoping to get their services from the India Open in January. Of course, it is yet to be finalised as we are still discussing the details," Singhania said.

Under Mulyo, Indian male shuttlers secured an unprecedented five Super Series titles in 2017, which included four titles by Srikanth and one by Praneeth.

"The contracts of all the coaches expire in December end, so we will have to seal the appointments by this month."

ACT will be great platform for fringe players: Hockey captain Manpreet Singh

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

The upcoming Asian Champions Trophy in Dhaka will be a perfect platform for the fringe players to showcase their talent and stake a claim in the first team, said Indian men's hockey team captain Manpreet Singh.

The tournament, originally scheduled to be held last year, has been postponed multiple times due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and will now be played from December 14 to 22.

This will be India's first outing after the team's historic Olympics bronze medal winning campaign earlier this year. The Manpreet Singh-led side will be without eight players from the Tokyo Games squad, including the likes of veteran goalkeeper PR Sreejesh who has



been rested,

"With nearly 10 players who were part of the Tokyo Olympic squad being rested, this is a fantastic opportunity for the players who had been waiting on the sidelines to get a chance to perform in a major international tournament. This will be a good platform for them to showcase their talent and temperament," said Manpreet before leaving for Dhaka on Friday.

Defending champions India would begin their cam-

paign on the opening day against Korea before locking horns against Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan and hosts Bangladesh in the single-pool tournament for top honours.

"This is our first outing after the Tokyo Olympics so naturally there is a lot of excitement among the players. We have had a good training camp in Bhubaneswar and I feel since the weather here is quite similar to that of Dhaka, we won't take long to acclimatise," the skipper said.

"It will be a good tournament not just in terms of competition but also to understand about other team's capabilities. We assess the progress of other Asian countries ahead of the all-important Asian Games and Asia Cup next year," the ace mid-fielder added.

CI felicitates young shuttler Taarini

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Cricket Club of India (CCI) felicitated young shuttler Taarini Suri, who won twin triple crowns in the European circuit last month.

In recognition of her achievements, the CCI Executive Committee headed by its sporting president Premal Udani and the badminton sub-committee honoured Taarini, coach Hufrih Nariman and the youngster's parents.

Udani presented Taarini with a plaque, a cash award and gift vouchers.

The talented 14-year-old Taarini, who trains under renowned coach and former ace badminton player Hufrih Nariman at the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy at the CCI courts, had clinched the girls' singles

Under-15, girls' doubles Under-17, and the mixed doubles Under-17 titles at the FZ FORZA Finnish Youth 2021 Badminton Championship in Finland in early November.

A fortnight later, Taarini repeated the feat winning the girls Under-15 singles and doubles title and the girls' Under-15 mixed doubles event at the Swedish Youth Games 2021 at Malmo.

ATK Mohun Bagan hope to plug defence, avoid hat-trick of defeats



PTI ■ FATORDA

Heavyweights ATK Mohun Bagan would be eyeing to plug holes in its defence to avoid the ignominy of a hat-trick of defeats when it takes on an unbeaten Chennaiyin FC in an Indian Super League match here on Saturday.

After starting off in style with thumping wins over Kerala Blasters FC and arch-rivals SC East Bengal, the Mariners have slumped to back-to-back losses against nemesis Mumbai City FC and Jamshedpur FC to slip out of top-five. Against quality opposi-

tion in MCF and JFC, the green-and-maroon brigade's defence has been terribly out of shape, leaking seven goals in two matches.

Their two national defenders Pritam Kotal and Subhasish Bose have failed to live up to the expectations in the absence of injured Tiri and Sandesh Jhingam, who has left for Croatian club Sibenik.

Habas would hope Tiri, the star Spanish central defender, plays the full 90 minutes, even as it seems a far-fetched reality as he is yet to gain full fitness.

Chennaiyin FC have been the most resolute in their defence this season, letting in the least number of goals — two — from three matches. In such a scenario, Habas would look to rearrange his formation and may ring in a few changes with Michael Soosairaj a possibility in the left wing.

While trying to bolster the defence, ATK Mohun Bagan has suffered in its attacking play, something that was seen in its 1-2 loss to the Red Miners.

Carolina Marin pulls out of World Championships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Three-time champion shuttler Carolina Marin's much-awaited return to competitive action got further delayed as she pulled out of the World Championship after failing to regain fitness following a knee injury.

The Rio Olympics gold medalist had withdrawn from the All England Championships this year after suffering the injury during the Swiss Open.

The 28-year-old had announced her plans of making a comeback at the home World Championships begin-

ning in Huelva, Spain.

"I was having a really good season start, I had won four tournaments out of five. I was feeling very confident, strong and in a really good physical and psychological condition until just one bad movement broke my knee completely," Marin said in a video posted in her twitter handle.

"Mentally it has been really hard to keep myself up, my priorities have been always health and well being. Therefore my team and myself have decided not to play the Huelva World Championship."



Marin, considered as one of the most dominating players in international badminton, said she might be

back in February next year but wouldn't want to put a date on her return.

"We have also taken the decision of not having a formal date of comeback to competitions until we are 100 sure my knee is fully recovered."

"So we will be evaluating slowly knee progress and the sensations."

I am daily having it, so we believe I might be officially playing again in the month of February and March."

Marin, who had missed the Tokyo Olympics, had sustained a knee injury in the Indonesia Masters final in January 2019 and had missed the

World Championships that year even as India's P V Sindhu claimed her maiden title.

The Spaniard had returned at Vietnam Open in September, 2019 and went on to win the China Open, Syed Modi tournament and a runners-up finish at the French Open that year.

After a second-best finish at Indonesia Masters, Spain Masters and Denmark Open in 2020, Marin returned to claim back-to-back titles at Thailand and a final finish at the season-ending World Tour Finals in Bangkok.

Pelé to remain in hospital for 'a few days' for exams

Sao Paulo: Brazilian soccer great Pelé said he will remain in a hospital in Sao Paulo "for a few days" to undergo new exams on his colon tumor. The 81-year-old Edson Arantes do Nascimento was brought to the Albert Einstein hospital this week for chemotherapy sessions to treat the tumor found during routine exams at the end of August. Pelé was hospitalised for almost one month

due to the surgery to remove it.

Pelé said on Instagram he has been "having small chemotherapy sessions as part of my treatment." He added he had just finished the last session of 2021. "I wanted to share this achievement with you. After all, every little victory is a reason to celebrate, don't you think?" he wrote, with a picture showing him in a hospital gown and a clenched right fist. AP

Villarreal makes last 16 in CL, Leicester falls in Europa

AP ■ MADRID

Villarreal clinched the final place in the last 16 of the Champions League on Thursday, while Leicester failed to advance in the Europa League.

Villarreal beat Atalanta 3-2 away in a game postponed from Wednesday because of heavy snow in northern Italy.

The Spanish side only needed a draw to advance as runner-up from Group F but jumped out to a 3-0 lead by the 51st minute, with Arnaut Danjuma scoring twice. Atalanta answered with goals from Duván Zapata and substitute Ruslan Malinovskyi but it was too late to turn things around.

Atalanta finished third in the group and will enter a playoff to get into the last 16 of the second-tier



Europa League, the competition Villarreal won last season.

Leicester faced a must-win game at Napoli to advance in the Europa League but lost 3-2. Spartak

Moscow secured top spot of Group C with a 1-0 away victory at Legia Warsaw.

Also, Eintracht Frankfurt, Galatasaray and Red Star Belgrade

made the next round while Bayer Leverkusen, Lyon, Monaco and West Ham had already qualified with a game to spare.

Only the eight group winners go straight into the round of 16 — the runners-up enter a playoff with the eight teams who finish in third place in the Champions League groups.

In the inaugural Europa Conference League, Jose Mourinho's Roma reached the second round after a 3-2 win at CSKA Sofia and Basel was the last to reach the round of 16.

Another big team in the competition, Tottenham, had its game against Rennes postponed after a coronavirus outbreak at the English club that would have deprived manager Antonio Conte of at least eight players who have tested pos-

itive. A new date for the match has not been announced.

AZ Alkmaar, Copenhagen, Feyenoord, Gent, LASK, and Rennes had already won their groups in the third-tier competition.

The draw for the next stage is scheduled for Monday.

EUROPA LEAGUE

In the tightly contested Group C, all four teams could still qualify for the round of 16 ahead of the final round.

Leicester had a disastrous start to the game at Napoli.

Forward Adam Ounas gave Napoli early lead four minutes into the game with a low shot. Twenty minutes later, Eljif Elmas doubled the advantage.

Leicester pulled one back three

minutes later when defender Jonny Evans found himself at the right spot in the area to reduce the lead and Kiernan Dewsby-Hall equalized in the 33rd after a rebound.

But Napoli recovered with Elmas scoring again in the second half.

A 1-1 away draw against Fenerbahçe was enough for Eintracht Frankfurt to claim Group D. Olympiakos finished second after a 1-0 loss to host Antwerp.

Galatasaray held Lazio to a 0-0 draw in Rome to advance from Group E, leaving its Italian opponent in second.

Red Star drew 1-1 with Braga after Aleksandar Katai converted a penalty kick to equalize after the Portuguese club took the lead through Galeno's spot kick. The result meant Red Star stayed one

point ahead of Braga atop Group F.

EUROPA CONFERENCE LEAGUE

Roma leapfrogged previous leader Bodø/Glimt of Norway, which was held 1-1 at Zorya Luhansk in Group C. Roma was 3-0 up after Tammy Abraham netted his second goal in the 53rd, before CSKA netted two consolation goals.

In Group G, Vitesse beat Mura 3-1 to sit second, leading Tottenham by three points. Arthur Cabral scored twice for Basel in a 3-0 victory against Qarabag to advance as winner in Group H.

Denmark's Randers placed second in Group D despite a 1-0 loss to Alkmaar while a 1-1 home draw against Anorthosis Famagusta secured second place in Group B for Partizan Belgrade.