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KERALA GOV TAKES ON THE CM, BUT POLITELY

WORLD 8

KARZAI 'INVITED' TALIBAN TO STOP CHAOS

SPORT 12

AGUERO ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT FOR HEALTH REASONS

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY DECEMBER 16, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3



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I AM A RISK-TAKER: AYUSHMANN 10 VIVACITY

Opp raises Lakhimpur, insists on axing MoS

BJP rejects demands

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The violence in the Lakhimpur Kheri during the farmers' protest on October 3 was back in the focus with the Opposition mounting pressure on the Government to dismiss Minister of State Ajay Mishra "Teni" whose son is one of the 13 accused arrested in the case.

The BJP, however, rejected as "unfounded" allegation and the Opposition's demand for the resignation of the Union Minister and but ruled out a discussion on the Lakhimpur Kheri issue as the matter is sub-judice.

In the Lok Sabha, the Congress demanded dismissal of Mishra and in the Rajya Sabha, a united Opposition wanted reinstatement of suspended MPs of the Upper House. The Government refused to heed both the demands.

In the Lower House, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi moved a notice seeking adjournment of business to discuss a "definite matter of urgent importance" — the SIT report on Lakhimpur Kheri. The Congress MP said the



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi interacts with the media at Parliament House during its Winter Session PTI

Government should "immediately sack" Mishra and "ensure justice is delivered to the families of the victims".

The Congress and other Opposition members trooped into the Well of the House chanting "we want justice" "tanashahi nahin chalegi" and carrying placards "Modi sarkar Teni ko barkhast karo".

The issue has been raised a day after a special investigation team of the Uttar Pradesh Police told a local court that the October 3 incident was a "planned conspiracy" to kill farmers. The Lok Sabha proceedings were disrupted from

the word go with the Opposition members making their intentions clear that the House businesses will not be allowed. Speaker Om Birla appealed to the members to restore order as the House is also to take up a discussion on price rise.

The question hour progressed under the din before Birla (who did not allow notice of adjournment motion) adjourned the House until 2 pm. The bedlam continued in the House when it resumed proceedings at 2 pm with Rajendra Agrawal in the chair. Amid the ruckus, he said the

Zero Hour submissions can be made in writing and it will be considered as recorded.

As Opposition members continued to stay in the Well of the House shouting "we want justice" and carried placards trying to block the sight of the members speaking, Agrawal adjourned the House after its proceedings had lasted barely eight minutes.

Outside both the Houses of Parliament, the Government sought to dismiss the Opposition demand for the dismissal of "Teni" and also hit out at the Opposition members for their continuous disruption of upper House proceedings to seek revocation of the suspension of 12 members.

"The probe is on under SC's directions. Such comments (of Opposition) are unfounded," BJP leader in the Rajya Sabha and Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal told reporters.

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Video of Min Ajay Mishra's outburst at media viral

PREETAM SRIVASTAVA ■ LUCKNOW

Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Mishra, who is under pressure to resign over his son Ashish's involvement in the Lakhimpur Kheri violence, has landed in yet another controversy on Wednesday.

In a video, which went viral on social media, Mishra is purportedly seen hurling abuse at a reporter and calling the media "chor (thieves)". Soon after the video went viral, Mishra was summoned to New Delhi. He immediately left for the national Capital.

The incident occurred outside Mother Child Care Hospital in Lakhimpur district, where reporters cornered Mishra as he inaugurated the facility's new oxygen plant. When a journalist asked him about the SIT adding charges in the Lakhimpur Kheri case, the Minister at once lost his temper and asked the journalist "Dimag kharab hai?" (Are you mad?).

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Fully back US laws on sanctions or waiver: Biden's pick for India envoy

Statement vital amid threat of sanction under CAATSA for S-400 deal with Russia

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Joe Biden's nominee for next envoy to India has assured American lawmakers that he would "fully support the law of the land" and the implementation of CAATSA as he underlined that the waiver provision is part of the tough law.

During his confirmation hearing as US Ambassador to India on Tuesday, 50-year-old Eric Michael Garcetti, a close confidant of President Biden, also said that the growing defence trade between India and the US is one of the major success stories of the bilateral relations.

Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act or CAATSA is a tough US law which authorises the administration to impose sanctions on countries that purchase major defence hardware from Russia in response to Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and its alleged meddling in the 2016 US presidential elections.

Responding to a question on enforcement of CAATSA sanctions on India now that New Delhi has started receiving delivery of the S-400 missile system from Russia,



Garcetti, currently the Mayor of Los Angeles, said he fully supports the law of the land and the implementation of CAATSA as law.

"I don't want to prejudice the Secretary's decision about sanctions or a waiver. And I do want to tell the Chairman, Ranking Member (and) all the members (of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee). I do fully support the law of the land, the implementation of CAATSA as law here and part of that is the waiver provision," said Garcetti.

In October 2018, India had signed a USD 5 billion deal with Russia to buy five units of the advanced long-range surface-to-air missile defence system S-400, notwithstanding warning from the then Trump administration that going ahead with the contract may trigger US sanctions under CAATSA.

Alexander Mikheyev, the head of Russia's state-run mil-

itary firm Rosoboronexport, said last month that Moscow has started delivery of the components of the S-400 air defence missile systems to India.

Garcetti said, if confirmed, he would advocate the continued diversification of India's weapons systems, and the threats to US own weapons systems.

"If that diversification doesn't occur because we have to protect our data and our systems," he said, adding that he would work towards growing the India-US Major Defence Partnership.

Amid a looming threat of US sanctions on India over its procurement of S-400 missile systems from Russia, India has said that it takes sovereign decisions based on threat perception and to keep the armed forces in a state of readiness to meet the entire spectrum of security challenges.

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Jabs by US drugmakers less effective against Omicron



New super mutant spread to 77 nations known to evade vaccine efficacy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Vaccines developed by US drugmakers Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson, and Johnson against Covid-19 have proved to be less effective against the new super mutant Omicron variant that has now spread to 77 countries.

The Omicron variant, harbouring up to 36 mutations in spike protein, is known to evade vaccine efficacy.

The study led by researchers at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), Harvard, and MIT tested blood from people who received the Moderna, Johnson & Johnson, and Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines against a pseudovirus engineered to resemble the Omicron variant.

They included individuals that were both vaccinated recently or had recently taken booster doses, and also had prior SARS-CoV-2 infection.

The findings, posted on preprint MedRxiv, meaning not peer-reviewed yet, showed that the neutralisation of Omicron was "undetectable" in most vaccinated individuals. "Our results would suggest that these recipients of J&J

Scientists at the Africa Health Research Institute in Durban, South Africa, work on the omicron variant of the Covid-19 virus on Wednesday AP

that Omicron drastically escapes vaccine-induced immunity after primary vaccination series with mRNA-1273 (Moderna), BNT162b2 (Pfizer/BioNTech) or Ad26.COV2.S (Johnson & Johnson/Janssen) and exhibits increased infectivity in vitro, raising the potential for increased transmissibility," said Wilfredo F Garcia-Beltran, Department of Pathology, MGH at Boston.

However, individuals boosted with mRNA vaccines exhibited potent neutralisation of Omicron only 4-6-fold lower than the wild type, suggesting that boosters enhance the cross-reactivity of neutralising antibody responses.

The team found Omicron pseudovirus is more infectious than any other variant tested. Overall, this study highlights the importance of boosters to broaden neutralising antibody responses against highly divergent SARS-CoV-2 variants.

Further, the study showed that recipients of mRNA boosters following J&J vaccine exhibited markedly improved neutralising titers, but did not achieve the breadth of response seen with mRNA primary vaccination followed by mRNA booster.

"Our results would suggest that these recipients of J&J

vaccines may benefit from additional mRNA vaccine doses with the potential to further raise titers and broaden their neutralizing activity," the researchers said.

Omicron breakthrough infections may result in attenuated disease severity in vaccinated people due to cellular and innate immunity, they noted.

"These findings support the need for rapid and synchronised widespread deployment of mRNA boosters as a public health measure to curtail the emergence and spread of highly mutated SARS-CoV-2 variants," Garcia-Beltran said.

Pfizer confirms Covid pill's results, potency vs Omicron

Washington: Pfizer said Tuesday that its experimental pill to treat Covid-19 appears effective against the omicron variant. The company also said full results of its 2,250-person study confirmed the pill's promising early results against the virus: The drug reduced combined hospitalizations and deaths by about 89% among high-risk adults when taken shortly after initial Covid-19 symptoms.

Lone crash survivor Varun loses final battle

After being rescued, Group Capt survived for eight days

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Group Captain Varun Singh, the lone survivor of the helicopter crash in which Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat and his wife were killed, died on Wednesday. The 39-year-old fighter pilot battled for life for eight days in the military hospital, Bengaluru.

The MI-17 helicopter carrying 14 passengers, including the crew, crashed on December 8 in Coonoor near the Defence Services Staff College (DSSC), Wellington.

General Rawat, his wife Madhulika, and 11 other military personnel died the same day. Nearly all of them suffered serious burn injuries.

Group Captain Singh was rescued from the wreckage with serious injuries. He was



first taken to the military hospital in Wellington and then airlifted to Bengaluru.

"The IAF is deeply saddened to inform the passing away of braveheart Group Captain Varun Singh, who succumbed this morning to the injuries sustained in the helicopter accident on December

8, 2021. IAF offers sincere condolences and stands firmly with the bereaved family," the Indian Air Force said on Twitter.

In August, Group Captain Singh was honoured with Shaurya Chakra, India's third-highest peacetime gallantry award after the Ashok Chakra and Kirti Chakra, for displaying exemplary composure and skill when his Tejas aircraft developed a technical snag during a sortie in October last year.

Known to be an excellent test pilot, the officer is survived by an 11-year-old son, an eight-year-old daughter, and his wife. His father, Colonel (retired) KP Singh, had served in the Army Air Defence (AAD).

The Group Captain's family originally hails from Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh and now lives in Bhopal.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed anguish at the passing away of Group Captain Singh.



Nihang Sikhs along with farmers and others participate in a religious procession (Kisan Mazdoor Khalsa Fateh march), after arriving from Delhi, in Amritsar, on Wednesday PTI

Deported gangster Pujari in ATS custody

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A day after he arrived in New Delhi on deportation from Philippines, notorious gangster Suresh Pujari was on Wednesday remanded by a Thane court in the custody of Maharashtra's Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) till December 25 in connection with several extortion cases registered against him.

Pujari — who was extradited to India on Tuesday evening and brought to Thane from Delhi — was produced before Chief Judicial Magistrate Rajendra J Tambe, who remanded him in the ATS' custody for 10 days.

Pujari, who had been arrested in the Philippines in October, is wanted in at least two dozen extortion and firing cases in Mumbai, Thane, Kalyan, Ulhasnagar and Navi Mumbai.

The case was registered with the MFC police station at



Gangster Suresh Pujari, who had been deported from the Philippines to India, being produced in a court by the ATS, in Thane, on Wednesday PTI

Kalyan in Thane district, while he is also wanted in another case registered against him early this month at the MHB police station for allegedly handing extortion and death threats to a Borivli-based based hotelier.

On his arrival in the capital from the Philippines, IB

and CBI officials took Pujari's custody. Later on, they handed him over to the Maharashtra ATS officials who had landed in Delhi to bring the gangster to Mumbai.

Pujari is a relative of underworld don Ravi Pujari, who was deported from Senegal, Africa, to India in February 2020.

Ravi is currently being investigated by Central agencies and police in Karnataka, Gujarat, and Maharashtra.

Suresh, who was initially associated with underworld don Chhota Rajan and Ravi gangs, had severed his links with Rajan and Ravi in 2007 and formed his own gang. In 2007, he fled the country. After fleeing abroad, he lived in several countries under fake identities.

The investigations had revealed that Suresh was operating outside the country using aliases like Suresh Puri and Satish Pai. Unconfirmed reports said he had returned to Mumbai in 2013 but left the country immediately afterwards using a fake passport.

The Interpol had issued red-corner notices on the basis of requests from the Mumbai and Thane police after several extortion cases against him surfaced.

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CAPSULE

MOST WANTED HM TERRORIST KILLED

Srinagar: Security forces shot dead a most wanted Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist in an encounter in Jammu & Kashmir's Pulwama on Wednesday.

'JAMIA A++ RANKING RESULT OF TEAM WORK'

New Delhi: Jamia Millia Islamia vice-chancellor Najma Akhtar said on Wednesday that the A++ ranking in the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) review was a result of the team effort and despite the Covid pandemic, the university was prepared for the assessment.

TIKAIT, SUPPORTERS HEAD BACK HOME

Ghaziabad: After an iconic fight with the Centre that resulted in the withdrawal of contentious farm laws, farmer leader Rakesh Tikait and his supporters on Wednesday left for their homes from Ghazipur.

UP village mourns death of Capt Varun

Corakhpur: Kanhauli village in Uttar Pradesh's Deoria district plunged into mourning after learning about the death of IAF Group Captain Varun Singh.

Group Captain Singh, a decorated air warrior who was seriously injured in the chopper crash in Tamil Nadu on December 8, succumbed on Wednesday at a military hospital in Bengaluru, the IAF said.

He was the lone survivor of the crash in which Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat, his wife Madhulika and 11 armed force personnel were killed.

As soon as the death of Group Captain Singh reached his native Kanhauli village, it immersed in grief.

Villagers remembered the IAF officer as a down to earth

man who would always put his country first.

Group Captain Singh had visited the village around five months ago after attending a marriage ceremony in Lucknow. "Bhaiya came to the village five months ago and I took him to the farm to show the crops," said caretaker of the officer's house Chandan Gond with tears in his eyes.

Group Captain Singh's relative 55-year-old Ram Pratap Singh said he always talked to him like a friend.

Sikander Kushwaha of the village said the IAF officer would often tell them to put the country's interests first and would sing the national anthem with huge respect.

Rajiv Kumar Singh, 50, said the officer remained a fighter till his last breath. **PTI**

Bangladesh has 'special place' in India's neighbourhood first policy: Prez Kovind

Dhaka: President Ram Nath Kovind said on Wednesday that Bangladesh has a "special place" in India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy as he met the country's top leadership on the first day of his three-day maiden State Visit here, further expanding bilateral ties based on sovereignty, equality, trust and understanding that transcend even a strategic partnership. Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Arindam Bagchi tweeted. During his meeting his Hamid, President Kovind "reiterated that Bangladesh has a special place in India's 'neighbourhood first' policy" and said that India's development partnership with Bangladesh is one of the most comprehensive and wide-ranging ones, according to a statement issued by the Indian President's office. President Kovind, who arrived here earlier in the day at the invitation of his counterpart M Abdul Hamid to attend the golden jubilee celebrations of Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan in 1971, held delegation-level talks with him which was followed by a banquet. "President Kovind @rashtrapatibhvn welcomed by Bangladesh President HE Md. Abdul Hamid for their bilateral meeting at Bangabhaban. Further expand-

ing bilateral ties based on sovereignty, equality, trust and understanding that transcend even a strategic partnership," he said. Noting that Bangladesh is one of India's largest trade partners, he said that New Delhi looks forward to a more organised and seamless trade between the two countries. He noted that there is a lot of scope in partnering in areas like space, nuclear technology, defence, pharmaceuticals and other advanced science and technology fields. He said that a formal 'Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement' would give a significant boost to two-way trade. After the delegation-level talks, President Hamid hosted a banquet in his Indian counterpart's honour at Bangabhaban Presidential Palace. Earlier, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina called on President Kovind and the two leaders discussed several issues of mutual interest and bilateral cooperation.

Both sides reviewed the progress in the multifaceted and comprehensive bilateral ties. The two leaders also recalled the spirit of the 1971 Liberation War and expressed satisfaction at the joint celebration of Maitri Diwas on December 6, Bagchi said. Foreign Minister Dr A.K. Abdul Momen separately called on President Kovind and "apprised him of the excellent progress in bilateral cooperation and of future joint projects, including in the area of connectivity," he said. Briefing the media later in the evening, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla said President Kovind's discussion with Prime Minister Hasina was "comprehensive encompassing many areas of our multifaceted relationship, including jointly preserving the legacy of Bangabandhu and 1971 war." "We are

aspirational nations. Today, we have achieved an incredible amount of synergies in terms of connectivity, joint manufacturing and cooperation. We have set the stage for an exponential increase in ties," he said. Bangladesh premier's press secretary Ihsanul Karim said that President Kovind told Prime Minister Hasina that he was very happy to be part of the celebrations of three mega events - birth centenary of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Golden Jubilee of Bangladesh's independence and diplomatic relationship between the countries. Hasina described India as a "great friend" and recalled the then Indian government and people's crucial role during Bangladesh's War of Liberation in 1971. "Exchange of visits between the countries even amid the COVID-19 situation

is the testimony of warm relationship between the two countries," she said, acknowledging her Indian counterpart Narendra Modi's "historic and successful" Bangladesh tour in March this year when the celebration of the three events were opened. Hasina said after the 1965 India-Pakistan War, when Bangladesh was Pakistan's eastern wing, the commutations between the two countries were snapped in various routes and called for restoring those routes. She expressed satisfaction over the ongoing cooperation in various areas even in the current pandemic situation. Earlier in the day, President Hamid along with his wife Rashida Khanam received President Kovind at Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. He was accorded a red carpet welcome upon his arrival. **PTI**

HC rejects IPS officer's plea to quash FIR

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday rejected a plea by senior IPS officer Rashmi Shukla seeking quashing of an FIR registered by the Mumbai police under the Official Secrets Act, 1923 in the phone tapping case and pleading for the transfer of the case to the CBI.

Holding that there was merit in the contentions made by the Mumbai police, a HC division bench of Justice Nitin M Jamdar and Justice Sarang V Kotwal ruled: "... the impugned FIR prima facie discloses cognisable offences. Since the FIR discloses a cognisable offence, the police have a duty to investigate. No ground is made out to quash

the FIR and to prevent any further investigation. The prayer for transfer of the investigation to CBI on the ground that the CBI is investigating the postings of the Police Officers is without merit as both the investigations are different".

The petition pertained to an FIR registered by the police at the BKC Cyber Police Station on March 26 based on a complaint filed by the State Intelligence Department (SID) against unknown persons for the alleged illegal phone tapping and invoked sections of the Official Secrets Act, Information Technology Act and Indian Telegraph Act. Before the BKC police registered an FIR in the phone tapping case, the then

Maharashtra Chief Secretary Sitaram Kunte had claimed in a report submitted to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray that "it appears that Ms. Shukla herself had leaked the confidential report (to the former chief minister Devendra Fadnis)".

An IPS officer from 198 batch, Rashmi Shukla is currently Additional Director General (ADG) of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) based in Hyderabad.

"We find merit in the contention of the Respondent - State that two investigations - State that two investigations are two different. The complaint in the present FIR is of an unauthorised leak of the official secret documents. It may be that the investigation based on the truth or

veracity of the contents of the documents will lead to a different result. However, it is a different investigation to ascertain how and whether official secret documents were leaked

"Even if the contents of the documents are true and correct, the illegal leakage of the official document will still constitute an offence. Thus, the alleged offence concerning the illegal handling of the official confidential document is different from the investigation carried out by the CBI in respect of FIR dated 21 April 2021. It is separate from the present FIR, and the outcome of both the investigation need not depend on each other," the two Judges noted.

In its ruling, the HC bench held that "the transfers and postings of the Police Officers referred to in unnumbered paragraph 5 are linked to the allegation of abuse of official position by the then Home Minister and others".

The HC bench clarified that its and the earlier orders of this Court are not to be construed as unfettered authority to CBI to inquire into transfers and postings of the Police Officers generally, which do not reflect upon the alleged act and conduct expressly attributed to the then Home Minister and others. After clarifying the same, the Division Bench reiterated that the present Writ Petition, which was pending, would be decided on its own merits. "This division bench has already made it clear that all aspects of police transfers are not handed over to the CBI to investigate.

Opp raises Lakhimpur insists...

From Page 1

Asked about the demand for a discussion, he added, "Parliamentary rules dictate that a sub-judice matter is not discussed (in Parliament)".

The Leader of the House in the Rajya Sabha also hit out at the Opposition members for their continuous disruption of the House proceedings to seek revocation of the suspension of 12 members, who allegedly attacked marshals and indulged in "unruly" conduct inside the chamber in the last session.

This shows that the Opposition parties lack any real issue to criticize the Government and are not keen on raising pro-people matters, Goyal said.

He sought to say that the Lok Sabha was scheduled to discuss the issue of price rise and the Rajya Sabha the Covid-19 situation following the outbreak of the Omicron variant but the Opposition protests caused adjournments in both the Houses.

The Union Minister said 12 Opposition members were suspended for damaging the confidence of Parliamentary security staff and added that the suspended MPs also lowered the Chair's dignity. They should tender an apology for their conduct, he said.

Fully back US laws on sanctions or waiver: Biden's pick for...

From Page 1

Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt, replying to a question in Lok Sabha on December 3, said the government is aware of all developments that may impact procurement of defence equipment.

Bhatt said the S-400 missile is a potent system and India's air defence capability will be significantly enhanced following its induction.

During the confirmation hearing, Garcetti praised the increasing defence trade between the US and India.

"I think it is one of the great success stories of the last few decades from zero to USD 20 billion in procurement, the intelligence sharing that we have, the interoperability, the exercises, the maritime work that we're doing," he said. India is the only designated Major Defence Partner of the United States.

Having concluded four major defence enabling agreements since 2016, the United States and India have made significant progress as Major Defence Partners and America looks forward to further increasing information sharing, bilateral and multilateral exercises, maritime secu-

Video of...

From Page 1

He tried to shut down the mobile phone of another journalist who was recording the incident.

The viral video shows the Minister using expletives and threatening media persons present there before walking off. He referred to journalists as "chor". "These people have no shame. Can't they see this is a hospital, so many people are here," the MoS can be heard saying, adding that his son is innocent and is being framed. The BJP leader gets into a verbal altercation with a reporter and in his temper he even lunges at someone, the video shows. He eventually leaves in a huff. Earlier in the day, the Lok Sabha proceedings were adjourned till Thursday as the Opposition members raised slogans and waved placards demanding the sacking of Mishra.

"I would not only just bring it up, but it would not be something at the end as an obligation. It will be a core piece of what I'll be engaging my Indian counterparts have confirmed with," he said.

"There's no question that the US India relationship should be underpinned by our common commitment to democracy, human rights and to civil society... If confirmed, I will actively raise these issues. I'll raise them with humility. It's a two-way street on these, but I intend to engage directly with civil society," he said.

"There are groups that are actively fighting for the human rights of people on the ground in India that will get direct engagement from me. We know that democracies are complicated and we can look at our own and at India's, but it's a cornerstone of our shared values," Garcetti said. **PTI**

Deported...

From Page 1

Suresh had in the past allegedly organised an attack on noted lawyer and NCP leader Majeed Memon. He had also allegedly threatened current State Minister and NCP leader Jitendra Awahad and Omie Kalani, son of Pappu Kalani from Ulhasnagar. Over the years, he had been threatening and extorting money from hoteliers, builders and politicians.

Suresh is the third notorious gangster to have been deported during the last three years. Earlier, Ravi Pujari and Ejaz Lakdawala were extradited from abroad in 2020. Once he is remanded to judicial custody in the coming days, Suresh will be lodged at the high-security Arthur Road prison, where under trial-gangsters and terrorists are kept normally.

Suresh is the third notorious gangster to have been deported during the last three years. Earlier, Ravi Pujari and Ejaz Lakdawala were extradited from abroad in 2020. Once he is remanded to judicial custody in the coming days, Suresh will be lodged at the high-security Arthur Road prison, where under trial-gangsters and terrorists are kept normally.

The SIT had urged the chief judicial magistrate to replace IPC sections 279 (rash driving/riding), 338 (causing grievous injuries by negligence) and 304A (causing death by a rash and negligent act) with IPC section 307 (attempt to murder) among others. It also recommended the promulgation of IPC sections 326 (voluntarily causing injuries by dangerous weapons), 34 (acts by several persons with common intentions) and sections 3/25/30 of the Arms Act in warrants of the 13 accused.

The violence in Lakhimpur Kheri's Tikunia broke out when a group of farmers was protesting the visit of Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya to Union Minister Mishra's native place and it left four farmers, a local journalist, two BJP workers and a driver dead and several injured.

Saving criminals and taking dip in Ganga won't work: CPI takes jibe at PM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Communist Party of India State Secretary Dr Girish took a jibe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying saving criminals and taking a dip in the Ganga to wash sin would not work now.

"If PM Modi wants to save his party from public ire, then he would have to remove Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Mishra Teni whose name has surfaced in the Lakhimpur Kheri case," he said.

Girish alleged that the Union minister hatched a conspiracy to murder of farmers and used his ministerial power to destroy the evidence against him and his son.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA Mail ID: sepwdbalangir@gmail.com
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, BALANGIR (R&B) CIRCLE: BALANGIR
 e - Procurement Notice
BID IDENTIFICATION No: CCE (R&B) BGR / 09/ 2021-22
 No. 3468 // Dtd. 13.12.2021

The Chief Construction Engineer, Bolangir (R&B) Circle, Bolangir on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate composite bid in double cover system in **ONLINE MODE** for the construction of works detailed in the table below from **B/A/Special/Super Class Contractors** registered with the State Governments and contractors of equivalent Grade/ Class registered with Central Government/ MES/ Railways for execution of Civil works. The proof of registration from the appropriate authority shall be enclosed along with the bid.

1. Nature of Work	: Building, Road and Bridge
2. No. of tender	: Buildings- 9 no's, Road-1no and Bridge- 2no's
3. Tender Cost	: Rs. 10, 000/-
4. Class of Contractor	: B/A/Special/Super
5. Date & Time of sale & Receipt of Bids	: From Dt. 24.12.2021, 10.00 A.M. to Dt. 07.01.2022 up to 05.00 P.M.
6. Date of opening Bid	: Dt..10.01.2022 at 11.00 A.M.
7. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: http://tendersonssa.gov.in . All future corrigendum will be available on ONLINE MODE only.	

OIPR-34131/11/0009/2122 Chief Constructn Engr, Balangir (R&B) Circle, Balangir.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (CIVIL) PLANT WW
 DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT OF NCT DELHI
 CHANDRAWAL: WATER WORKS NO. II CIVIL LINES : DELHI-54
 Office Tel/Phone No. :-23815504
 E-mail:- eecplant.djb@nic.in

"STOP CORONA: WEAR MASK, FOLLOW PHYSICAL DISTANCING, MAINTAIN HAND HYGIENE."
 SHORT PRESS NIT No.25/Item No.1 & 2/(2021-22)

S No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost	Earnest Money (EMD)	Tender Processing Fee (Fresh)	Publication date of tender in e-procurement solution	Last date & time for receipt of tender form e-procurement solution
1.	Providing laying 400 mm dia DI water line from Manhole No. 3 to Raw Water Inlet Channel at Chandrawal WW- II. (Tender ID: 2021_DJB_212788_1)	3487740/-	Exempted vide Office Endorsement No. DJB/2020-21/MISC-II(PT)/971 dated 23/12/2020 of Jt. Director (F&A)-DJB	500/-	15.12.2021	21.12.2021

The more detail required above can be seen on website www.delhi.govtprocurement.com
ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) Advt. No. J.S.V. 815/2021-22 **EX. ENGINEER(C) PLANT, WW**

Office of Superintending Engineer Civil Circle, P.W.D., Devpura Haridwar
 Website: <http://pwd.uk.gov.in> Fax/Phone No.: 01334-221407 E-mail: sepwdharidwar@gmail.com
 Letter No.: 3174/GC-CC/2021 Date: 15/12/2021

National Competitive Bidding (E-Tendering)
 The Superintending Engineer, Civil Circle, PWD, Haridwar on behalf of "Governor of Uttarakhnad" invites item rate tender through E-tendering under Two Bid system. All information will be available from date 18.12.2021 and onwards on website <http://www.uktenders.gov.in>.

Sr. No.	Name of work	Earnest Money (Rs. in Lacs)	Cost of Tender (Rs.)	Time of Completion of work (in Months)	Validity of Tender (Days)	Category of Contractor
1	Widening and strengthening with BM and SDBC of Bongla-Rohalki-Alipur road in constituency Jwalapur Distt. Haridwar under State Sector	10.00	5000.00 + 18.00 % GST	12 Months	120 Days	Category 'A/AA' for Road work in any State Govt./ Central Govt.

Note:- Submission of following documents (Sl. 1 to 4) in original is essential in above mentioned office upto/before the last date and schedule time of uploading tender by the bidders.

- Cost of tender document as per column 4 shall be attached in the form of demand draft in favour of Executive Engineer, Provincial Division, PWD, Haridwar. Bank draft for Rs. 5000.00 and G.S.T. Rs. 900.00 to be submitted separately.
- Validity of Tender for 120 Days should be written on Rs 100.00 Non Judicial stamp paper with duly signed and affixed Rs. 1.00 Revenue stamp.
- Earnest Money as per column 3 to pledged in the name of Superintending Engineer, Civil Circle, PWD, Haridwar.
- Copy of Registration.

Superintending Engineer Civil Circle, PWD, Haridwar

जल संसाधन विभाग
 कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
 सोन नहर प्रमण्डल, खगौल
अल्पकालीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या-01 SBD/ 2021-22
राष्ट्रीय स्पर्धा निविदा
 (केवल ई-टेंडर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)

क्र०	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि (लाख रु० में)	अग्रघन की राशि (लाख रु० में)	परिभाषा विवरण का मूल्य (अप्रत्यक्षीय) (लाख रु० में)	बेट्टान को देय "बीड प्रोसेसिंग फी" (अप्रत्यक्षीय) (केवल ऑनलाईन मोड में मुफ्त) (रु०)	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि (माह में)
1	पटना मुख्य नहर के 86.10 किमी० से निःसृत आर० पी चैनल- 04 के पुनर्स्थापन एवं नदीकरण कार्य।	942.64	18.86	10,000/-	5,900/-	26
2	विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता:- कार्यपालक अभियंता, सोन नहर प्रमण्डल, खगौल।					
3	निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना निर्गत करने की तिथि:- दिनांक 13.12.2021					
4	निविदा कागजात डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड करने की अवधि:- दिनांक 21.12.2021 के 10:00 बजे पूर्ववाह से 27.12.2021 के 3:00 बजे अपराह्न तक। केवल वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर।					
5	प्री-बीड मीटिंग की तिथि, समय एवं स्थान:- दिनांक 23.12.2021 को 3:00 बजे अपराह्न में मुख्य अभियंता का कार्यालय, सिंघाई सुजान, जल संसाधन विभाग, डिहरी।					
6	तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय:- दिनांक 29.12.2021 के अपराह्न 3:00 बजे। केवल वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर।					
7	वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय:- सक्षम पदाधिकारी द्वारा बाद में वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर घोषित की जायेगी।					
8	निविदा खोलने का स्थान:- केवल वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर।					
9	निविदा घेना की अवधि:- 120 दिन।					
10	विशेष जानकारी प्राप्त करने हेतु वेबसाइट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in & https://fmiscwrdbihar.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है।					

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Strife, exits set to mar Cong's poll prospects

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With municipal elections round the corner in the national Capital, Delhi Congress seems to be struggling with internal disputes as more than 50 senior leaders have left the party within the span of the last six months. While scores of senior party leaders including party's vice-presidents are not happy alleging 'ignorance' from party Delhi unit president Anil Kumar while framing the party's strategy.

A senior party leader said that many such leaders are not even invited in any decision making process and the ignorance is certainly going to have a huge impact on upcoming municipal elections.

At the time when the ruling BJP is facing wrath of the people after it failed to deliver in the last 15 years, the Congress has an opportunity to gain the ground but the internal disputes will harm the possibility of success to great extent.

Recently, in a meeting held at Pradesh Congress Committee, it was decided that party's senior leaders including four terms MLA and former secretary in AICC for 10 years Jaikishan, Shivani Chopra, Ali Mehndi, Mudit Agarwal and Abhishek dutt was given authority of some of the departments but still all the affairs are decided by party president alone, he said.

This was the reason, he said "Party's 'Pol Khol Yatra' failed to garner support of the public as the campaign was not supported and coordinated by leaders at district level. The attempts to reach out to the people were scattered due to



lack of coordination among the party leaders.

The Congress has divided into a faction and it will cost the party's chances of winning seats in municipal elections," a senior party functionary said. According to sources in the party even one of the vice-presidents has written to the top leadership expressing displeasure over the functioning of the party in the leadership of party Delhi unit president Anil Kumar.

Five-time municipal councillor and senior Congress leader Mukesh Goel joined the AAP along with about a dozen office-bearers of the Congress, including two-time former councillor Parma Bhai Solanki. Party sitting councillor and Karawal Nagar Mahila district president Amarlati Sangwan also left the party to join the BJP.

The BJP had emerged as the clear winner in the last Municipal Corporation elections winning 184 seats. The AAP came a distant second with just 46 seats in all the three Delhi municipal corporations, while the Congress could just manage to win 30 seats and others got 10 seats.

HC refuses to entertain PIL on removing content on Shah Jahan, Aurangzeb from NCERT books

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court on Wednesday refused to entertain a PIL seeking a direction to NCERT to remove and rectify its Class 12 history textbook which states that grants were issued during the reign of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb for repairing temples destroyed during wars.

A bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh said it would impose costs and asked if the petitioners, who claimed to be "hardworking and sincere students", wanted the court to review the policies of the Mughal rulers by way of its "so-called PIL".

"You are saying you have a problem that Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb had no such policy for giving the grants for temple repair etc? ...You want us to decide about the policies of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb? The high court will decide?" the bench questioned.

The court remarked that the petition was wasting judicial time and subsequently allowed the petitioners to unconditionally withdraw the plea.

The petitioners Sanjeev Vikal and Dapinder Singh Virk claimed that the NCERT has no record or information regarding the content being taught to students and wrongly projected the acts of the Mughals.

"Para 2 to page 234 of the 'Themes



in Indian History Part 2' textbook, was published without any valid source of information and was inserted just to glorify the reign of Mughal Emperors Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb," the petition stated.

"It is well known fact that most of the Mughals emperors levied heavy taxes upon the performance of the religious ceremony and pilgrim tours from the people who belong to Hindu religion. It is not a new fact that the Mughal Emperors also compelled the non-Muslim people to get converted to Islamic religion," it added.

The petitioners claimed that they even filed an RTI application before the public information officer of NCERT who stated that no information was available in their files with respect to the "source from which NCERT concluded" the statement in question.

PTI

19 new aircraft stands become operational at Delhi airport's Terminal 1

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Airport has completed the expansion work of first phase of smart Apron of Terminal 1, Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) spokesperson said on Wednesday.

In the first phase, 19 out of 82 Code C stands have been constructed, and all of them have become operational after statutory approval from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation.

The completion of the first phase of works for the expansion of T1's new smart Apron is another step towards enhancing the infrastructure and passenger experience at Delhi Airport to make it future-ready.

The new smart apron will not only facilitate improved passenger experience by improving operational efficiency and safety on the airside, but also contribute towards significantly reducing harmful CO2 emissions, underlining DIAL's commitment to environment-friendly outcomes and initiatives. Post completion of Phase 3A Expansion Works, the passenger handling capacity of Delhi Airport would increase to 100 million passengers per annum (MPPA) and the airside capacity will be enhanced to handle 140 MPPA.

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I. Prabhakara Rao, Deputy Managing Director, GMR Group,

Hyundai Motor India signs MoU with 4 Indian women cricketers

Gurugram: South Korean automobile major Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL) on Wednesday kicked off 'The Drive Within' campaign and signed a Memorandum of understanding (MoU) with four Indian Women Cricketers at Hyundai headquarters in Gurugram.

Hyundai has entered into an exclusive one-year association with Smriti Mandhana, Vice-Captain of Indian Women's Cricket Team, Jemima Rodrigues, Taniya Bhatia and Shafali Verma as Brand Ambassadors to highlight and celebrate their contribution to Indian cricket.

The event was attended also by Smriti Mandhana, Vice-Captain of Indian Women's Cricket Team, Jemima Rodrigues, Taniya Bhatia and Shafali Verma.

Commenting on the MoU



signing, Seon Seob Kim, MD & CEO, HMIL, said, "We are glad to announce an association with truly inspiring players in Indian Women Cricket. The grit & spirit shown by these sportswomen will become a role model for the entire nation. We are proud to announce them as Brand Ambassadors for taking the Hyundai spirit forward. This association with India's top women cricketers signifies Hyundai's commitment towards enabling women youth power that defines the new age India."

He said Hyundai is celebrating the spirit of Indian women cricketers setting new benchmarks and inspiring millions with 'The Drive Within' campaign.

City air quality worsens, returns to 'very poor' category in morning

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Just a few days after recording improved air quality, Delhi's air quality index (AQI) returned to a very poor category on Wednesday morning. According to the Centre-run System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting And Research (SAFAR), the overall Air Quality Index (AQI) of Delhi in the morning was recorded at 346.

The AQI of Delhi's neighbouring region Noida also slipped into the very poor category with the AQI 344.

According to SAFAR's short range air quality weather forecast, shallow foggy conditions are likely to keep AQI poor for next 2 days. "On 16th air quality is going to improve and from 17th onwards significant improvement is likely due to high wind speeds that keeps AQI within 'poor' or 'lower end of very poor' category," it added.

Meanwhile, Gurugram's air quality has also declined from moderate to poor category with the AQI at 246. The air quality in the capital marginally improved and moved to the 'poor' category from 'very poor' on Sunday. The AQI on Monday was recorded at 256 in 'poor' category.

Notably, an AQI of 0-50 indicates acceptable air quality, 51-100 indicates satisfactory air quality, 101-200 indicates moderate air quality, 201-300 indicates poor air quality, 301-400 indicates very bad air quality and 401-500 indicates severe/hazardous air quality. The SAFAR had earlier predicted an improvement in the air quality from November 21, however, the sudden drop in temperature has now affected Delhi air quality negatively. SAFAR has issued an advisory to avoid outdoor physical activity and prolonged exertion in view of the poor air quality.

Delhi government has started bus service for its employees from 14 sites to the Secretariat, officials said, in response to the city's deteriorating winter air quality. To boost public transportation and reduce air pollution, the Government is also running roughly 700 more buses on various routes under the 'Paryawaran Sewa' programme.



Delhi Police signs MoU with NLU for training of officers

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police on Wednesday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the National Law University (NLU) for training of officers and investigators.

"The Delhi Police and National Law University (NLU) have joined hands to evolve and impart comprehensive legal education at all levels of basic police training," said Chinmoy Biswal, the spokesperson of Delhi Police.

According to the statement issued by the police, the partnership aims to disseminate legal knowledge and processes among police personnel and to make them aware about their role in national development through short-term courses, lectures, seminars, workshops and conferences.

Delhi Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana said, "Seventy per cent of our battle in investigation is fought in the court of law and strong legal foundation is very significant for securing conviction in any case. Keeping this in mind, investigation has been separated from other law and order duties and a separate wing has been dedicated for this at police station level."

The NLU has designed the



module of legal subjects for Delhi Police officers inducted at different levels i.e. DANIPS officers, sub inspectors etc. Till now various courses on law and legal provisions for the recruits were being conducted with the help of police officers, public prosecutors and other private law experts, as per statement.

The law module is designed to provide inputs to Delhi Police officers with dynamic and complex problems in law related matters. The programmes include relevant law-oriented learning for police officials through case studies, role plays and other practical methods, the statement stated.

The statement said that the NLU faculty will undertake courses on the Constitution of

India, Code of Criminal Procedures, Indian Evidence Act, Indian Penal Code and important Minor Acts like POCSO, Arms Act, JJ Act, NDPS Act, I.T. Act, MCOCA etc.

Besides designing basic legal training for DANIPS officers & Sub Inspectors, NLU will also conduct promotion courses for ASIs/SIs and Refresher courses for in-service officers. E-learning modules have also been designed on relevant law related subjects, it said.

The National Law University, Delhi is located in Dwarka and is one of the most prestigious national law schools in the country. Established in 2008, it is offering academic courses at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

HC calls for national database of societies to check old ones, grant new registrations

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court has called for creation of a national database of societies whose access would be provided to all the registrars across the country to check for existing registered societies and granting registrations to new ones.

The high court said it appeared that the Registrar of Societies itself, as an authority, is under confusion as to whether it has the power to cancel registrations or not, which is reflected in differing stands that it takes in various writ petitions.

Justice Prathiba M Singh said the court was of the view that there is an imminent need to consider amendments in the Societies Registration Act, 1860, as it applies to

Delhi, for including provisions to safeguard the rights of third parties who may have grievances with the grant of registration to a particular society.

The high court said the Registrar of Societies also ought to be an authority which exercises the responsibility of granting registrations to a society after at least doing a basic check as to whether a society with an identical/ similar name exists or not.

"For this purpose, a national database of societies may have to be created and access of the same would have to be provided to all the Registrars across the country, to check for existing Registered Societies, while granting registrations to new ones," the court said.

Motorcycle-borne man dies after collision with truck

New Delhi: A 36-year-old man was killed after he was accidentally knocked down by a truck in north Delhi's Burari area on Tuesday night, police said.

The truck driver has been arrested, they said. Mahender Kumar, a resident of Tikri Khurd in Narela, was en route to his house on his motorcycle after visiting a relative when he came under the truck at around 10.45 pm.

He was driving a cab for a living, they said on Wednesday. According to a senior police officer, the truck driver Ram Prakash (47), a native of Uttar Pradesh, took the Burari flyover here only to realise that he was on the wrong road and hence moved his vehicle backwards.

A++ ranking in NAAC review a result of team effort, says Jamia V-C

New Delhi: Jamia Millia Islamia vice-chancellor Najma Akhtar said on Wednesday that the A++ ranking in the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) review was a result of the team effort and despite the Covid pandemic, the university was prepared for the assessment.

The grading provided by the council is crucial for funds and grants allotted to a varsity by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

Jamia Millia Islamia has got a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.61. The CGPA for A++ accreditation is between 3.51 and 4.

Jamia Millia Islamia had been ranked A in the first cycle of NAAC review in 2015.

"We were expecting it. The NAAC happens every five years and we should remain good in those five years. Our university was also affected by Covid and we found a way to prepare ourselves. We kept in mind the NAAC parameters, including evaluation, governance, research infrastructure etc," she told reporters. The NAAC team visited the campus from December 6 to December 8.

Akhtar said 70 per cent of the assessment is based on what the university sends about its projects and initiatives to the NAAC, while 30 per cent is based on the NAAC team's visit.

"Everyone worked really hard. They got trained how to teach online. It reflects our sheer hard work. If you work hard, you will still get this ranking even if you are a minority university," she said.

Akhtar added that the ranking is not only a confidence booster for Jamia Millia Islamia but also for other universities.

Apart from Jamia Millia Islamia, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and IGNOU have received the A++ grading, she said. "We do not have competition with JNU which has mostly masters and PhD programmes. IGNOU is a different university in character. We offer Bachelors, masters, diploma and PhD programmes and ours is a multi faculty university," she added.

For the NAAC visit, the university had constituted an IQAC team headed by professor Shafeeqe Ansari, who passed away during the pandemic, she said.

Govt launches 'Bhimachi Jai' song celebrating Babasaheb Ambedkar's life

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Wednesday launched the theme song of a play based on the life of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar which would be organised at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium on January 5.

Sisodia said, "Babasaheb laid the foundation of modern India. This play is an effort to express our gratitude towards Babasaheb's contribution towards the county in this 75th year of independence. Today, we are launching the theme song of the play with Indian Ocean band," Sisodia said while launching the song at the Specialised School of Excellence at Kalkaji.

The duration of the song is 5.30 minutes.

Indian Ocean band members performed the song which goes as "Jab tak Jan Gan Man ka maan rahega, jab tak ye samvidhan rahega, jab tak hindustan rahega... Babasaheb ka

nam rahega."

He added that there is a tradition to express gratitude towards legends through big plays or arts in foreign countries but such a big stage play was never organised in India before this. "This tradition is being started in India by the Arvind Kejriwal Government. This play will be very grand and free for all. I appeal everyone to come and watch it," Sisodia said.

Earlier this month, paying tributes to Ambedkar on his death anniversary, Chief Minister Kejriwal had announced that an international level stage play based on the life of Babasaheb Ambedkar will be organised at the JLN Stadium on January 5.

He had said the play will be staged by well-known actors with international level production.

He also had said there will be 50 shows of the play on a 100 feet long stage.

On this occasion, Indian

Ocean Band artist Rahul Ram said that such a grand event is being organised in Delhi for the first time based on the life of Babasaheb. The entire team of Indian Ocean Band thanks the Delhi Government for this opportunity.

Music composer Amit Kilam said that youth have a unique enthusiasm for music. Music is a very powerful tool to get any message across to everyone.

We are very happy that by joining this campaign of the Delhi Government, we will work to spread Dr. Ambedkar's message of equality, harmony and brotherhood to the people through music.

Himanshu Joshi, another member of the Indian Ocean band, said that our song "Bhimachi Jai" is a tribute to Dr. Ambedkar, one of the founders of the country, the father of modern India, the father of the Indian Constitution and the greatest proponent of the fight for equality for the oppressed.

Girl goes missing during b'day shopping trip; Delhi Police rescues, reunites her with family

New Delhi: For a couple from Uttar Pradesh a fun-filled trip to the national Capital for shopping for their daughter's sixth birthday turned into a harrowing experience after she got lost in the crowded and cramped Chandni Chowk market.

With bags of clothes and birthday decorations, the girl's parents went shop to shop enquiring about their daughter, finally reaching a police post where they sought help.

"They were tense and in tears. We deployed our local network to find the girl and after a two-hour search, we finally traced her," said Head Constable Bharat recalling the December 7 incident.

It was difficult to locate her amid the huge rush of shoppers, but not impossible, said Bharat, who is in touch with the family who celebrated the girl's birthday on Wednesday.

"They had invited me and my colleagues to attend her birthday party, but "we have our duties here," said the head constable, who plans to visit the family in Uttar Pradesh's Kondri village soon along with his team from the Lahori Gate police station. The details of the girl were sent on WhatsApp groups, comprising shopkeepers, police personnel and local institutions, he said, adding that the girl was found by members of the Shish Ganj Gurudwara in Chandni Chowk.

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MAHA LOCAL BODY POLLS

27% reserved OBC seats notified as general by SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the State Election Commission (SEC) of Maharashtra to notify 27 per cent seats in the local body, which were reserved for the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), as general category so that the poll process can be taken forward.

The apex court had on December 6 stayed till further orders the local body election in Maharashtra on seats reserved for the OBCs and had made it clear that the poll process for the other seats would continue.

A bench of Justices AM Khanwilkar and CT Ravikumar, which was hearing an application filed by Maharashtra Government seeking modification of the last week order, directed the SEC to issue fresh notification for the 27 per cent seats within a week.

"In other words, the SEC must immediately issue fresh notification for the 27 per cent seats, reserved for OBC, as general category and initiate election process for these seats along with the election process, already on its way for the remaining 73 per cent of seats, in the concerned local body,"



The apex court had on December 6 stayed till further orders the local body election in Maharashtra on seats reserved for the OBCs and had made it clear that the poll process for the other seats would continue

the bench said.

The bench said it is not possible to countenance the arguments that without complying with the triple test, which is required to be followed before provisioning such reservation for OBC category, the state authority or SEC can be permitted to notify the seats for OBC in any local bodies.

The apex court had passed the order last week while hearing two pleas, including the one assailing the provisions inserted/amended through an Ordinance permitting reserva-

tion for the category of backward class of citizens up to 27 per cent uniformly throughout Maharashtra in the concerned local bodies.

In its order passed on Wednesday, the bench said there is no reason to modify the December 6 order in that regard. Apex court however, said the hiatus cannot be continued for an indefinite period.

"As has been ordered in the case of... we would follow the same route by directing the state authority and the SEC to treat the notification issued for reservation for OBC as non-est in every local body, in which election are already notified, and to re-notify those seats for general category so that election to those seats can also be taken forward as per law along with the election of remaining 73 per cent seats, on which the process is already on its way," the bench said.

The top court said that SEC must declare the result of both the elections on the same day local body wise. SC said this direction would apply even to the by-elections of the concerned local bodies. It said the SEC's counsel wanted clarification as to whether these directions would apply in this election or should govern future poll also.

PORNOGRAPHY CASE

Apex court grants protection from arrest to Kundra

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday granted protection from arrest to businessman Raj Kundra in connection with an FIR registered against him for allegedly distributing pornographic videos.



In July this year, Kundra, who is married to actor Shilpa Shetty, was arrested by Mumbai Police in another case where he was accused of distributing porn films through an app. He was granted bail in September.

A bench of justices Vineet Saran and Aniruddha Bose on Wednesday issued notice to the Maharashtra Government on an appeal filed by Kundra against a Bombay High Court order rejecting his anticipatory bail. The apex court sought the State Government's reply within four weeks in connection with the FIR filed by the cyber cell of the Mumbai Police.

Kundra had been booked under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code, Indecent Representation of Women (Prevention) Act and Information Technology Act for allegedly distributing/transmitting sexually explicit videos. Fearing arrest, Kundra first sought anticipatory bail from the sessions court, but it was refused, so he moved the HC, claiming that he had been framed. The High Court also rejected his anticipatory bail application on November 25. The FIR named actors Sheryl Chopra and Poonam Pandey as co-accused.

Cabinet OK's ₹76K cr for semiconductor

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

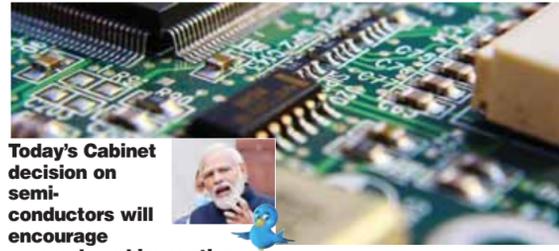
The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved Rs 76,000-crore policy boost for semiconductor and display manufacturing ecosystem in the country in a bid to position India as a global hub for hi-tech production.

The Cabinet also approved reimbursement of Rs 1,300 crore on digital transactions using UPI and RuPay debit cards, Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that the Cabinet's decision on semiconductors will encourage research and innovation in the sector and also boost manufacturing, strengthening the "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" programme. Modi tweeted, "Today's Cabinet decision on semiconductors will encourage research and innovation in the sector. It will also boost manufacturing and thus strengthen the dream of an Aatmanirbhar Bharat."

Announcing the decision of the Cabinet, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw observed that electronics plays an important role in everyday life, and semiconductor chips form a crucial part of electronics. Outlining the details of the scheme, he said the Rs 76,000 crore programme has been approved for the development of semiconductors and display manufacturing ecosystem.

The scheme is expected to usher in a new era in electronics manu-



Today's Cabinet decision on semiconductors will encourage research and innovation in the sector. It will also boost manufacturing and thus strengthen the dream of an Aatmanirbhar Bharat

NARENDRA MODI

facturing by providing a globally competitive incentive package to companies in semiconductors and display manufacturing as well as design. It will strengthen India's technological prowess in these areas of strategic importance and economic self-reliance. The programme will give an impetus to semiconductor and display manufacturing by facilitating capital support and technological collaborations.

The scheme for setting up of semiconductor fabs and display fabs in India will extend fiscal support of up to 50 per cent of project cost to eligible applicants. The Centre will work closely with the state governments on high-tech clusters with re-

quisite infrastructure in terms of land, semiconductor grade water, power, logistics and research ecosystem, to approve applications for setting up at least two greenfield semiconductor fabs and two display fabs in the country. At least 15 such units of compound semiconductors and semiconductor packaging are expected to be established with government support under this scheme.

Detailing the decision on UPI payments, the Minister said the Government will reimburse transaction charges levied on digital payments made by persons to the merchant as part of the merchant discount rate (MDR).

"In the coming one year... The Government will invest around Rs 1,300 crore so that more and more people move towards digital payments," Vaishnaw said. He also said that 423 crore digital transactions valued at Rs 7.56 lakh crore took place in November.

Railway bribery case: CBI arrests 4, recovers ₹2.19 crore cash

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Wednesday said it has arrested a Chief Engineer (Electrical), a Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer of Northeast Frontier Railway, a director of a private company and his employee in an on-going investigation of bribery case and recovered Rs 2.19 crore in cash and property documents during searches.

The arrested accused are — Chief Engineer (Electrical) VK Upadhyay, Deputy Chief Engineer, Ranjit Kumar Borah of Northeast Frontier Railway, Maligaon, Guwahati, Director Patna-based Sun Shine Devices Private Limited, Chintan Jain and his employee Niraj Kumar, the agency said.

Searches were conducted at nine locations including Guwahati, Patna and Noida among others at the premises of the accused which led to recovery of a total cash of Rs. 2.19 crore and several incriminating documents, it said.

Out of this, cash of Rs. 2.13 crore along with details of three flats in Noida were found at the premises of Chief Engineer (Electrical). Likewise, cash of Rs 6 lakh along with details of six flats in the name of Deputy Chief

Engineer and his family members, including at Guwahati, were found at his premises, it added.

The case was registered on December 14 against Borah, Jain and Kumar besides other unknown public servants and private persons.

It was alleged that during his stint in NFR, Borah had obtained two immovable properties in the form of benami flats as alleged illegal gratification from Jain.

It was further alleged that the accused demanded a bribe of Rs 2.10 crore from the private persons in lieu of the two benami flats for extending undue benefits to him in the past and also assured to extend undue favour in future as well.

It was also alleged that Jain started transferring the bribe money to the public servant in installments.

The CBI laid a trap and apprehended Borah and Kumar as soon as the bribe amount of Rs 15 lakh was exchanged between them.

During investigation, the role of the Chief Engineer also allegedly surfaced in the case and he was also apprehended. The arrested accused persons are being produced before the Competent Court at Guwahati and further Investigation is continuing, it added.

E-rickshaw permit: SC junks Bajaj Auto plea

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday dismissed a plea by Bajaj Auto against AAP Government's decision to issue 4,261 new permits only to e-autos, saying Delhi residents are badly affected by air pollution, a part of which is contributed by vehicles. The top court said even though CNG auto rickshaws are BS-VI compliant, there is still some carbon emission.

A bench headed by Justice L Nageswara Rao said the advertisement issued by the Delhi Government inviting applications for e-autorickshaws cannot be said to be arbitrary as it is in conformity with FAME-II scheme and the Electric Vehicle policy 2020.

"Residents of Delhi are badly affected by the air pollution, undoubtedly a part of which is contributed by vehicles. Even though CNG autos are BS-VI compliant, there is still some carbon emission."

"We also do not agree that the fundamental right of the applicant (Bajaj Auto) is violated. Amendment to Motor Vehicles Act cannot be read to mean that addition of e-autos on the road can be done over and above one lakh autos," the bench also comprising Justices BR Gavai and BV Nagarathna said. The Delhi Government opposed the plea filed by Bajaj Auto on the ground that CNG auto rickshaws cannot be compared to e-autos.

It said there is a proposal to



switch to electric vehicles with a view to decarbonise the transport sector. The AAP Government also referred to the FAME-II scheme of the Centre and electric vehicle policy 2020. 92,000 CNG autorickshaws have

already been registered in Delhi and there is a continuous process of replacement of old CNG auto rickshaws, Delhi government said.

Advocate ADN Rao, who is amicus curiae in the case, submitted that the application deserves to be dismissed as amendment made to motor vehicles act and central motor vehicle rules only relates to payment of registration fees. The Transport department of Delhi government had invited online applications for registration of 4,261 new permits for e-autorickshaws.

Bajaj Auto had moved the apex court with the claim that the advertisement was arbitrary and discriminatory to manufacturers of existing CNG three-seater autorickshaws (TSR).

4 in 10 Covid cases asymptomatic: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

About four in ten Covid-19 cases are asymptomatic, according to a new study conducted by a team from Beijing's Peking University which included 95 studies conducted on three different continents, representing almost 30 million people who were tested for Covid.

Overall, about 40 per cent of Covid patients in the analysis had asymptomatic cases. The researchers defined an asymptomatic case as a person who tested positive on a PCR test — considered to be the gold standard for Covid testing — while not feeling any symptoms at the time.

For some sub-groups, like pregnant women and travelers on airplanes and cruises, the figure was about 50 per cent. The researchers also used 77 out of the 95 studies to estimate the number of Covid cases that occurred without symptoms.

Those studies included about 20,000 Covid cases in total, of which



40.5 per cent were asymptomatic.

The study shows that many people who may feel fine are still at risk of spreading the virus, and demonstrates the importance of widely available Covid testing, particularly for travelers.

The study found that certain populations, such as air and cruise travelers and pregnant women, were more likely to be asymptomatic than the overall population. The study found that certain populations, such as air and cruise travelers and pregnant women, were more likely to be asymptomatic than the overall population.

Covid cases can range from severe symptoms that land patients in the hospital — to mild, cold-like

symptoms, or no symptoms at all. Asymptomatic cases may help the coronavirus spread from person to person, because people can carry it without realising they're sick. Such cases distinguish the novel coronavirus from past SARS viruses, which typically don't spread without symptoms.

The new study on asymptomatic Covid infection suggests that they may be even more common than previously thought.

Researchers compiled and analyzed data from a number of studies focused on asymptomatic cases. The analysis was published in JAMA Network Open. It included 95 scientific studies in total, including 35 done in Europe, 32 in North America, and 25 in Asia.

Overall, the 95 studies included 29.8 million individuals who were tested for the virus. Among the population, 11,500 had asymptomatic Covid infections — about 0.25 per cent. Certain populations had higher numbers of asymptomatic Covid cases, the researchers found.

BJP MP compares Opp members protesting with Omicron

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A BJP MP on Wednesday compared the Opposition members protesting in the Rajya Sabha with "Omicron", alleging that they were a threat to democracy, and asked them to take the "Modi vaccine" to protect themselves from the new coronavirus variant.

Participating in a short-duration discussion on the situation arising out of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus in the Upper House of Parliament, BJP MP Shiv Pratap Shukla alleged that the Opposition members were running away from the debate as they did not want to recognise the efforts of the Government in controlling the spread of the virus.

He also urged them to follow social distancing norms and wear masks while protesting in the Well of the House.

Shukla asked the protesting members to take the vaccine against Covid-19 which, he said, the opposition had earlier dubbed as "Modi vaccine" or "BJP vaccine".

"We all are discussing Omicron and Omicron is standing right before us," Shukla said, pointing towards the opposition members. "I feel that there cannot be a bigger Omicron than this, which is not allowing Parliament to function. That is why there is a danger to democracy in Parliament because of these Omicrons. These Omicrons are not becoming silent even when the Chair is making efforts," he said, again pointing towards the protesting Opposition members.

The Opposition members objected to his remarks, with Manoj Kumar Jha of the RJD saying he has no right to speak so.

Twitter India ex-head quits firm

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Twitter India head Manish Maheshwari has left the company to work on an education engineering venture. Maheshwari, who had been transferred to the US in August this year, shared the development on a tweet.

"After close to three years, I am leaving Twitter to dedicate myself to #education and #teaching. While it is with a heavy heart that I leave Twitter, I am excited about the impact that can be created globally through education," he tweeted.

Maheshwari said he is partnering with Tanay Pratap, who has worked as a Senior Software Engineer with Microsoft. "We will start by imparting employability training via a virtually immersive platform, which we are calling #Metaversity," Maheshwari noted.

In a series of tweets, Maheshwari highlighted how Covid-19 has fundamentally changed not only the skills needed to be successful in the new economy but also how those skills are imparted, and the role technology — particularly metaverse — can play.

"Education is very close to my heart. I have been a teacher since high school



while growing up in a middle-class household in India's hinterland. Even at Wharton, I paid for my education by being a teaching assistant. This is an opportunity to go back to my roots," he said.

The US-based microblogging platform - which has an estimated 1.75 crore users in India — had courted controversy earlier this year over the new social media rules, and the Indian Government had confronted Twitter over deliberate defiance and failure to comply with the IT rules, despite repeated reminders.

Twitter had also faced flak for its various actions taken on tweets and accounts of high-profile users. In June, an FIR was registered against Maheshwari and some others in connection with a probe related to a video of an alleged hate crime that went viral on social media.

Durga Puja gets Heritage tag by UNESCO

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on Wednesday added West Bengal's largest annual festival, the Durga Puja, to its "Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity".

The decision to inscribe "Durga puja in Kolkata" in the list was taken on Wednesday, the second day of the 16th session of the intergovernmental committee, which is being held in Paris from December 13 to 18.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi took to twitter to laud the moment saying, "A matter of great pride and joy for every Indian! Durga Puja highlights the best of our traditions and ethos. And, Kolkata's Durga Puja is an experience everyone must have."

G Kishan Reddy, Union Minister For Culture, Tourism And Development Of North



Eastern Region (DoNER) said, "Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This is a recognition of the confluence of our rich heritage, culture, rituals & practices and a celebration of the feminine divinity & the spirit of womanhood. Jai Maa Durga!"

"The festival was particularly praised for its all-inclusive approach cutting across barriers of religion, gender and economic strata," said an official of

the Union ministry of culture who is posted in West Bengal.

As per the inscription on the UNESCO's website, "Durga Puja is seen as the best instance of the public performance of religion and art, and as a thriving ground for collaborative artists and designers. The festival is characterized by large-scale installations and pavilions in urban areas, as well as by traditional Bengali drumming and veneration of the

goddess.

"During the event, the divides of class, religion and ethnicities collapse as crowds of spectators walk around to admire the installations."

The last time an Indian festival got this recognition was the Kumbh mela in 2017 and Yoga in 2016. Traditional brass and copper craft of Punjab got the recognition in 2014, while Manipur's Sankirtana ritual singing got it in 2013.

Climate change hard on children, says study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Climate change is hard on children, making them vulnerable to infectious diseases too, a team of researchers has said in a study published in the journal "Science of the Total Environment".

For instance, during the study conducted in Varanasi city in Uttar Pradesh, the researchers from Banaras Hindu University (BHU) observed that a 1 degree Celsius rise in maximum temperature was associated with an increase in diarrhea and skin-disease cases by 3.97 per cent and 3.94 per cent, respectively.

Overall, they found that climate parameters accounted for 9-18 per cent of the total infectious disease cases among kids. The study which was conducted among 461 children under 16-years-of-age in Varanasi had probed the association between climate parameters



and infectious diseases in children under 16-years-of-age in Varanasi.

The researchers concluded

that maximum temperature and humidity are important drivers leading to infectious disease among children. Driven

by human-made activities, climate change may challenge the gains in the public health sector made over the years. Globally, it is estimated that children bear most of the burden of disease due to climate change, with the poorest disproportionately affected.

Led by RK Mall along with Nidhi Singh, T Banerjee, (all from central Indo-Gangetic Plain region DST-Mahamana Center of Excellence in Climate Change Research, BHU) and Akhilesh Gupta from Department of Science and Technology under Union Science and Technology Ministry established that climate parameters like temperature, humidity, rainfall, solar radiation, and wind speed were associated with infectious diseases like gastrointestinal diseases, respiratory diseases, vector-borne diseases, and skin diseases among children in the holy city.

Wanted Hizbul terrorist shot dead in Pulwama

PNS ■ JAMMU

A joint team of security forces Wednesday morning gunned down a self-styled district commander of pro-Pakistan Hizbul Mujahideen terrorist outfit in Uzrampathri area of Pulwama.

The slain terrorist has been identified as Feroz Ahmad Dar son of Abdul Khaliq resident of Heff-Shrimal Shopian. He was A+ category terrorist.

According to the police records the slain terrorist was involved in several terror crimes including attack on Minority Guard in year 2018 at Zainapora Shopian, in which 04 Police personnel were martyred.

According to a police spokesman the operation was launched late Tuesday night on receipt of information about

the presence of terrorists in the area.

As the cordon tightened the terrorist forcefully entered one of the houses in the village, which was swiftly surrounded and cut off by the security forces after safe evacuation of all the occupants. Intermittent exchange of fire between the terrorist and forces continued throughout the night. The terrorist was subsequently neutralised around 5:00 am on 15 Dec 21.

The slain terrorist had joined Hizbul Mujahideen on 27 May 2018 and was likely recruited by HM terrorist Adil Ahmed Wani. He was suspected to be involved in attacks on vehicles of security forces and terrorizing local population into assisting other terrorists and OGWs.

As per police records, Feroz

was active since 2017 and involved in several terror crime cases. He was also involved in killing of a girl namely Ishrat Muneer daughter of Muneer Ahmad Bhat resident of Dangerpora Pulwama in February 2019.

He was involved in killing of a non local labour namely Charnajeet son of Hans Raj resident of Fazila Punjab and injuring others in October 2019 when they were loading Apple boxes in a vehicle in Zainapora area of Shopian. Besides he was also instrumental in luring the gullible youth to join terrorist ranks.

"Incriminating materials, arms & ammunition including one AK rifle along with three magazines were also recovered from his possession", police spokesman added.

NHRC to 3 NE States: Don't register cases against scribes at drop of a hat

Shillong: Tripura, Meghalaya and Mizoram have been directed not to register cases against journalists at the "drop of a hat", National Human Rights Commission member Justice M M Kumar said on Wednesday.

The direction was given to chief secretaries and the directors of police of the three states during their deposition to the Commission at a two-day hearing here which concluded Wednesday.

The NHRC direction was given in connection to a complaint filed by Sanit Debroy of the Assembly of Journalists in Tripura and the Commission has given specific directions to that state's chief secretary and director general of police, Kumar said.

"We have told the states'

authorities during the hearing that they need to show patience and to give them (journalists) enough space to express their point of view ... We have also told them they don't register cases at the drop of a hat," he told PTI.

Debroy had approached the NHRC with his complaint that since the BJP-IPFT government came to power in the state in 2018 many scribes had been attacked and many newspaper offices had been vandalised.

The other two states, whose representatives were present at the meeting, were also directed to do the same.

"I have told the chief secretaries (of the three states) this (Wednesday) afternoon and they have taken note of the direction," he said. **PTI**

Nadda, CMs, Dy CMs of 11 BJP-ruled States visit Ayodhya

KAMLESH SRIVASTAVA ■ AYODHYA

Chief ministers and deputy chief ministers of 11 Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled States along with BJP national president JP Nadda visited Ayodhya and performed aarti and offered prayers at the Saryu Ghat in Ayodhya on Wednesday. Nadda said that all the chief ministers wanted to have 'darshan' of Ram Lalla since everyone had gathered in Varanasi for the meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"After the inauguration of Kashi Vishwanath Dham, a meeting of chief ministers was held. All of us wanted to have a darshan of Ram Lalla," Nadda said while addressing reporters in Ayodhya. The scheduled visit also included offering prayers at Hanuman Garhi temple and Saryu Ghat.

Local MP Lallu Singh and BJP district president Sanjeev Singh welcomed the guests. They also visited the site where the Ram temple is being constructed. "We also wanted to review the grand temple that is being built. The chief ministers keep meeting from time to time. Since everyone had come to Kashi they wanted to visit Ram Lalla," he added. The BJP president also said that it was his "heart's desire" that a grand Ram temple be built here. "It's a matter of joy that the dream of crores of Indians is being realised," he said. This is the first such visit by the BJP chief to the Ram Janmabhoomi after the Supreme Court's verdict on the issue. The Supreme Court delivered its verdict in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid case on November 9, 2019, giving ownership of the 2.77 acres

of disputed land in Ayodhya to the Ram Janmabhoomi Nyas, while simultaneously ordering that five acres of land be provided to the Sunni Waqf Board for building a mosque.

The dignitaries who visited Ayodhya included chief minister of Arunachal Pradesh and his family and deputy chief minister, chief minister of Tripura and his family, chief minister of Manipur and his family, chief minister of Assam and his family, chief minister of Himachal Pradesh and his family, chief minister of Madhya Pradesh and his family, chief minister of Goa and his family, chief minister of Karnataka and his family, chief minister of Uttarakhand and his family, chief minister of Haryana and his family, chief minister of Gujarat and the deputy chief minister of Bihar.

7-yr-old boy tests +ve for Omicron in WB

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Bengal on Wednesday reported its first Omicron case with a seven-year-old boy from Farakka in Murshidabad district testing positive.

The who boy had returned from Abu Dhabi via Hyderabad showed no symptoms and was presently with his mother, Chief Medical Officer of Murshidabad said adding the health administration was keeping a close watch on the patient whose parents have however tested negative.

The boy had tested positive for Omicron at Hyderabad Airport whereafter he had travelled down to Kolkata, sources in the State administration said adding the passengers of the flight he returned in were being traced.

The Health Department officials however said that the



"only good thing is that the family drove back to Farakka about 300 km away in private vehicle there by making chances of further spreading the infection comparatively less." The police have been asked to check for the places where the family stopped while its journey down to Murshidabad, sources said.

Meanwhile, the State Election Commission has issued instructions to the administration to ensure strict observation of corona protocols in the run up to Kolkata Municipal Corporation elections which is going to take place on December 19.

HC modifies Aryan's bail condition order

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a relief to Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan's son and accused in the mid-sea drug bust case Aryan Khan, the Bombay High Court on Wednesday modified earlier bail condition order and exempted him from appearing before the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) in Mumbai office every Friday.

Exempting Shah Rukh's son from appearing before the NCB's Mumbai office on every Friday which was one of the 14 conditions in the bail granted by the high court on October 28, single-bench Judge Justice Nitin Sambre ruled that Aryan would attend the NCB office in Delhi as and when he was summoned to do so.

The Judge ordered the modification of Aryan's bail order after the NCB chose not to oppose to the plea but submitted that the relaxation should be allowed subject to the condition that Khan should appear before the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the case in Delhi as and when he is summoned.

"The counsel for NCB

places on record reply, and he states that whatever is the modification can be granted in light of para 7 (of NCB reply). Sufficient notice is given. With aforesaid background, condition (i) and (j) stands modified. The applicant shall attend office at Delhi as and when summoned with a 72 hour prior notice," the Judge noted in his order.

The Judge noted that Aryan would be summoned as and when his presence is

required by SIT for the purpose of investigation either in Delhi or Mumbai.

On Aryan's another plea seeking permission to travel outside Mumbai, the HC bench said that he must submit his itinerary to the investigation officer in advance.

Aryan's senior counsel Amit Desai had sought modification to the bail condition since the matter is now being handled by the Delhi SIT, on the ground

that his client faced problems commuting each Friday owing to the huge media presence.

Representing the NCB, the Special Public Prosecutor S. Shirsat concurred that since the case is now taken over by SIT Delhi, the (Friday compulsory appearance) condition could be modified to the extent as and when he is summoned by the SIT. It may be recalled that on October 28, the Bombay high court had granted bail to Aryan

Ruckus in UP Assembly on demand for axing Union Min, cane dues payment

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The winter session of the Uttar Pradesh legislature commenced on Wednesday with the opposition creating ruckus and demanding removal of Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Mishra Teni and payment of cane dues.

The Samajwadi Party and Congress staged demonstrations outside the Vidhan Bhawan and took out foot march, demanding resignation of Union minister Teni after the Special Investigation Team (SIT) report on the Lakhimpur Kheri incident framed murder charges on his son.

Edu campaign for KPCC workers

Publishers come forward with free and heavily discounted books



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN N KOCHI

The Ernakulam District Congress Committee, described as the important district committee in Kerala, and its young president Mohammed Shiyas have reasons to be happy. By Wednesday, it has been disclosed that many book publishing houses in the State have come forward offering books, either free of cost or at highly discounted rates, to the initiative by the Propaganda Wing of the party to make party cadres and workers read books.

"Leading publishers like Mathrubhumi, DC Books with umbilical connections with the Congress have come forward offering books at subsidised rates to the EDCC so that our party activists could read these books," Shiyas told *The Pioneer* on Wednesday.

He said that the new generation is not fully aware of the contributions made by the Congress towards India's freedom struggle and the role of party leaders like Jawaharlal

Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi in the development of the nation as a progressive liberal democracy. "Each Congressman should be able to address any public meeting or conclave with erudition. We have lined up a series of management development programme to intellectually strengthen party workers. The general feeling among the people is that Congress workers do not take the pain to learn issues. I am shocked how such notion crept into the minds of the people," said Shiyas.

As part of the re-education campaign of the party, the Prachar Vibhag of the KPCC organised a meeting at Ernakulam which was addressed by well known writer and film personality John Paul. He explained to the party cadre about the significance of Congress in India's development and progress. "It is impossible to see Congress and India as two separate identities. They are intertwined and one cannot visualise an India without Congress or vice versa," Shiyas

told the gathering.

Coming days will see economists, scientists, historians and literary figures addressing the Congress workers on a weekly basis. A committee of senior leaders would hold routine viva voce with young Congress workers to check the quality of their understanding about local, national and international affairs.

One of the book lovers who was elected as the winner in a book lottery gave away books worth Rs 6,000/- to the library to be set up by the EDCC. Coming days will see other DCCs replicating the Ernakulam model in their districts to mould new breed of party workers.

The district committees are also planning exclusive sessions for party workers with former president of the AICC Rahul Gandhi MP and Priyanka Gandhi. Despite the claims by some sections that the Congress has lost its fighting power, the party is alive and kicking in Kerala, sans any fanfare.

DELHI POLLUTION CONTROL COMMITTEE

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, (GOVT. OF NCT OF DELHI)
5th FLOOR, ISBT BUILDING, KASHMERE GATE, DELHI 110006

Visit us at <https://www.dpcc.delhigovt.nic.in>

PUBLIC NOTICE

Citizens of Delhi are advised to initiate the following steps in different categories of air quality. The air quality and category in which it falls i.e. Good, Moderate, Poor, Very Poor, Severe and Severe + is available at www.cpcb.nic.in.

(1) MODERATE TO POOR CATEGORY Ambient PM2.5 values between 61-120 ug/m3 or ambient PM10 values between 101- 350 ug/m3

- a) Keep engines of your cars/bikes/scooters properly tuned.
- b) Maintain proper air pressure in tires of cars/bikes/scooters.
- c) Keep your PUC certificate up to date.
- d) When you are out for a drive, do not idle your vehicle, turn off the engine.
- e) Do not dispose of waste / garbage in the open spaces.
- f) Report air pollution activities through SAMEER App/Green Delhi App.

(2) VERY POOR CATEGORY Ambient PM2.5 values between 121-250 ug/m3 or ambient Pm10 values between 351-430ug/m3

- a) People to minimize the use of personal vehicles and use public transport.
- b) Be sure to replace air filters at recommended intervals in your automobiles regularly.
- c) Avoid dust-generating construction activities during the months of October to January, if possible.

(3) SEVERE CATEGORY Ambient PM2.5 values > 250 ug/m3 or ambient PM10 values >430 ug/m3

- a. Choose a cleaner commute - share a ride to work or use public transportation or walk or cycle.
- b. People whose positions allow them to work from home should work from home.
- c. Do not use coal and wood for heating purposes.
- d. Individual house owners may provide electric heaters (during winters) to security staff to avoid open burning.
- e. Combine errands and reduce trips. Walk to errand when possible.
- f. Do not burn garbage, plastics and other discarded items.

(4) SEVERE + CATEGORY When ambient PM2.5 values > 300 ug/m3 or ambient PM10 values >500 ug/m3

- a) Children, the elderly and those with respiratory, cardiovascular, cerebrovascular or other chronic diseases stay indoors as much as possible, and to avoid outdoor activities.

Sd/-
Member Secretary (DPCC)

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (E&M) HP-1 DELHI JAL BOARD; GOVT. OF N.C.T. OF DELHI HAIDERPUR WATER WORKS, DELHI -110085 (Email: eeemhp1_djb@nic.in) Press N.I.T. NO.19 (2021-22)					
STOP CORONA: WEAR MASK, MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING AND MAINTAIN HAND HYGIENE					
S. No.	Name of work	Approximate value based on Schedule of rates/ item rates/lump Sum (Rs. in lacs)	Exempted Earnest Money in Rs.	Tender Fee	Date of release of tender in e-procurement solution
1.	Cleaning of reservoir no. 4 by robotic machine technology at Haiderpur water works ph1 Tender ID- 2021_DJB_212747_1	Item Rate	60,500/-	500/-	14.12.2021
Last date/time of receipt of tender through e-procurement solution 29.12.2021					

Further details in this regard can be seen at <https://delhi.govtprocurement.com>
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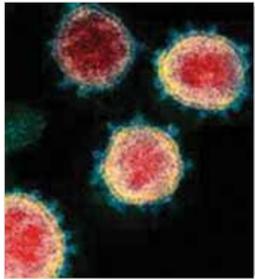
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PAPER WITH PASSION

Future tense

Vaccine platforms are needed to respond faster when the next virus or mutation emerges

India's COVID task force chief VK Paul says we should have vaccine platforms that can quickly adapt to the changing nature of the COVID-19 variants. He cautions of the possibility of the Indian vaccines becoming ineffective in emerging situations in the future. In effect, he is saying that the efficacy of the vaccines can wane over time and if in that period the virus does not die out but mutates into new variants, then there is an urgent need to find new and better vaccines that can handle the emerging mutations. Till now, a lay person's understanding is that India needs to vaccinate 70 per cent or more of the adult population so that herd immunity is achieved and the epidemic turns endemic; and then it is a matter of the people getting a vaccine jab maybe once a year, like we take the flu jab annually. The Omicron variant now tells us it is not all that simple. This variant may not be dangerous like Delta or Delta Plus, but it is transmissible at a much faster pace. Secondly, the variant emerges when the world simply cannot afford another lockdown that destroyed the economy. It means that schools will need to reopen and



remain open, international travel and trade have to resume, and people cannot stop working in factories and offices. Therefore, what we are looking at is a way of boosting the immunity of school-children, the ageing population with comorbidities, travellers and people who work in crowded places, like in the healthcare, police, religious, education, commerce and sales, transportation, manufacturing and hospitality sectors.

These sections of our population, while being the most productive, are also the most important sources of the virus and its transmission. Whether it is Covaxin or Covishield or a booster dose, can they handle the virus and its transmission effectively enough for economic activity to continue without taking a health toll on the people? Should our scientists look for new vaccine platforms to handle new mutants or tailor future vaccines and boosters to sustain the country's endemicity? The question is, who will decide the priority? Scientists tell us that India achieved herd immunity this June when the country transitioned from the epidemic phase to endemic prevalence and that it has managed to retain that status till recently. The status can continue depending on how strictly the Government tests and traces to contain the spread of the virus. It also depends on the ability of the people to not violate the safety protocols. Otherwise, we will end up in a situation where the quantum of new and rising positive cases — of any variant — is one day more than the immunity-naïve population that could not break the herd immunity threshold. We are then staring at another wave. For the present, we have no option but to invest in vaccine platform development and manufacturing to respond faster when the next virus or mutation emerges in the future.

PICTALK



A panoramic view of the Taj Mahal as birds fly over it on a wintry afternoon

PTI

Dark shadow

Omicron is tiptoeing across nonchalant countries but we must be awake to its threat potential

Omicron cases are rising steadily across the country and the world. First discovered in South Africa, the new Coronavirus variant has now spread to at least 63 countries, though experts believe it could have spread even to countries that haven't yet officially detected it. While epidemiologists study the severity of Omicron and whether it could trigger another world freeze, preliminary researches suggest that though it could be 'less severe', it has the ability to evade the immune-response of even vaccinated hosts. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), it is likely that Omicron will outpace the Delta Plus variant where community transmission occurs. "In the current situation, vaccination alone will not allow us to prevent the impact of the Omicron variant because there will be no time to address the vaccination gaps that still exist," the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control has said. This is overwhelming enough for now considering that most countries are still recuperating from the aftermath of the earlier pandemic waves. Meanwhile, West Bengal reported its first Omicron case when a seven-year-old boy in Murshidabad district tested positive while Rajasthan and Delhi reported four cases each of the new COVID-19 variant.



Unfortunately, even two years since grappling the virus and conceding irreparable damages, the situation is back to zero. There is little clarity about the virus; travel makes one vulnerable; there's constant threat of being infected and, more importantly, the fear of total lockdown — which can cripple economies and induce nasty sufferings — is terrorising people. There is only speculation over whether the Omicron cases may spiral anytime soon but, rather than waiting for the uncontrollable surge, people should act now and cover the basics. Vaccine remains the first defence, followed by a face mask and social distancing and other COVID-appropriate norms. Preliminary findings that existing vaccines may not provide complete protection against Omicron should not be used as an excuse to dodge the jab. There is no need to panic, but certainly to be vigilant. We have little options and perhaps little time, too. Therefore, to prevent another health and economic hazard, the public and the administration must work in tandem and not let the guard down like it happened during the earlier waves. What's being taken lightly today could snatch our loved ones away.

Kerala Guv takes on the CM, but politely



JS RAJPUT

A stickler for rules and ethics, Arif Mohammad Khan has thrown down the gauntlet on the issue of constitutional propriety in appointing V-Cs

Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan threw a bombshell when he requested the Chief Minister to take over the privileges enjoyed by the Chancellor in appointing Vice-Chancellors. Khan, a known firm believer in constitutional propriety, must be in a real tough situation amongst those who ideologically do not believe in democracy and its principles. Fed up with persistent unscrupulous intrusion of the State Government in fulfilling his constitutional obligations, the Governor has written to the Chief Minister that he would not like to exercise the power of the Chancellor of State universities — a statutory provision — as he is being pressured to act against the stipulations contained in the relevant university Acts, and is expected to act against his conscience. Though seriously upset and disturbed, he has followed the Gandhian approach: Let the Chief Minister assume the Chancellor's powers. Expected outcomes are many: No controversy, the CM has his say, and the Governor is spared of moral and mental pressure.



Arif has well-established credentials as a scholarly intellectual who did not succumb to the perks and perquisites associated with power. He is perceived as a politician who took real secular and democratic instance in the Shah Bano case. The young and old alike know that his is the sane voice that comprehends, and propagates, the essence of the universal unity of all human beings — World is but one family. He was the youngest Union Minister in Rajiv Gandhi's Cabinet, and had forcefully defended the Supreme Court judgment ordering a monthly allowance to a divorced Muslim woman. Rajiv Gandhi, however, buckled under pressure and brought constitutional amendment, depriving the woman — and future Muslim women divorcees — of even that pittance of an allowance.

Arif took a principled stand, and quit the Cabinet. The entire nation was with him. Politics could never override his intellectual, scholarly and spiritual pursuits. With time, he has earned a

respectful place in the world of scholars, academics and intellectuals. He hit the nail on its head when he stumped a biased and vitriolic journalist's query: "What is the future of Muslims in India?" His answer: "Same as that of India."

The pace of progress of any nation would depend on its cognitive capital far more than its financial assets. And it would depend on the quality of education imparted by the universities. As is generally known, the Vice-Chancellors are appointed through a well-defined process and procedure. Even in Corona times, this process was religiously followed in most States, except in Kerala and West Bengal. Interviews were held, in some cases in dual offline and online modes. This process has sanctity, and most CMs maintain it. The Governor of Kerala was expecting just this much. How could someone in his position ignore his responsibility? He has every right to expect his CM to help him discharge his constitutional obligations. It is also clear that being the constitutional head of the State, the Governor knows the compulsions of the CM, and is prepared to show all courtesy and consideration to him, but within the limits of propriety and ethics.

He agrees — with considerable stress on his con-



THE GOVERNOR HAS WRITTEN THAT HE WOULD NOT LIKE TO EXERCISE THE POWER OF THE CHANCELLOR OF STATE UNIVERSITIES AS HE IS BEING PRESSURED TO ACT AGAINST THE STIPULATIONS CONTAINED IN THE RELEVANT ACTS, AND IS EXPECTED TO ACT AGAINST HIS CONSCIENCE

science — and accommodates his CM's wishes, agreeing to give a second term to his favourite Vice-Chancellor. He does so expecting that the Government shall ensure adherence to the prescribed process in future appointments. His expectations are belied within days when the Government submits a single name, asking the Chancellor to appoint him as the V-C of the Sanskrit University. Nobody who knows Arif and his illustrious contributions would ever believe pretensions by any person anywhere that he would ever attempt to violate the well-set systems of procedures and related ethical standards.

For over five decades, the nation has been appreciative of school education in Kerala, and the leadership it provided to other States in achieving higher literacy rates. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of the higher education system in Kerala. It represents a unique entity that represents Indian ethos of unity in diversity; most importantly, respect for all religions and faiths. According to 2011 population figures there are 54.73 per cent Hindus, 26.56 per cent Muslims and 18.38 per cent Christians in Kerala. When Islam came to Kerala in its initial years, Christianity was

already well established there. All these years, they have lived together, worked together and progressed together.

Kerala could offer a model for the nations undergoing serious demographic transformation: A transition from a single religion, language, culture and ethnicity to a mixed population with all the diversities. Who is not familiar with the cultural and spiritual contributions of Kerala? Oceans of knowledge have flown from Kerala. Where could it be better understood than in Kerala that the Kulapati enjoyed the highest place of reverence in Indian society and the system of knowledge dissemination and generation? He was the embodiments of knowledge, values and morals. And hence, kings and emperors felt privileged in receiving dust from his feet. We need Vice-Chancellors of that level and calibre. The Kerala Governor's offer to quit his privileges in favour of his Chief Minister could become an eye-opener to the academic world, which must create a climate that the academic autonomy and transparency in academic matters is not impinged upon from any quarters. And that is the key to India's progress.

(The author works in education, social cohesion and religious amity. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HEED THE PRICE RISE ISSUE, NOW

Sir — A social media quip that these days is cheaper than tomatoes in Goa encapsulates the erratic price rise trend that has come to affect the common man time and again. The spiraling prices of essential commodities are a national phenomenon. However, the 'extreme conditions' prevalent in Goa is indeed a matter of concern. In neighbouring Karnataka, when prices of vegetables, fruits, various food items and other eatables are a quarter of what we have to pay for them here in Goa, one can well gauge the gravity of the situation. Engaging the authorities in a virtual show of strength, the protests against the discernible Government plans which threaten to harm local interests are on the rise these days.

The standard of living in Goa is such that it is becoming increasingly difficult for an average citizen to make both ends meet. Besides, the escalation in the prices of common commodities has not been comforting either. The Goan pao, for example. What Goa needs right now is activism against these economic malaises that threaten the lives of the common man. Demands for decent living conditions should be resonating in the high seats of power which can only come through collective efforts by the Government to check inflation.

Pachu Menon | Margao

INDIANS RENOUNCING CITIZENSHIP

Sir — Is it a good sign or bad? Should we be proud to be humiliated? Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai informed Parliament that during this year, ie till September 20, 2021, about 1,11,287 Indians renounced their citizenship. Not only this, over the last seven years, more than eight and a half lakh people said goodbye to Indian citizenship. This in itself is a world record. No one in any other country has done this in such a large number.

Yes, due to civil war and starvation, millions of people were forced to live a nomadic life in other countries. But no one left his/her country out of desire. If

The Govt doesn't own temples



India underwent decolonisation in 1947, which marked the transition of power from the British to Indian political elites. However, the withdrawal of colonisers did not translate to the erasure of colonial influence from India. This can be attested by the fact that many policies and practices followed by the Indian State today are vestiges of British colonialism. One such practice is the State's control over Hindu Temples. This invidious practice was effectuated by the British to plunder the wealth attached to the temples by assuming control over its administrative

structures. Post-independence, this practice was legitimised by the Nehru Government through the promulgation of the Hindu Charitable and Endowments Act in 1951. Ironically, it continues even today under a Government that is accused of fostering Hindu nationalism.

Apart from undermining the localised, community-driven and self-sufficient nature of the temple administration, this practice has facilitated corruption by placing temple revenue in the hands of the bureaucracy. According to a report submitted by the Government of Tamil Nadu to the Madras High Court in 2020, around 12,000 temples in the State don't even have the money to perform *pooja*, leave alone other rituals. It is imperative that this practice be outlawed. The Central Government should do so by bringing in a legislation that releases temples from the States' control and places them back in the hands of the Hindu community, to which they actually belong.

Nissim Aggarwal | Chandigarh

we look at the record of Americans relinquishing their citizenship, then they are negligible. Only 2,072 Americans in 2019, and 5,800 in 2020, gave up their citizenship. Perhaps, there is a dire shortage of opportunities, jobs and amenities in India. There is no employment here for doctors, engineers, top managers and other professionals. That's why people are being forced to leave India.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

LAKHIMPUR KILLERS MUST BE PUNISHED

Sir — The gruesome manner in which Ashish Mishra, son of Union Minister of State Ajay Mishra, and his co-accused crushed the hapless farmers and a poor journalist to death brought a deadly chill to the hearts of everybody and made everyone believe that it was only a pre-planned murder attempt by the accused. Now the Special Investigation Team (SIT) has categorically confirmed that the

Lakhimpur Kheri incident was indeed a 'pre-planned conspiracy' and the SIT has booked Ashish and 12 other accused under various sections of the Indian Penal Code.

Now that it is made very clear that the murders were pre-planned, the accused should be given the maximum punishment. In view of the gruesome nature of the massacre, the court should consider even capital punishment to the perpetrators, terming it one of the rarest of rare cases. The irony is that Ajay Mishra, father of Ashish, the main murder accused, is the Junior Home Minister of the nation and what's more shocking is that he is still allowed to 'serve' at the Centre. One really wonders where the country is headed.

Tharcus S Fernando | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

I will stop the money going into Swiss banks so that it will go into the pockets of women.



Delhi Chief Minister —Arvind Kejriwal

The reality is that Omicron is probably in most countries, even if it hasn't been detected yet.



WHO Director-General —Tedros Adhanom

Times are changing with things like body shaming, mental health and rejections being talked about.



Actor —Surveen Chawla

I was and am available for selection all the time. All these people, writing lies, are absolutely not credible.



Indian batsman —Virat Kohli

The BJP's sunset has started from Goa, UP, Punjab...entire India. They have cheated the people a lot.



West Bengal Chief Minister —Mamata Banerjee

FIRST COLUMN

THE FOUNDATIONS OF A ROBUST SOCIETY

The images of infancy and childhood have a significant effect on personality development



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

Education is the key to growth. It begins in the prenatal stage and continues till death. Many believe that the state of mind of the mother has an impact on the state of mind of the child in the womb. After birth, early infancy, childhood and later stages have their own successive stages of learning. A child is constantly absorbing from the external world and these images get imprinted on the mind. The psychologist will tell you the images of infancy and childhood have a significant effect on personality development. The catch is no one calls this education. It has everything to do with learning but learning and education are not seen as synonymous. Somehow, this phase of one's life, though fundamental to the growth of the person and personality, has not been sufficiently programmed. At least, not yet. This kind of a situation is the seedbed of diversity and individuality. By itself, neither is undesir-



able. The ability to imbibe education has some linkages with the preceding years of one's life experiences. The preceding years of life (which has been explained above) have a significant influence on the way a person grows and absorbs education of alphabets, figures and structured thinking. Normally, kinder garden education which is the link between the stage in life where all sensory learning was experiential and subsequent formal education which is more structured is the rite of passage from one stage to another. Handling of this needs more attention. Kindergarten education is not just a 'play school'. It is an experience of transition from informal learning to formal education. During the kindergarten stage one learns about groups and what is meant when one says things like "don't fight/ sit properly/ eat at meal time — and more".

These experiences need to be handled sensitively to lay the foundations of a good citizen. Somehow, the post kindergarten stage leads to more formal education and there is a tendency in Class I to V to even draw up a syllabus. Nothing wrong with that. The interesting thing is, almost the world over, to be a teacher from kindergarten stage to roughly Class V or equivalent, no formal training is deemed necessary. It is only for post-Class V teaching (and that also not universally) is a formal training as a teacher a requirement. This has its own costs and consequences. The costs are in letting a child grow from Class 1 to 5 in an almost 'un-deciphered' manner. Ways of deciphering the human potential at that stage are fuzzy. The gap needs to be responded to and should be given the highest importance in the interest of cohesive and well-planned society. Generally, by the time one graduates from Class V to the phase beyond, one is not only about to grow out of a single-digit age to a double-digit age, but has an overdose of knowledge being pumped into him. In the first decade of one's life, there is a need to understand some core ideas like that of harmony, reasoning, values of group living, ability to understand things other than one's own experience and indeed the simple act of listening. The basic point is these foundational years of an individual's life are critical to the kind of society that individual will ultimately grow up to make, through youth and adulthood. To create a meaningful and worthwhile society the 'pre-ten' age of learning needs to be a part of competent parenting. An understanding of this, with everyone contributing, will strengthen the foundations of a robust society.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal.)

Gorkha is Cardozo's fabricated war glory

Bollywood has made a mockery of war films. In an attempt to glorify the soldier, it has lowered Ian Cardozo's dignity by redundant but popular embellishments



RATTAN KAUL

They say that if a lie is told many times, it turns into truth. Bollywood is now making a biopic film called 'Gorkha', in which fiction is sought to be converted into fact and factual history overlooked. This has reference to the 'cult' of Maj Gen Ian Cardozo of the 4/5 Gorkha Rifles. The story goes that in the Battle of Sylhet, Cardozo injured after he stepped on a mine, used his *khukri* (a type of machete) to amputate his own leg before a surgeon operated upon him. The problem is that the film producer has gone by popular battle accounts of Maj Gen Cardozo in the interviews he gave to journalists and material from his books, rather than the factual history and recorded write-ups by the then Commanding Officer Brigadier Harollikar MVC and myself.

A number of video films, patently unauthentic, valorising Maj Gen Cardozo have been mysteriously doing rounds for some time now. Already, a team of officers of the 4/5 Gorkha Rifles (FF) is contesting the 'Alleged Act of Bravery' (AAB) of the then Second in Command, in the Sylhet Battle (December 6-17, 1971).

He claims he cut his foot with his *khukri*, whereas it was the Regimental Medical Officer who cut his dangling ankle. Cardozo stepped on a NM14 laid by my Company and, therefore, is a battle accident casualty. He has made many claims during Sylhet Battle to enhance his own leadership, undermining the leadership in the conduct of the Sylhet Battle of Commanding Officer Lt. Col Arun Harollikar, who was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra. We, the officers who fought the Battles of Atgram (Nov 20/21), Ghazipur (Dec 4/5) and Sylhet, want to preserve the dignity, honesty and respect of the battalion and want the truth and nothing but the truth to be known to all.

Bollywood has invariably made a mockery of war films. In its attempt to glorify the soldier, it has lowered his dignity by redundant but popular embellishments. Unfortunately, films are first made and then authenticated by the Military/MoD for fact and form so that the image of armed forces is preserved. The biopic on legendary Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw was hugely publicised but gradually evaporated. No one knows what happened to it. *Gorkha* will impact our neighbour Nepal from where majority of Gorkhas come and where several films have been made on Gorkhas like *Gorkhali Paltan*, *Gorkhas*, *Gorkhali*, *Lahure* and *Gurkha*. The hero of the Indian film *Gorkha* will not be a Gorkha but a Goan.

Cardozo is not the first one indulging in creative bravery. One can recall the case of Ketchup Colonel (about an officer who faked photos of 'slain militants' by splashing tomato sauce on them in August 2003 near Silchar in Assam), a fabricated encounter at Siachen and the staged Pakistani attack on own post in Mendhar in J&K, all inspired by valour-mania.



SEVERAL SENIOR OFFICERS OF THE REGIMENT ARE ANGUISHED THAT CARDOZO, THE SPIRITED AND BRAVE GENERAL OFFICER, WOULD RESORT TO FABRICATION OF BATTLE ACCOUNTS FOR GLORY. INCIDENTALLY, HIS SENA MEDAL EARNED IN 1962 IS NOT FOR GALLANTRY IN THE FACE OF ENEMY BUT FOR DISTINGUISHED SERVICE WHILE LEADING A PATROL AND CERTAINLY NOT FOR THE 1971 WAR

Brig (Retd) Rattan Kaul is a defence management expert. Belonging to 4/5 GR(FF), he was assault Company Commander at Atgram (Nov 20/21, 71) and a Forward Road Block Commander in the Battle of Sylhet. He was seriously injured in the Battle of Sylhet. The views expressed are personal.



War diaries maintain the chronology of battle. Battalion and regimental histories record troop performance in war and field areas. Sometimes these are written inaccurately, adding, deleting and altering content. But 'Gorkha' most likely will be based not on factual history but a fabricated autobiography. The AAB claimed by Cardozo occurred in the 1971 war at Sylhet. There is no mention of AAB in the only authentic account of the war — in 'Bravest of the Brave' written by Harollikar. It notes that the Second in Command stepped on a mine and was injured and evacuated.

Cardozo claimed AAB only after his Commanding Officer Harollikar had died in 2007, starting around 2011/12, through interviews given to journalists like Claude Arpi, Mohan Guruswamy, Barkha Dutt and several others. Interviews about AAB were so many between 2011 and 2021 that the original version changed almost each time, giving rise to contradictions. In addition, in his interviews, he let pass journalists' accounts that he commanded the battalion in Battle of Atgram (Nov 20/21, 1971).

The Battle of Atgram, famous for the 'khukri attack', was possibly the last such *khukri* assaults in the history of modern warfare, surpassing the previous recorded attack in the Battle of Bau (Nov 1, 1965, Borneo) by the 2/10 RGR. The Battle of Atgram was a unique attack, with the soldiers infiltrating behind Pakistani defences through knee-deep marshes in an uncharted area without any artillery support. Our two companies, one of them mine, penetrated the defences of Atgram, unsheathed the *khukris* and, in a

matter of just 90 minutes, annihilated a full company — the Bravo Company 31, Punjab, Pakistan Army. Those killed included their Company Commander Major Azhar Alvi who, feigning death, jumped up and tried to kill CO Brig Harollikar and me. Not that the Pakistanis were cowards, but the *khukri*-wielding Gurkhas of the battalion were braver. Unfortunately for Cardozo, he forgot that we both arrived in the Battle Zone of Sylhet by the same helicopter on December 9 and he was evacuated after the mine accident on December 16, and was nowhere near Atgram.

It is instructive to note the following facts:

a. An eye-witness account by Colonel (then Major) Manmohan Malik SM (C Company Commander) in Sylhet Battle has rejected the AAB claim outright, saying he does not comprehend why the General Officer has falsified the accident and that when Regimental Medical Officer was attending on Cardozo, he was present and placed his head in his lap to comfort him.

b. Our Regimental Medical Officer Capt DK Sengupta, who performed the operation after the minefield accident died in May 2021, through his recorded statement confirms the eyewitness account. His son Anindiya Sengupta has testified in writing his father's recall of the AAB and called it 'mythical'. He pointed out discrepancies on a *Discovery* channel programme glorifying AAB, where Cardozo sings a different tune that the doctor was "taking time". It is also recorded that Cardozo expressed his gratitude to Sengupta, that "he may forget his parents but not him (Sengupta)".

Sadly, Cardozo did not even acknowledge Anindiya's message conveying the death of his father.

c. Another officer from 4/5 Gorkhas, who was near the accident site, has also rejected Cardozo's claim. None of us from the unit support his claim as all along we knew that his dangling ankle was cut by Sengupta and further surgical intervention was done by Pakistani surgeon Major Mohammad Basheer FRCS at the Pakistani Field Hospital at Sylhet, as the complete garrison had surrendered a day earlier (Dec 15). Retired Gorkha soldiers of the battalion in Nepal, who fought the Sylhet Battle, recently recalled they never heard during and after the war that Cardozo *saab* had cut his leg with his *khukri*.

d. The General Officer sought the help of a Bangladeshi officer, who was part of the Mukti Bahini then, to record two video clips, both contradictory, claiming to have been nearby (impossible) in corroborating the AAB. None of the four officers from the battalion who fought the Sylhet battle is ready to verify his claim.

e. Several senior officers of the regiment are anguished that Cardozo, the spirited and brave General officer, would resort to fabrication of battle accounts for self-glorification. Incidentally, his Sena Medal earned in 1962 is not for gallantry in the face of enemy but for distinguished service while leading a patrol and certainly not for the 1971 war.

If Akshay Kumar wants to enact the heroics in combat, there are at least 150 PVC and MVC winners to focus on. And hundreds more who have shown exceptional bravery in war or fighting insurgency and terrorism.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

WE WANT THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HOME AFFAIRS TO RESIGN BUT PM NARENDRA MODI IS NOT READY.
—CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI



THE PROBE IS ONGOING UNDER THE SUPREME COURT'S DIRECTIONS. SUCH COMMENTS OF THE OPPOSITION ARE UNFOUNDED.
—UNION MINISTER PIYUSH GOYAL

Varanasi corridor: The Opp has to look for a new path

The Opposition's compulsion is that it does not want to go against the majority euphoria that has given two terms to Modi and UP to the BJP

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Varanasi blitzkrieg climaxes with the launching of the Vishwanath corridor with its strong Hindu, Hindutva or Hinduism thrust. The Rs 339 crore project is completed in less than three years.

Amid the reverberation of the Har Har Mahadev chants and the festive mood, there is a veiled feeling of reestablishing the supremacy of the Hindu ethos.

How the Vishwanath corridor shapes up in Uttar Pradesh will decide the course of the 2024 general elections, which may be held after a new delimitation to elect 888 Lok Sabha MPs against the present 543. The politics in UP are becoming more complex and may final-



SHIVAJI SARKAR

(The writer is a senior journalist. The views expressed are personal.)

ly complicate Indian politics.

The opposition is in a bind. The compulsion of the opposition is that it does not want to go against the majority euphoria that has given two terms to Modi and also put UP in BJP's kitty.

Now Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav takes the credit for sanctioning the corridor that today eloquently reminds of Maratha queen Ahilyabai Holkar and the rise of BJP.

A foxed Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has also fallen for the bait and says that now a Hindu government has to unseat the proponents of Hindutva. That is a problem. Careful weaving of religious ethos into politics is setting the election mood. The problems of price rise, kisan, job-



lessness, the difficult business scenario, they all pale into insignificance, says a UP minister during the Varanasi celebrations.

Yes, Modi has made a difference. Except for once on December 3, 2018 in an election rally, Modi has never reflected his idea on Hindutva. Responding to Rahul Gandhi, he said, "Oh brother...Hindutva...is a rich heritage. Even the sages never claimed to have full knowledge of Hindu and Hindutva.

I am a very small man and I do not claim to have such vast knowledge."

It is different from what LK Advani had said in his party presidential address in 2004, "Hindutva is a sentiment, it is neither an electoral slogan nor should it be confused with religion". In his view Hindutva is the core of our nationhood. But Advani was confined by the Supreme Court narrative that it was a way of life. Modi has made it a wave and connected the majority.

The opposition has lost its secularism plank and now finds it difficult to reject the Hindu in any form as Varanasi and Lord Vishwanath are its unwritten core. It sways the majority mindset.

Varanasi is very critically located too. It influences directly UP, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttarakhnad. Being a cultural epi-centre, it touches other regions up to far off Rameswaram in the south. Anything new at the Lord's abode touches hearts everywhere. The expansion of the temple complex to over 5.3 lakh square feet area, the spruced-up city, the easy access to the temple, and the clean Ganga ghats touch everyone.

Carefully, the issue of the Gyanvapi mosque has been sidelined though it is not outside the larger agenda. The Sangh Parivar wants it resolved through a proposal coming from the minority community. The RSS' Muslim Rashtriya Manch is already

trying to carve out a niche among minorities and calling upon Muslims to act against terrorism.

The two-day stay of the Prime Minister and the beginning of a month-long celebration at Varanasi is aimed at setting the tone for the UP election. It has set a new political commonness in Hindutva. The opposition Congress, various regional parties, Samajwadi, Aam Admi Party, are now playing on the turf of the BJP. Even the CPM is not ignoring the presence of the strong Hindu sentiments.

With an evening Ganga aarti with chief ministers and deputy CMs of various BJP-ruled states and a conclave of 12 BJP CMs and nine deputy CMs, the party is all set to

sweep the mood, perhaps beyond the 2022 UP polls.

The opposition has been sharpening their weapons post-withdrawal of the three farm laws, but the Varanasi corridor may make their path to capture power arduous. It might bring a disunited opposition on one platform, as Congress leader Abhishek Manu Singhvi put it on Monday.

The BJP is upbeat but is not oblivious of the opposition unity moves. The Prime Minister's speech is full of how prepared the BJP is. However, that does not mean that the opposition is not making efforts to unseat the BJP. Whether they would succeed or not would decide the course not only of UP but the Lok Sabha in 2024 as well.

UK PM faces off revolt to bring in Covid vax pass

PTI ■ LONDON
British Prime Minister Boris Johnson faced off one of the biggest rebellions of his premiership from within his own party to make Covid-19 vaccine certification mandatory in the country from Wednesday. Adults in England must now show a so-called "COVID Pass" as proof of being double vaccinated to enter nightclubs, big sports matches and other large events after Parliament passed the rules on Tuesday night, despite 99 Conservative Party MPs voting against the government's plans.

United Kingdom's devolved administrations have similarly strict entry norms for venues. The House of Commons also backed, with fewer Conservative MPs disagreeing, the continuation of mandatory mask-wearing in most indoor settings, and compulsory vaccination for

Omicron to be dominant variant in EU by mid-Jan

AP ■ BRUSSELS
Omicron is expected to be the dominant coronavirus variant in the European Union's 27 nations by mid-January, the bloc's top official said Wednesday amid concerns that a dramatic rise in infections will leave Europe shrouded in gloom during the holiday season.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the EU is well prepared to fight omicron with 66.6% of its population fully vaccinated. She expressed disappointment that the pandemic will again disrupt year-end celebrations but said she was confident the EU has the "strength" and "means" to overcome COVID-19. "Like many of you, I'm sad that once again this Christmas will be overshadowed by the pandemic," she said.

National Health Service (NHS) workers in England. The scrapping of self-isolation for fully vaccinated COVID contacts, in favour of daily lateral flow tests instead, passed unanimously without a vote.

EU regulators: J&J vaccine booster OK to give after 2 mnts

THE HAGUE: The European Union drugs regulator said Wednesday that people 18 and older can receive a booster shot for the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine at least two months after their initial shot of the one-dose vaccine. The European Medicines Agency also said the J&J vaccine can be used as a booster dose in people who have had two shots of the vaccines made by Pfizer and Moderna.

The recommendations by the agency's human medicines committee give countries more flexibility as they roll out or accelerate booster campaigns to tackle the spread of the new omicron variant. The agency said that public health bodies in the EU's 27 countries may issue official recommendations on the use of booster doses, "taking into account the local epidemiological situation, availability of vaccines, and emergency effectiveness and the limited safety data for the booster dose."

KARZAI 'INVITED' TALIBAN TO STOP CHAOS

AP ■ KABUL
The Taliban didn't take the Afghan capital — they were invited, says the man who issued the invitation.

In an *Associated Press* interview, former Afghan President Hamid Karzai offered some of the first insights into the secret and sudden departure of Afghan President Ashraf Ghani — and how he came to invite the Taliban into the city to protect the population so that the country, the city doesn't fall into chaos and the unwanted elements who would probably loot the country, loot shops.

When Ghani left, his security officials also left. Defense minister Bismillah Khan even

asked Karzai if he wanted to leave Kabul when Karzai contacted him to know what remnants of the government still remained. It turned out there were none. Not even the Kabul police chief had remained.

Karzai, who was the country's president for 13 years after the Taliban were first ousted in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, refused to leave. In a wide-ranging interview at his tree-lined compound in the center of the city where he lives with his wife and young children, Karzai was adamant that Ghani's flight scuttled a last-minute plan focused on the Taliban's entry. He and Abdullah Abdullah, the government's chief negotiator,

had been working with the Taliban leadership in Doha on a negotiated agreement to allow the militia to enter the capital under controlled conditions.

The countdown to a possible deal began Aug. 14, the day before the Taliban came to power. Karzai and Abdullah met Ghani, and they agreed that they would leave for Doha the next day with a list of 15 others to negotiate a power-sharing agreement. The Taliban were already on the outskirts of Kabul, but Karzai said the leadership in Qatar promised the insurgent force would remain outside the city until the deal was struck.

Early on the morning of Aug. 15, Karzai said, he waited to draw up the list. The cap-

ital was fidgety, on edge. Rumors were swirling about a Taliban takeover. Karzai called Doha. He was told the Taliban would not enter the city.

At noon, the Taliban called to say that "the government should stay in its positions and should not move that they have no intention to (go) into the city," Karzai said. "I and others spoke to various officials and assurances were given to us that, yes, that was the case, that the Americans and the government forces were holding firm to the places (and) that Kabul would not fall."

By about 2:45 p.m., though, it became apparent Ghani had fled the city. Karzai called the defense minister, called the

interior minister, searched for the Kabul police chief. Everyone was gone. "There was no official present at all in the capital, no police chief, no corps commander, no other units. They had all left." Ghani's own protection unit's deputy chief called Karzai to come to the palace and take over the presidency. He declined, saying legally he had no right to the job. Instead the former president decided to make a public, televised message, with his children at his side "so that the Afghan people know that we are all here."

Karzai was adamant that there would have been an agreement for a peaceful transition had Ghani remained in Kabul.

Kremlin: Xi supports Putin's pursuit of guarantees from West

AP ■ MOSCOW
Chinese President Xi Jinping supported Russian President Vladimir Putin in his push to get Western security guarantees precluding NATO's eastward expansion, the Kremlin said Wednesday after the two leaders held a virtual summit.

Putin and Xi spoke as Moscow faces heightened tensions with the West over a Russian troop buildup near Ukraine's border. In recent weeks, Western nations engaged in diplomatic efforts to prevent a possible invasion of Ukraine. The Kremlin has denied harboring plans to storm its neighbour.

Putin, meanwhile, demanded guarantees that NATO will not expand to Ukraine or deploy troops and weapons there.

He told Xi on Wednesday about "mounting threats to Russia's national interests from the US and the NATO bloc,

which consistently move their military infrastructure close to the Russian borders," Putin's foreign affairs adviser, Yuri Ushakov, said.

The Russian leader stressed the need to hold talks with NATO and the US on legally binding security guarantees, according to Ushakov. Xi responded by saying he "understands Russia's concerns and fully supports our initiative to work out these security guarantees for Russia," Ushakov said.

He said Moscow's proposals have been passed on to US Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Karen Donfried, who visited Moscow on Wednesday and met with Russia's deputy foreign minister, Sergei Ryabkov.

In recent years, China and Russia have increasingly aligned their foreign policies to counter U.S. domination of the international economic and political order.

UN watchdog says Iran to allow new cameras at N site

AP ■ TEHRAN
The United Nations' nuclear watchdog and Iran reached a deal Wednesday to reinstall cameras damaged at an Iranian site that manufactures centrifuge parts, though inspectors remain limited on what footage they can access.

The agreement will see cameras put back at Karaj, which came under what Iran describes as a sabotage attack in June. Iran had since refused the International Atomic Energy Agency access to replace cameras damaged in the incident, part of an ongoing hard-line tactic taken by Tehran at negotiations underway in Vienna over its tattered 2015 nuclear deal with world powers.

Iranian media first reported the deal without citing a source. IAEA Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi later tweeted out a statement detailing the arrangement.

"This is important for verification under the Iran nuclear deal, and work will continue to address other outstanding safeguards issues," Grossi wrote.

The IAEA said the cameras would be reinstalled at Karaj in the "coming days."

Chauvin pleads guilty to federal charge in Floyd's death

AP ■ ST. PAUL, MINN
Former Minneapolis police Officer Derek Chauvin pleaded guilty Wednesday to a federal charge of violating George Floyd's civil rights, averting a trial but likely extending the time he is already spending behind bars on a state conviction.

Chauvin, who is white, was convicted this spring of state murder and manslaughter charges for pinning his knee against Floyd's neck during a May 25, 2020, arrest as the Black man said he couldn't breathe. Chauvin was sentenced to 22 1/2 years in that case.

The federal charge alleged that Chauvin deprived Floyd of his rights by kneeling on his

neck as he was handcuffed and not resisting. Chauvin appeared in person Wednesday for the change of plea hearing in an orange short-sleeve prison shirt and was led into and out of the court in handcuffs. He said "Guilty, your honor" to confirm his pleas in Floyd's death and an unrelated 2017 case, and acknowledged that he was guilty of the acts alleged.

With parole and presuming good behaviour, Chauvin is expected to actually serve about 15 years of his state sentence behind bars. Any federal sentence would run at the same time as the state sentence, and defendants serve about 85 percent of federal sentences presuming good behaviour.

Deuba elected president of Nepali Congress for 2nd term

Kathmandu: Prime Minister of Nepal Sher Bahadur Deuba, 75, has been re-elected as the President of the Nepali Congress (NC). He defeated his only contestant Dr. Shekhar Koirala. Deuba got 2733 votes while Koirala got 1855 votes during the 14th general convention of the party.

Initially Deuba, Koirala, Prakash Man Singh, Bimalendra Nidhi and Kalyan Gurung were in the fray. After none of the candidates secured above 50 per cent votes, the elections went to the second round between Deuba and Koirala who secured the first and second highest votes.

In the second round of voting, a total of 4,623 votes were cast. Out of these, only 4,588 votes were valid.

In the second round, besides Koirala, all three defeated candidates threw weight behind Deuba, making it possible for him to win.

President Deuba, who began his political career as a student leader, was actively involved in Nepal's democratic movement in 1990. IANS

Saudi-led warplanes bombard Houthi camp in Yemen's capital

IANS ■ SANAA
Warplanes of the Saudi-led coalition launched multiple airstrikes on a military camp controlled by the Houthi militia in Yemen's capital Sanaa, reports said.

The airstrikes hit Al-Hafa camp late Tuesday night in the eastern part of Sanaa, reported Xinhua news agency, citing the Houthi-run al-Masirah TV. Powerful explosions could be heard across the city following the airstrikes, the report said without providing further details.

Meanwhile, the coalition said in a statement reported by the Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya TV that the airstrikes destroyed two caves and four underground warehouses used by the Houthi militia for storing "ballistic missiles and bomb-laden drones".

The Iran-backed Houthi militia has recently intensified cross-border missile and drone attacks against Saudi cities.

In February, the Yemeni rebel group began a major offensive against the Saudi-backed Yemeni government army to capture the oil-rich province of Marib in central Yemen.

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301 (U.P.)
Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

E-TENDER NOTICE
E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firms 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 & http://etender.up.nic.in. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/ amendments & corrigendum etc.

A) Fresh Work:

S. No.	Jobs No.	Name of the work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
1.	29/CGM/Sr. M(E&M)-II/2021-22/ET	Annual Maintenance of Electrical works in Staff Quarter type-I, II, III & IV sector-27, Noida	48.77
2.	32/CGM/Sr. M(E&M)-II/2021-22/ET	Providing of High Mast light and Street light in different parks of sector-55,56, Noida	46.79
3.	33/CGM/Sr. M(E&M)-II/2021-22/ET	Development of villages (Strengthening & Shifting of Electric line in front of village Bishanpura & Street light work, Noida	48.55
4.	35/CGM/Sr. M(E&M)-II/2021-22/ET	Strengthening of street light & roads Infrastructure of Transport Nagar, sector-69, Noida	45.07
5.	25/CGM/Sr. M(E&M)-IV/2021-22	Annual Maintenance of Park light at different location of E & M-IV, Noida.	48.13

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 30.12.2021 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-Qualification shall be opened/downloaded on dated 31.12.2021 at 11.00 A.M.

B) Re-Tender Work :

S. No.	Jobs No.	Name of the work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
1.	19/CGM/Sr. M(E&M)-IV/2021-22	Annual Maintenance of Fountain at Noida Gate sector-14A near DND, Antim Niwas sector-94 & sector-150, Noida	37.61
2.	14/CGM/Sr. M(E&M)-III/2020-21	M/o Authority Building (AMC of different type AC's installed in different office in Main Administrative office sector-6), Noida	58.56

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 23.12.2021 upto 5.00 PM. Pre-Qualification shall be opened/downloaded on dated 24.12.2021 at 11.00 A.M.

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

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

Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below- mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Ramwati/ Ramwat/ Vijay Chauhan/ LBKAP00004878091	House No. C-432, Block-C, Mohalla Narayan Kunj Colony Vojna No.-2, Avas Vikas, Udhampur Singh Nagar, Kashipur Uttarakhand- 244713/ December 13, 2021	June 25, 2021 Rs. 19,81,342/-	Kashipur/ Faridabad

The above-mentioned borrowers (s)/ guarantors (s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date : December 16, 2021
Place: Faridabad
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

UTTARAKHAND POWER CORPORATION LTD.
(A Govt. of Uttarakhand Undertaking) Corporate Identity No. VA40109UP 20018 GC2587/2358
Victoria Cross Vijeta, Gabar Singh Urja Bhawan, Kanwall Road, Dehradun- 248001
Telephone-0135-2763672-75, Fax-0135-2763830 Website: www.uktenders.gov.in

E-TENDER NOTICE (NIT) Date : 15.12.2021
Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd., Dehradun invites e-tender for following as detailed below:

Sl. No.	Tender Specification No./Package/ Name of work	Estimated cost (in ₹)	Minimum Average Annual Turn Over (MAAT) for best three years out of last five financial years (in ₹)	Earnest Money/ (in ₹) or Bid Security declaration	Cost of tender Document including GST (in ₹)	Last Date & Time of online request for tender & submission of tender in online & offline mode	Date of opening of Bid part 1st in online & offline mode
1.	Name of work:- Re-conductoring of 7.5Km 33KV line for ACSR Dog Conductor to ACSR Panther Conductor of Rishikesh feeder line from 220KV Substation to Nagar Nigam office Rishikesh and shifting of 0.2Km. 11KV, 0.5Km. LT Line for NSC of RVNL Munikireti Tehri Garhwal & Construction of 0.5Km (Including 0.35Km. Double ckt) 33KV Line on ACSR Dog Conductor from 33/11KV Dhalwala SS to Northern Railway site Dhalwala and construction of Bus Isolator, Circuit Breaker & Terminal Gantry etc. on turnkey basis	2,01,92,224.00	4,00,00,000.00	4,04,000.00	11,800.00	30.12.2021 upto 17.00 hrs	31.12.2021 at 15.30 hrs

For further details, please visit our website www.uktenders.gov.in
SAVE ELECTRICITY IN THE INTEREST OF THE NATIONS. Use LED Bulbs, Save Electricity, (Toll - Free - 1912)
" Pay Electricity Bill Online 24x7 from www.upcl.org" (For information on Electricity Theft, Informer may report to Toll Free No. 1800 180 4185/Fax No. : 0135-2760911)

ENGINEERING WORKS

Tender Notice No.: CON/2021/Dec/02, **Dated:** 06-12-2021. E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work.
Tender No.: CE-CON-A-G-PA-2021-15;
Name of Work: Construction of 5 Nos. B Class, 4 Nos. D Class RBG Room, High platform, PP Shed, FOB with Ramp, circulating area, approach road, OH Water Tank 50000 l capacity, deep tube well and earthwork in filling to form embankment including blanketing, construction of minor bridges (14 nos.), RUB (4 nos.), trolley refuges, drain, diversion road and other ancillary works from field Ch. 3.35 Km to Ch. 4.60Km for Rahmatpur station, Ch. 9.10Km to 10.40Km for Bansbari Halt, Ch. 15.65Km to 16.75Km for Khawaspur Halt, Ch. 24.85Km to 26.00Km for Lakmpur station, Ch. 38.40Km to 39.10Km for Bardha halt, Ch. 49.60Km to 50.60Km for Kalaganj Station, Ch. 55.30 km to 56.10Km for Teragachh halt in connection with construction of new BG line from Arariya to Galgalia of N.F. Railway (Construction). **Tender Value (Approx):** ₹ 134,67,68,251.38/-, **Date and time of Closing of Tenders at 14.30 hrs on 07-01-2022. Date and time of Opening of Tender at 15.30 hrs on 07-01-2022.** For details please visit in website www.ireps.gov.in

Chief Engineer/Con/3, Maligaon NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY Construction Organization
Serving Customers With A Smile

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General public on behalf of ICICI Bank Ltd. that Mr. K.L. Jaiswal was the owner of Ground Floor, and First Floor, without roof rights, after selling remaining floors of property bearing No. 9-161, in Block-B, area measuring 200 sq. yds. Sector -07, Surya Nagar, Ghazabad - N.P., by virtue of free hold deed dated 07.10.1998, registration No. 4915, free of all encumbrances, to Mr. K. L. Jaiswal and his wife Mrs. Satya Jaiswal, their surviving members Mr. Rajeev Jaiswal, Mr. Sanjeev Jaiswal, Mrs. Namrata Gambhir, claiming ownership of the said property as legal heirs. All persons including other legal heirs if any are hereby informed that above mentioned legal heirs want to sell the said property to Mr. Rajeev Kumar Jaiswal who is taking loan from ICICI Bank Ltd. for purchase of the said property, if anybody has any objections upon the ownership of Mr. Rajeev Jaiswal, Mr. Sanjeev Jaiswal, Mrs. Namrata Gambhir is to be addressed in writing on the below mentioned address within 10 days of the present.
Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
206, EPC Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Mohi Nagar, N. Delhi-15
Ph: 011-41112527-28. kumarassociatesadvocates@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform to the Public at large that the Original Share Certificate No. 40308, Distinctive Nos. mentioned 1522401-1522500, Under Registered Folio No. 4011 issued to **SURUCHI VERMA HANS** by **KANPUR PLASTIPACK LTD.**, has been lost/ misplaced. She has tried her best to find the same but it is not traceable. Thereafter, she made online complaint to P. S. Crime Branch, Delhi vide LR No. 663866/2021 dated 07/09/2021
IF ANYONE FINDS, PLEASE CONTACT AT: 9810991586

WESTERN RAILWAY

ENGINEERING WORK
Divisional Railway Manger (WA), Western Railway, 6th floor, Engg. Deptt. Mumbai Central, Mumbai - 400008, invites E-tender as per details given as follows. **Tender Notice No. & Date :** BCT/21-22/235 dtd. 14.12.2021. **Work and location :** Virar - Jora-Vasan Sec. (I) (UP & DN Line) -TRR(P) = 8.612km & TSR = 29.543 km (By PQRS = 26.398 km & By Manual = 3.145 km). (ii) (DN Line)- CTR(P)-17.242 km (By PQRS = 16.211 km & By Manual = 1.031 km). (iii) TTR (TWS+WCMS)=56. (CS+CMSC)=10. (iv) TFR=16.543 km. (Composite Tender Engg. + S&T work) - (Re-invite-1). **Approx. cost of work in Rs. :** 9,99,52,777.72. **EMD Rs. :** 649800/- **Date & Time of submission :** On 07.01.2022 till 15.00 hrs. **Date & Time of opening :** On 07.01.2022 till 15.30 hrs. Regarding detailed tender conditions please visit www.ireps.gov.in **Manual offers will not be considered.** 0597
Like us on : f facebook.com/WesternRly

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

PUBLIC NOTICE: Builder Cancellation
This is to bring to your notice that **SANJEEV KUMAR / GEETA** (borrower/s) has availed Home loan facility vide facility agreement number **LBFBDB0004102691** located at **FLAT NO-A3-707, HABITAT 78 -TOWER A-3 7TH FLOOR SECTOR 78 FARIDABAD.** The borrower/s has failed to pay the contractual amount to the builder as per the terms and conditions of the agreement. The Bank had informed the same to the borrower through letter dated **DECEMBER 08, 2021** informing that **CONSCIENT INFRASTRUCTURE PVT LTD.** has cancelled the allotment of the above mentioned property. You are therefore requested to resolve this matter with the builder within 7 days from the date of this publication. Please take further notice that post cancellation of the allotment of the said property ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/orrespon sible for any other allotment done by the builder.
Dated: December 16, 2021 For ICICI Bank Limited
Place: Delhi/ NCR Sd-

उत्तराखण्ड पेयजल संसाधन विकास एवं निर्माण निगम
कार्यलय: अधिकांश अतिरिक्त, निगम कार्यालय, जीएनएचओडी अस्पताल के सामने, कमला नगर, देहरादून-248001 फोन नं. : 0135-2765703 ईमेल: eedupjndd@gmail.com

पत्रांक-3803/निविदा/326 दिनांक- 14.12.2021

E-Quotation Notice
E-Quotation are invited for the following works
Name of Work: All works (Including preparing Software, Software loaded, computers Bill generation, bill printing, Distribution to Consumers, revenue collection at Seven collection centre, Daily revenue submission to bank (same day), verification of collection with respect to report, report Daily & Monthly report generation and submission to office including required all stationary & material for generation, printing of Water Bills receipt (on Pre Decided Format) for attached all Water Supply Scheme in Block Doiwala, Sahaspur, Vikashnagar and Raipur. Office Space, office furniture, with electricity and internet backup facility will provide by the Department Nos of Consumers 23,000 (App.)
3. Estimated Cost: 60 Lakhs
4. Period of work: 12 months
5. Earnest Money: Rs.1,20,000.00 (Rs. One Lac Twenty thousand only)
6. Last date for receiving of all bids : 21.12.2021, 17.00 hrs
7. Cost of each tender : Rs 1000.00+18% GST
Detailed E-tender notice and tender document will be published on **www.uktender.gov.in** on 17.12.2021
Executive Engineer

CHITTARANJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS
OPEN E-TENDER
Open E-Tenders are invited for and on behalf of the President of India for the following work: **Sl. No.:** (I) **Tender No.:** ETD-Modifcation-Improve. **Name of Work:** Improvement of Cab Interior and Exterior Aesthetics with Outer Body PU Paint of WAG-9HC Locomotives. **Tender Value (Rupees):** 20,75,500.00. **Cost of Tender Document (Rupees):** 0.00. **Earnest Money Deposit (Rupees):** Nil. **Period of Completion:** 90 (Ninety) Days. **NOTE:** (i) Date of Closing: 31.12.2021 at 13:00 hrs. (ii) Complete details can be seen in the Railway website www.ireps.gov.in. (iii) Tender Calling Authority: Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer, Design (Conventional). (iv) Contact No.: 9163340312. (v) Email Id: dyceeccon@ctw.railnet.gov.in. **PRI-289 Dy.CE/ED/Conv./CLW/CRJ**
Like us on : www.facebook.com/ctwrailways

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

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Dated: December 16, 2021 For ICICI Bank Limited
Place: Delhi/ NCR Sd-

उत्तराखण्ड पेयजल संसाधन विकास एवं निर्माण निगम
कार्यलय: अधिकांश अतिरिक्त, निगम कार्यालय, जीएनएचओडी अस्पताल के सामने, कमला नगर, देहरादून-248001 फोन नं. : 0135-2765703 ईमेल: eedupjndd@gmail.com

पत्रांक-3803/निविदा/326 दिनांक- 14.12.2021

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E-Quotation are invited for the following works
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Executive Engineer

Deuba elected president of Nepali Congress for 2nd term

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Initially Deuba, Koirala, Prakash Man Singh, Bimalendra Nidhi and Kalyan Gurung were in the fray. After none of the candidates secured above 50 per cent votes, the elections went to the second round between Deuba and Koirala who secured the first and second highest votes.

In the second round of voting, a total of 4,623 votes were cast. Out of these, only 4,588 votes were valid.

In the second round, besides Koirala

Cabinet clears ₹1,300-cr incentive scheme to promote digital payments

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a ₹1,300-crore incentive scheme to promote digital transactions using UPI and RUPAY debit cards, Electronics and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said. The Minister said that the Government will reimburse transaction charges levied on digital payments made by persons to the merchant as part of the merchant discount rate (MDR). "In the coming one year...The Government will invest around ₹1,300 crore so that more and more people move towards digital payments," Vaishnav said. He also said that 423 crore digital transactions valued at ₹7.56 lakh crore took place in November. The approved scheme will cover reimbursement on digital transactions of up to ₹2,000, using RUPAY debit cards and BHIM-UPI. "Under the scheme, the acquiring

banks will be incentivised by the Government, by way of paying a percentage of the value of transactions (P2M) done through RuPay Debit cards and low-value BHIM-UPI modes of payments, at an estimated financial outlay of ₹1,300 crore for a period of one-year w.e.f. April 01, 2021," an official statement said. This scheme will facilitate acquiring banks in building a robust digital payment ecosystem and promoting RUPAY debit card and BHIM-UPI digital transactions across all sectors and segments of the population and further deepening digital payments in the country, it added. The scheme was formulated in compliance with the Budget announcements (FY2021-22) by the government to give a further boost to digital transactions in the country. **PTI**

Pre-budget consultation Agri experts for MSP based on realistic cost, subsidised diesel

New Delhi: Farmer organisations and agri experts on Wednesday pressed for MSP based on realistic cost of production, higher subsidies on diesel and allowing new technologies like genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in their pre-Budget submission to the finance ministry. Ministers of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary and Bhagwat Karad held the first pre-Budget consultations with representatives of agriculture and agro processing industry through virtual mode. In order to achieve the target of doubling farmers' income, Consortium of Indian Farmers Associations (CIFA) Chief Adviser P Chengal Reddy said the government should increase priority sector lending to agriculture by 25 per cent. He suggested that the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices, which is the Government's advisory body on price policy for crops, should be made autonomous for fixing the minimum support price (MSP) by ascertaining realistic cost of production. Reddy pitched for allowing "technologies including GMO" in time-bound manner to boost productivity. He favoured immediate approval for genetic technology developed by ICRISAT and ICAR. CIFA also said steps should be taken to solve labour shortage and high labour cost. He suggested MNRREGA should be linked to all farming activities. Besides, Reddy sought reduction in taxes on pesticides and recommended provision of 5,000 litres diesel per season for harvesting and transplanting at 50 per cent subsidy. Krishak Samaj Chairman Ajay Vir Jakhar tweeted that he participated in the pre-Budget discussions on agriculture. **PTI**

Markets extend losses for fourth day as Fed decision looms

Mumbai: The Sensex and Nifty buckled under selling pressure for the fourth session on the trot on Wednesday as risk-off sentiment prevailed ahead of the US Federal Reserve's policy decision. A sharp drop in the rupee -- which slumped to a 20-month low against the US dollar -- and unabated foreign fund outflows also weighed on the bourses, experts said. The 30-share BSE Sensex slumped 329.06 points or 0.57 per cent to end at 57,788.03. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty fell 103.50 points or 0.60 per cent to 17,221.40. Bajaj Finance was the top loser in the Sensex pack, dropping 3.10 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finserv, ITC, TCS, Titan, HCL Tech and HDFC. On the other hand, Sun Pharma, Kotak Bank, M&M, Maruti, L&T and NTPC were among the gainers, surging as much as 2.59 per cent. The market breadth was negative, with 21 out of the 30 Sensex constituents finishing in the red. **PTI**

Rupee dives 44 paise to close at 20-month low against dollar on forex outflows

Mumbai: The rupee plunged by 44 paise to close at a 20-month low on Wednesday as consistent foreign fund outflows and risk-averse sentiments weighed on the local unit. Growing concerns over the Omicron variant of coronavirus after the WHO warned of high transmissibility risks of the new strain hit the appeal of riskier assets. The rupee has been under pressure for the past five weeks due to consistent forex outflows on expectations of faster rate of tapering by the US Federal Reserve to rein in rising inflation.

Gold tanks ₹297, silver slumps ₹556

New Delhi: Gold in the national capital on Wednesday dipped ₹297 to ₹47,019 per 10 gram reflecting decline in international precious metal prices, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the precious metal settled at ₹47,316 per 10 gram. Silver also declined ₹556 to ₹59,569 per kg from ₹60,125 per kg in the previous trade. In the international market, gold was trading lower at USD 1,769 per ounce and silver was flat at USD 21.92 per ounce.

Amazon crosses 10 lakh sellers mark in India

New Delhi: Amazon India on Wednesday said it now has over 10 lakh sellers on its platform with more than 4.5 lakh new merchants joining the platform in the past two years. More than 90 per cent of the sellers on Amazon.in are local small and medium businesses (SMBs) and over half of these sellers on the marketplace come from tier-II and -III cities, according to a statement. Since January 2020, over 4.5 lakh new sellers have joined Amazon.in. Of these, over one lakh are local offline retailers and neighbourhood stores that have been onboarded on the Amazon marketplace through the Local Shops on Amazon programme, it added. "It is heartening to see the role Amazon is playing in enabling small local businesses across the country, including local offline retailers and neighbourhood stores from across

India that are adopting e-commerce and placing their trust in Amazon to grow their business by selling online, participating in last-mile deliveries, joining assisted shopping and more," Amazon India Vice-President Manish Tiwary said. He added that the rapid growth of sellers joining Amazon.in reflects the tremendous entrepreneurial spirit of the Indian businesses and the key role e-commerce has played in their business, especially during the recent challenges caused by the pandemic. "As we look forward, we remain committed to our pledge of digitising 10 million SMBs, including the ubiquitous dukaans. We strongly believe that Amazon can play a significant role in fueling India's digital economy to its USD 1 trillion ambition," Tiwary said. Since its entry into the Indian market in 2013, Amazon has been investing in

creating the infrastructure and ecosystem to support SMBs to adopt e-commerce. This includes initiatives like taking Chai Cart and Tatkall vans to markets and SMB hubs in cities across India for increasing awareness about e-commerce and launching several India-first innovations for Amazon like Seller Flex and Easy Ship. The company also operates key seller cohorts like 'Karigar' for weavers and artisans, 'Saheli' for women entrepreneurs and 'Launchpad' for emerging direct-to-consumer brands. Amazon has been engaging with the vast network of local neighbourhood stores across India, integrating e-commerce into their operations through focused programmes like Local Shops of Amazon (for online selling), Amazon Easy (for assisted shopping), I Have Space (for last-mile deliveries) and others. **PTI**

High frequency indicators look upbeat, RBI officials on state of economy

Mumbai: A host of incoming high frequency indicators are looking upbeat and consumer confidence is returning gradually, an article on the state of economy written by RBI officials has observed. The article published in the RBI Bulletin also stated the global economy remains hostage to heightened uncertainty, with Omicron sparking fresh containment measures. The Indian economy bounced back strongly in the second quarter of 2021-22, with GDP surpassing its pre-pandemic levels, and inflation broadly aligning with the target. "The Indian economy continues to forge ahead, emerging out of shackles of pandemic," stated the article authored by RBI officials. It further observed the ongoing revival is driven by a confluence of factors -- release of pent-up demand, government's push for capital expenditure, robust external demand and normal monsoon. Faster resumption of contact-intensive services and speedy restoration of consumer confidence brightens near-term prospects, it said. The RBI clarified that the views expressed in the article are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Reserve Bank of India. **PTI**

Short-term power market to grow in coming days, says CERC Chairperson Pujari

New Delhi: Share of the short-term electricity market will grow in future with lesser fructification of long-term power purchase agreements, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) Chairperson P K Pujari said on Wednesday. In short-term market, consumers like captive users or discoms buy power either at energy exchanges or directly from generating firms (gencos) under open access. This is different from conventional PPAs where consumers buy electricity for a term as long as 25 years. "I don't think long-term PPAs will fructify in future. I think the share of short-term electricity market will grow...It is no way that long term PPAs will meet 100 per cent demand," Pujari said at a virtual programme, 'Know Your Regulator' organised mainly by the Centre for Policy Research. Pujari was talking in view of the dynamic power scenario where consumers have access to different short-term market products like real time market, day ahead market and term ahead market, among others. Last year in June, real time market (RTM) was launched where consumers, including distribution companies (discoms) and captive users, can buy power on exchanges just an hour before delivery. Pujari stated that currently the short-term market share ranges from 6-7 seven per cent which would grow in future. He was also of the view that power sector regulators (central and state) would have to be ready with the framework for short-term products like for three months (of power supply) or so. At present, India has two power exchanges -- Indian Energy Exchange and Power Exchange of India Ltd -- where power trading is done. **PTI**

Salaries of BSNL, MTNL staff paid till Nov: MoS Communications

New Delhi: Salaries of BSNL and MTNL employees are up-to-date and have been paid till November 2021, Parliament was informed on Wednesday. For the two state-owned telecom corporations, BSNL and MTNL, stiff competition in the mobile segment and absence of 4G services (except in a few locations for BSNL) in the data-centric telecom market are eroding their competitive strength, Minister of State for Communications, Devisinh Chauhan said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha. To a question on whether the staff of MTNL and BSNL have not received their salaries for several months due to losses the companies are facing, the minister said, "Salaries of BSNL and MTNL employees are up to date and have been paid up to November 2021". The administrative allotment of spectrum for 4G services was approved in 2019 with government support to BSNL as part of the revival package. **PTI**

Paytm shares continue to decline; tumble nearly 8%

New Delhi: Shares of recently-listed One97 Communications Ltd, Paytm's parent company, continued to face selling pressure for the fourth session on the trot and further tanked nearly 8 per cent on Wednesday. The stock tumbled 7.72 per cent to close at ₹1,380.05 on the BSE. During the day, it plunged 13.22 per cent to ₹1,297.70. On the NSE, it declined 7.63 per cent to close at ₹1,381.90. "Paytm's shares tumbled over 13 per cent as a lock-in period for the company's institutional investors ended on Wednesday. "Following a sharp decline after the lock-in period ended for anchor investors, Paytm is finding buying interest at lower levels however 1,700 may act as a supply point and it may remain in the 1,300-1,700 range until the market determines its right value," said Parth Nyati, Founder, Tradingo. In traded volume terms, 5.40 lakh shares were traded at the BSE and over 1.31 crore units at the NSE during the day. "The 8 per cent correction

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE

Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

N.I.T. No.	13(A)/21-22, Dated 14.12.2021
1 Name of work with its location	(A) Multiple Sports Facility at Karnal Singh Stadium in the S/O SSE/W/T. Camp under ADEN/E-I.
2 Approx. Cost of work	(A) Rs. 79.99,954
3 Completion period of work	(A) 06 Months
4 Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender	Upto 15:00 hrs. on 11.01.2022 and Opening of tender at 15:00 hrs. On 11.01.2022
5 Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc. : Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in	

No.: 128-W/269/OET/21-22/WE/NIT 13(A) Dated: 14.12.2021 2943/2021
Serving Customers with a Smile

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General Public is hereby informed that one person **Yogesh Negi, S/o: Saty Singh, R/o: 139-B, Pocket C-2, Mayur Vihar Phase-3, Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped since **10.11.2021 at 02:00 pm** from Connaught Place, Delhi from the area of P. S. Ghazi Pur, Delhi. In this regard a case vide **DD No. 91A dated 24.11.2021** has been registered at P. S. Ghazi Pur, Delhi. The description of the missing person are as under: **Age: 31 years, Height: 5'5", Face: Oval, Build: Medium, Complexion: Fair, ID Mark: On right hand written "क". Wearing: Black colour shirt, pant and black colour shoes in feet.** Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the person but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this person kindly inform to the following.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-mail id: cbi.gov.in
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax No. 011-24368639
P.S. Ghazi Pur, Delhi
DP/807/ED/2021 Tel.No.011-22610068, 8750870625

UJVNL Limited

H.O. "UJJAWAL" Maharani Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dohradun-248006
Telephone: 0135-2763808, Fax: 0135-2763508
CIN No. U40104UR2001SGC025866
Website: www.ujvnl.com

RO No. 990 Short Term - Tender Notice Dated: 15.12.2021

Office of the Executive Engineer (Civil-SHP), Dharchula, invites sealed tenders from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below:

Tender No. 02/EE(Civil-SHP)/Dharchula/2021-22
Name of work: Carrying out detailed contour survey & construction of survey pillars at 4 x 3 MW Tankul SHP, Dharchula, Pithoragarh. Estimated cost : 11.96 Lac + G.S.T. extra
Date of availability of bid document on website : 15/12/2021
Last date for submission of tender : 31/12/2021 upto 15:00 hrs
For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents can be downloaded from the Nigam's website "www.ujvnl.com"

Executive Engineer (Civil-SHP), Dharchula
"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity"

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-Tender Notice

AMM/ETD/GZB acting for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender against tender no. 44215142. The details are as under:

Description of Item	DISC BRAKE ARRANGEMENT WHEEL MOUNTED BRAKE DISC FOR WAP-5
1 Quantity	1 Set
2 Tender due on	12.01.2022 11:00 Hrs
3 Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen	www.ireps.gov.in

Note (1) The tenderers must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement System (IREPS) site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for participating in E-tender system.
(2) For all terms and conditions please refer tender document.
(3) No manual offers are acceptable.
No. 16/44215142/ETD/GZB
Dated: 13.12.2021 2937/2021
Serving Customers With A Smile

PUBLIC NOTICE

General Public is hereby informed that my client Mr. Raj Kumar & Mrs. Rekha Gautam are intending to purchase the Property bearing No. H/234, measuring 92.18 sq. mt., Vashali, Ghazabad from its owners Mrs. Shakuntla Devi, Savana, Mrs. Anita Raisinghani, Mrs. Madhuri Savana, Mrs. Aadita Savana Mr. Siddharth Savana & Mrs. Swasthya Savana who have got the right by virtue of law of inheritance after death of Mr. Kanti Prakash Savana (K.P. Savana). There is no Succession Certificate/Will of late Kanti Prakash Savana (K.P. Savana) is on record. Any person having any claim in respect of the above mentioned property hereby by way, mortgage, or otherwise, whatsoever, are requested to inform the same in writing with documentary evidence to the undersigned within 15 days from the date of publication hereof together with copies of all documents on the basis of which claims are made, failing which any such right, title, interest, or claim, if any, will be deemed to have been waived and not binding on our Clients.

C.K. JHA, Advocate E-204, Karkardoma Courts, Delhi-110032 (M) -9811295074

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

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

Whereas The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Ashok Varma/ Amrita Verma/ LBDEL0002026678/ LBND000003331778/ LBDEL0002026678	Flat No- 4504, 5th Floor, Tower- 4, Ats Greens- II, Plot No A-58, Sector-50, Noida, Uttar Pradesh/ December 13, 2021	May 31, 2021 Rs. 85,82,931/-	Delhi/ NCR
2.	Sharad Yadav/ Shashi Yadav/ LBDEL000202963186	Flat No KL 10, 2nd Floor Tower Plaza Plot No CS 04/ GH 01 Sec 04 Galaxy Plaza Greater Noida Noida/ December 13, 2021	July 06, 2021 Rs. 14,43,624/-	Delhi/ NCR
3.	Anuj Sharma/ Sonia Sharma/ Altius Auto Solutions Pvt Ltd/ LBDEL00003618393	Flat No- CGG-174, Tower-G, 17th Floor, Wing-4, Phase-1, Plot No 15, DLFL Capital Green Moti Nagar Shivaji Marg, Delhi/ December 10, 2021	August 16, 2021 Rs. 1,21,65,240/-	Delhi/ NCR
4.	Jai Prakash Chauhan/ Rohtash Chauhan/ Sutapa Chauhan/ Kamboj Hospitality Pvt Ltd/ LBGHZ00004959353	Plot No 3, Block - Ch, Sector 116, Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar, Noida/ December 13, 2021	August 16, 2021 Rs. 56,91,051/-	Delhi/ NCR
5.	Jai Prakash Chauhan/ Sutapa Chauhan/ Kamboj Hospitality Pvt Ltd/ LBGHZ00004960492	Unit No.1602, 16th Floor, Tower Sears, "Omaze Twin Towers" Plot No F 21, Sector 50, Noida Gautam Buddha Nagar, Noida/ December 13, 2021	August 30, 2021 Rs. 1,34,61,610/-	Delhi/ NCR

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantor(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Date : December 16, 2021
Place: Delhi/ NCR
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

कार्यालय-कार्यालय अधिन्या

लोक स्वास्थ्य यात्रिकी, खण्ड-जशपुर (छत्तीसगढ़)

ई-प्रोक्यूरमेंट द्वितीय निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

एजीक्यू पजीम प्रणाली अन्तर्गत उपर्युक्त श्रेणी में पंजीकृत ठेकेदारों से निम्नलिखित कार्य हेतु ऑनलाईन (Online) निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है-

कार्य का नाम- जशपुर विद्युत के निम्नलिखित विकासस्थलों में डेट्रोफिटिंग एवं एकल गमन नल जल प्रदाय योजना अन्तर्गत 63 से 75 फीटि व्यास के HDPE पाईप ए 20 फीटि व्यास के डेट्रोफिट पाईप एवं 90 फीटि व्यास के गुपीटीसी पाईप 6&10 kg/cm² स्टेनलेस सॉलिड प्रदाय का जोड़ने, विद्युत इन्टरकनेक्शन टैरिफ्युक्लैटरीकरण स्थापना, नलतीनेटर स्म, स्वीच ल्या, रनोवेयर, घरेलू नल कनेक्शन एवं अन्य संबंधित समस्त कार्य, 6 माह ट्रायल रन सहित स्वीकृत शेषकूल अनुसार ।

क्र.	निविदा क्र./दिनांक/सिस्टम नम्बर	योजना का नाम	अनुमानित लागत (लाखी रु. तक में)	अमानत राशि (लाखी रु. में)
1	51/29-07-2021/88460	विद्यालय कॉन्स्ट्रक्शन गमन योजनाकार के विपिन बसाहट में	107.80	88850/-
2	65/26-08-2021/88457	विद्यालय कॉन्स्ट्रक्शन गमन शहदगुडा एवं कुसुमताला के विपिन बसाहट में	145.33	109000/-
3	70/10-09-2021/88454	विद्यालय कुसुकी गमन घण्टगुडा रेट्रोफिटिंग नलजल प्रदाय योजना	31.26	23450/-
4	82/10-09-2021/88436	विद्यालय कुसुकी गमन काकोमो, जामवूरा, सुमरहोली एवं माराठी के विपिन बसाहट में	47.50	35650/-
5	85/10-09-2021/88433	विद्यालय फरसादासगमन, सुईजोए एवं सिमोन्हाकर के विपिन बसाहट में	47.18	35400/-
6	87/10-09-2021/88439	विद्यालय फरसादास गमन बोकी, सोमावारी, फरसादास एवं देहागाडी के विपिन बसाहट में	48.40	36300/-
7	88/10-09-2021/88440	विद्यालय फरसादास गमन साजवहार, बदीकाशी, सुईजवहार, गुण्डाडी, कुशावहार, दुधिया एवं ओपीजेर	48.19	36150/-

उपर्युक्त निर्माण कार्य की ऑनलाईन (Online) निविदा दिनांक 27.12.2021 तक आमंत्रित की जाती है। जल जीवन मिशन कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, निम्नलिखित निविदा विज्ञापन, निविदा दस्तावेज एवं अन्य जानकारी ई-प्रोक्यूरमेंट वेब पोर्टल <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> पर देखी जा सकती है।

हस्ता/अ-कार्यालय अधिन्या
R.O. NO - 65802/10
R.O. Date - 13/12/2021
लोक स्वास्थ्य यात्रिकी खण्ड जशपुर (छत्तीसगढ़)

RBI imposes penalty on PNB, ICICI Bank

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday said it has imposed a penalty of ₹1.8 crore on Punjab National Bank and of ₹30 lakh on ICICI Bank for deficiencies in the regulatory compliance. In a statement, the RBI said the Statutory Inspection for Supervisory Evaluation (ISE) of Punjab National Bank (PNB) was conducted by it with reference to its financial position as of March 31, 2019. Later, the RBI found non-compliance with directions related to levy of charges for non-maintenance of minimum balance in saving accounts. In both cases, penalties were imposed on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and were not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the banks with their respective customers, the RBI mentioned. **PTI**

its financial position as of March 31, 2019. Later, the RBI found non-compliance with directions related to levy of charges for non-maintenance of minimum balance in saving accounts. In both cases, penalties were imposed on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and were not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the banks with their respective customers, the RBI mentioned. **PTI**

Budget 2022-23 CPAI urges Govt to waive commodity transaction tax

New Delhi: Ahead of the Budget, the Commodity Participants Association of India (CPAI) said the government should look at waiving the Commodity Transaction Tax to boost trading volumes. In its Budget proposal to the Finance Ministry, CPAI has urged the government to relook at Commodity Transaction Tax (CTT) as it has yielded little revenue and destroyed national market volumes by 60 per cent. In addition, CTT encouraged liquidity, volumes and jobs to shift outside India. "Given low collection, the easiest way is to remove CTT," the association said. Since the introduction of CTT in 2013, the volume in commodity markets has plunged by 60 per cent, while the Government collected only ₹667 crore as revenues. **PTI**



Bollywood
 'I am proud and excited to host 2022 IIFA Awards as we unite the world through cinema.'
 —Salman Khan

<https://www.dailypioneer.com/vivacity/>



INSIDE THE FACTORY

MasterChef judge, writer and former greengrocer, GREGG WALLACE, reveals that the scale of production at Britain's food units is mind-blowing. By KHUSHBU KIRTI

Gregg Wallace, the writer, media personality and former greengrocer, is best known for co-presenting and judging *MasterChef*, *Celebrity MasterChef* and *MasterChef: The Professionals*. He also has garnered two Rugby Union coaching badges. Wallace first watched Millwall and remains an avid supporter to this day.

Beginning his career in Covent Garden Fruit and Veg Market, in 1989, Wallace started George Allan's Greengrocers, which he grew into a large and successful company supplying fruit and vegetables to London's hotels and restaurants.

Following his business success and with a clear passion and expertise in fruits and vegetables, the *MasterChef* host was also invited to co-present *Veg Talk* on BBC Radio 4 with Charlie Hicks. This led to the presenting of the first series of *Saturday Kitchen* in 2002 and eventually to his role as judge on *MasterChef*, *Celebrity MasterChef* and *MasterChef: The Professionals*.

Some other key projects of his include *Eat Well for Less*, *Inside the Factory*, *Turn Back Time*, *Harvest*, *Supermarket Secrets* and *Who Do You Think You Are?*.

The documentary, *Inside the Factory*,

has the interesting concept of hosts visiting some of the biggest food production units in Britain and sharing details about the various processes that take place inside these factories. The presenters comprise Cherry Healey, Ruth Goodman and Wallace.

Read on for excerpts from an interview, about the forthcoming *Inside The Factory Season 5*:

Audience has loved the first four seasons and they're so excited for the fifth one! Please give us an overview about *Inside the Factory Season 5*.

Inside The Factory is an incredibly successful format with the team of ours — Healey, Goodman and me. With exclusive access to a different factory in each episode, I get to uncover the astonishing processes that keep high-volume manufacturing on track.

What is new this season?

In terms of format, there is not much change. What we have been filming, that you may see at some stage is a lot of offshoot, which is called *Inside the Mega Factories*, where we looked at the building of a train, a London bus and a JCB digger.



What is one thing the audience should look out for?

One of the things that were incredibly unusual in the mass production was the wax jackets — they are still handcrafted by a team of very skilled people. That's what you should look out for because I found that quite incredible. In an era of mass production, so much there is handmade. Also, the ladies there realised that I was nice so they brought me sweets (chuckles).

You go into the factories to figure out the processing of food. What is your favourite part about that?

The favourite bit is the bit that you get at home — it's just learning the facts and figures. The extraordinary scale of production astounds me and some of the technology just takes me by surprise. Basically, what we are looking at here is everyday products that we possibly overlook (we might enjoy them but we generally overlook them). For me, it's just 'wow! I am left wondering how much technology goes into this stuff. The scale of production is just mind-blowing.

What is the worst thing you've experienced?

A lot of the food is uncomfortable. They are very often cold because of the refrigeration and then they are very often hot because of the cookery. The known food products are, by far, the most comfortable ones to film. Just so as you know, I spend three days inside each factory.

One of the worst bits is answering endless queries on social media on why it is I have to wear a hairnet... (sighs). It is not that I choose to wear the hairnet, anybody

entering the factory has to wear all the protective equipment, no matter who is it. You could be decapitated, and you would have to wear the hairnet over the stump.

Appealing to a global audience — how is that achieved? Especially given that food has strong preference.

Well, I do not have any part to play in the creation of the content. I am what I call 'a spoon for hire'. I just turn up and talk about things. However, I am guessing that a lot of the brands that we are discussing are global brands and are available all over the world. The scale of manufacturing is of interest, anyway, to everybody because I think there are tons of human stories.

It's the passion of the people inside the factories, I think, that tells a lot of the stories.

Do you think the love for food is what brings people back to this show?

No, I don't think it is. It is the finding out, it is the knowledge, it is the moments when you say 'WOW, really!?' It is this curiosity, I think that's what it is.

It is also nicely shot. I think that the appeal is being able to wander around

these factories from the comfort of our own sofa because they are all absolutely fascinating places to visit.

You've been around *MasterChef* for a long time and have been from a writer and media personality to a greengrocer. Do you think this is your calling?

It's been amazing! *MasterChef* made me famous. It was extraordinary, I was a greengrocer, but now I am famous (laughs)! It's just been an incredible journey — a journey you could never plot or chart. I have got no idea how it happened. It's just, I turned up for an interview one day about a food programme, and nearly twenty years later, I am still there.

And... no, I think if I have a calling, it is that I want people to lose weight and get healthier. I like entertaining people, that may be one of my callings. The other one is that I am healthier and fitter. Well, what I want to do is help people. That is what I feel a burning desire to do. Help people feel healthier. About myself, I am four and a half stone lighter, haha, if you look at the old *MasterChef*, you'd see how big I was. I want to help people — that is my burning ambition.

Winter is a great time of the year for many people. There's a lot to do and the weather is great for a lot of winter sports. But the weather can change in a split second and you might go from a mild sunny day to a stormy and even a wet one. We've already seen instances of rain in winters in some parts of the country. While you take care of all necessary things while heading out in winters, you cannot forget to take special care of your pets in winters, to ensure they don't get sick.

W for winter, W for Wellness: Has your pet had its annual examination yet?

Cold weather can worsen many conditions such as arthritis. You should take your pet to the veterinarian at least once a year, and it's just as good a time as any to make sure your dog or cat is in top health for cold weather.

Pets need choices, too

Pets are just like you, they all have preferences for quality bedding and many of them may actually choose to relocate their sleeping spot based on what makes them feel most comfortable. Foster a good relationship with your pet by making sure that s/he has safe options available so s/he can adjust his sleeping quarters as needed.

Safety lies indoors

Dogs and cats should be kept inside during cold weather. Having fur does not make dogs or cats immune to frostbite and hypothermia — this common belief is quite untrue because it fails to take into account that both species are highly susceptible if care isn't taken for oneself.

Tap! Tap! Tap!

Paw-some weather

BRINDHA PRABHU GANDHIKUMAR lists 10 tips to take special care of your pets this winter season, ensuring they don't fall sick



To prevent an animal injury from occurring, take precautions like knocking on the hood and honking the horn before starting the car to discourage dogs and cats from curling up behind the car's front grill where temperatures can reach dangerously high levels.

Dress them up

If you have a dog with short fur, it's not unusual to bundle them up in the colder months and be careful that the layers of clothing you put on them don't make them feel hot or itchy. When it comes to protecting your dog's feet from the freezing temperatures sometimes boots are

used for added insulation but always remember it's important to make sure any footwear fits correctly, otherwise, they might come off when you're out walking.

Tag for easy location

Many pets are lost during the cold season, and one of the main reasons is that it's hard for them to find their way back home. Make sure that your pet has a well-fitting collar on with up-to-date info so that you can always get in touch if needed, and that you both have an emergency plan where outside help will be able to easily identify the pet's owner if they ever need assistance away

from home. You can also opt for a microchip.

Beware of poisonous substances

Be sure not to leave any potential food, such as chocolate and onions, lying around on the floors where they might eat it. Also, make sure that household chemicals such as hand soap and anti-freeze are not readily available to your animals — they may consume these in order to get a quick fix of sweetness or a cooling sensation in their mouth, but the results can be fatal.

Be place-cautious

When taking your pets for a walk, avoid frozen ponds and lakes. You don't know if this surface will hold up your weight or not. If you decide to run through it and fall through the ice, the danger could be fatal.

Be shelter ready

When the weather gets icy, we recommend making sure that your dog is living inside. However, if your dog absolutely needs to be outside, provide him/her with an insulated home where he/she can escape snow and wind. Make sure that they have unlimited access to fresh drinking water.

Do not overfeed

During the winter months, pet owners worry about the overall health of their pets because of the general coldness outdoors. Some feel that putting a few extra pounds on their dog or cat gives it a little more protection from wind and cold, but the risks associated with this extra weight are not worth doing.

(The author is the co-founder of TABPS Pets, a pet-care and food industry.)

Travel has seen a major increase in the past few months as restrictions are lifted and more people are willing to step out to visit new and old destinations. Decoding these shifting travel patterns and emerging consumer behaviors, Gance, a lock-screen content platform of India and Southeast Asia, surveyed to understand the travel landscape in 2021-22 and various preferences of its users who desired to travel. The 'Glance Spotlight on Travel 2021' report revealed the emerging consumer sentiment and growth trajectory of the travel industry in 2022.

Over 1,400+ Indian mobile users were surveyed on InMobi Pulse, a mobile consumer intelligence platform for the report. The results were targeted at and weighed in a way that was representative of India's smartphone population. The survey was conducted between October 15-21, 2021.

While domestic travel has taken precedence post-pandemic, one of the findings highlighted that India still prefers domestic destinations over foreign ones. Other key insights that emerged through the survey were:

▲ Younger audiences are the most eager to travel with 56 per cent within the age group of 18-30 actively planning trips.

▲ December 2021 will witness a travel surge, with 46 per cent of respondents planning a trip to at least one destination.

▲ The most preferred type of vacation is a family vacation. They outpace solo travel or trips with friends at 37 per cent.

▲ Shorter durations for the trips are the norm as 54 per cent of respondents stated their planned trips to be of less than a week.

▲ It is also observed that beaches are the most preferred, with 22 per cent of respondents wishing to travel to sea-side destinations

▲ For transport, flights are most popular as 48 per cent of respondents have stated they would rather take them than other forms of transport.

In terms of accommodation, 44 per cent of respondents preferred luxurious

Time for a vacation

Glance Spotlight on Travel 2021 report reveals emerging consumer-sentiment and growth trajectory of the travel industry in 2022. By TEAM VIVA



accommodations. However, there has been a spike in the preference for homestays with unique experiences at 32 per cent. Most users are looking for lucrative travel packages, especially if it includes flight and stay. Other findings through the survey reiterated the rise in shopping before travel.

The survey also revealed that 49 per cent of respondents have pushed their travel plans to next year, to 2022, making it the most favourable time for the travel industry. The futuristic outlook for the travel, hospitality, and aviation industries looks positive as they enter the new year.

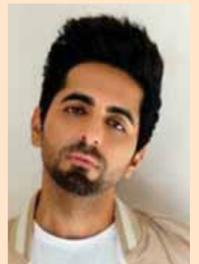
TRENDBLAZER

RANBIR MAKES A CONFESSION

Actor **RANBIR KAPOOR** has always been vocal about his learning experiences in life. In a recent interaction at a public event, he revealed how he was treated while working as an assistant director on the film *Black*. "Not saying that my generation of filmmakers are only running behind the commercial aspect, but when I assisted Sanjay Leela Bhansali, he used to really treat me as an assistant director. I used to be kneeling down for hours, he used to hit us and abuse us. That only hardens you and prepares you for the world," the *Sanju* star confessed.

fairtalk

AYUSHMANN KHURRANA



'I have never chosen to do a film keeping my box-office gains in mind. I have not been built like that and I don't think people expect anything safe from me. So, *Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui* is one of my riskiest films to date and no matter what the outcome of the film is, I will continue to be a risk-taker because I'm hard-wired like that as a human being.'

dailytalk

HITESH KEWALYA



'I think movies on taboo topics work when packaged as family entertainers. On one hand, *Shubh Mangal Saavdhan* used rom-com as a template. *Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan* used farce as a tool to deliver its message. For me, the idea was to create a language through which the audience can discuss these issues in a healthy and entertaining manner.'

TOM FLAUNTS HIS BLOODED FACE

Actor **TOM HOLLAND**, who is gearing up for the release of his forthcoming film *Spider-Man: No Way Home*, went skiing, but things went awry and he called girlfriend and co-star **ZENDAYA** to show her his injuries.

He shared, "I went skiing right after we finished this film because, you know, my contract was up. So, finally, I was allowed to do things I couldn't do before. I went snowboarding after that and I FaceTime'd Zendaya with blood all over my face."

"Everyone was like, 'Wipe it off'. But I was like, 'No, I look cool'," he added.



REVIVING COUNTRY'S HERITAGE

Governor of Gujarat inaugurates the 34th Hunar Haat in Surat

Acharya Devvrat, Governor of Gujarat, explained how Hunar Haat is playing a pivotal role in protection and promotion of thousands years' old ancestral legacy of arts and craftsmanship of the country.

In his address after inaugurating the 34th Hunar Haat at Vanita Vishram Parisar, Surat, Devvrat said that the artisans and craftsmen of the Hunar Haat have revived the country's heritage of art and skill. They have increased India's prestige and pride.

Devvrat mentioned that the Government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken several significant steps to protect and promote the ancestral legacy of arts and craftsmanship of our country which was on the verge of extinction. The Hunar Haat has proved to be an effective platform in this regard. The Hunar Haat has strengthened the campaign of 'Vocal for Local'.

The Hunar Haat is not only honouring the ancestral legacy of India but is also providing employment opportunities to lakhs of artisans and craftsmen from across the country.

He added that 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' is displayed at Hunar Haat in true sense. Since the ancient times, India had been known as the 'Sone Ki Chidiya' (Golden



Bird) due to its abundance of arts, craftsmanship, culture & tradition. And the country's artisans and craftsmen played an important role in making the country the 'Sone Ki Chidiya'. Today, the Hunar Haat is uniting the art and skill from every corner of the country.

On the occasion, Union Minister for Minority Affairs and Deputy Leader, Rajya Sabha, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said that the Hunar Haat has proved a "powerful perfect platform" of three Vs — "Vishwakarma Virasat Ka Vikas". The Government has not only protected the country's legacy of art and craftsmanship, it has



also provided market and opportunities to indigenous products.

Naqvi shared that more than seven lakh artisans, craftsmen and people associated with them have been provided employment and employment opportunities through Hunar Haat in the last about 6 years. About 40 per cent of them are women artisans.

In his address, senior Gujarat Minister Purneshbhai Modi said that every region, every district, every village of our country has skilled people.

Exquisite and elegant indigenous handmade products from more than 30 States and UTs are available in this 34th Hunar Haat in Surat where more than 600 artisans and craftsmen are participating with about 300 stalls. Traditional dishes from different regions of the country are also available at Hunar Haat in Surat.

Besides rare handmade indigenous products and traditional dishes; various cultural and musical programmes of renowned artists and Vishwakarma Vatika are also a major attraction of this 10-day Hunar Haat in Surat.

Union Minister of State for Rail and Textiles Darshana Jardosh; Gujarat Road and Building, Tourism Minister Purneshbhai Modi and Agriculture and Energy Minister Mukeshbhai Patel; MLAs Arvindbhai Rana, Kantibhai Balar, Sangitbhai Patil, Vivekbhai Patel, Pravinbhai Ghoghari and Zankhanaben H Patel; Surat Mayor Hemali Boghwala and other dignitaries graced the occasion with their presence.



Republic Day preparations commence

NGMA's workshop brings together over 250 Indian artists to paint a part of the 750-meters-long scroll depicting lives and struggles of unsung heroes of India's freedom movement

As the nation celebrates 75 years of India's independence, the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi has organised a week-long art workshop till the December 17 in Bhubaneswar titled, 'Kala Kumbh — Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'. The scrolls are being painted as per the artistic vision of Adwait Garanayak, DG, NGMA.

The workshop brings together over 250 artists from across the country to paint part of the 750-meter-long scroll depicting the heroic lives and struggles of unsung heroes of India's freedom movement. These scrolls will be an integral part of the Republic Day Celebrations in 2022.

"Any history of the independence movement would be incomplete without recounting the foremost role played by the masses and in particular by

women. Through the narrations in the scrolls, we are trying to give an artistic representation of the tales of valour and sacrifice of our unsung heroes," said Tamsunaro Jamir, director of NGMA.

At Bhubaneswar, the narratives would reflect the tales of valor from Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Bengal, north eastern parts of India and Andhra Pradesh with artistic expressions reflecting the indigenous forms of art such as pattachitra, talapatra chitra, manjusa, madhubani and jadupatua to name a few.

As the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi takes these workshops to other parts of the country, many more forms of indigenous art will be used to weave the stories of our unsung heroes which will be a befitting artistic tribute to their contributions to the freedom movement.

Workplace of the year

KIIT wins 'THE Awards Asia 2021' in 'Leadership and Management Team of the Year' Category



Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar, has been awarded 'THE Awards Asia' Leadership and Management Team of the Year for its phenomenal pandemic response and relief work. The award was announced by the Times Higher Education (THE). KIIT is the only University from India and also the only university in Asia to get this award in

one of the categories, for the second year in a row. KIIT was also declared winner in the category 'Workplace of the Year' last year.

KIIT got this recognition for its readiness to react to uncertainties,

reach the unreached, and endeavour to serve society. This includes setting up free Covid hospitals, distributing masks and sanitisers, food and essentials, scholarships, adopting orphans, and leveraging community education.



As a part of celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mohatsav, the medical department organised a seminar on Child Nutrition on December 10 at Tapan Sinha Memorial Hospital, Kolkata. Senior medical officers, para-medical staff and common people participated in the seminar.



Rajan Kanwar has taken over as the unit head of NFL Vijaipur unit. A chemical engineer, Kanwar has been associated with NFL for more than 33 years. With extensive experience of project management, operation and maintenance of plants, he has also served in Nangal and Panipat plants.

Joint efforts

POWERGRID signs MoU with governor of Himachal Pradesh for providing MRI machine in Kangra

Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) signed a MoU with the governor of Himachal Pradesh through Chief Medical Officer (CMO) of Kangra for providing one 1.5 Tesla MRI machine in Kangra on December 14 under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The MoU was signed in the august presence of Vipin Singh Parmar, speaker of Himachal Pradesh legislative Assembly, Rajiv Saizal, Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Himachal Pradesh, Rajinder Garg, Minister for food, civil supplies and consumer affairs, Himachal Pradesh, Shanta Kumar, former Chief Minister, Himachal Pradesh, VK Singh, direc-



tor (Personnel)-POWERGRID, TC Sarmah, executive director(CSR), POWERGRID, Kailash Rathore, executive director of POWERGRID, Northern Region-II and other senior officials from Himachal Pradesh Government and POWERGRID.

The MoU was signed by Dev Kumar, Senior General Manager (HR) on behalf of POWERGRID and Dr Gurdarshan Gupta, Chief Medical Officer (CMO), Kangra on behalf of Governor, Himachal Pradesh.

A HELPING HAND

Metro staff aids an injured commuter at Kavi Subhash Metro Station

A commuter had a bad fall on the ramp after getting down from a DN Metro at Kavi Subhash Metro station and sustained injuries.

On seeing this, the on-duty RPF and Metro staff at the platform immediately rushed to attend him and took him to the Station Master's office where he was given first aid. Thereafter, he was sent to Tapan Sinha Memorial Hospital for treatment.

He was later discharged from M R Bangur Hospital in stable condition.

PFC pays second interim dividend of ₹369.57 crore to Government of India for the financial year 2021-22

Power Finance Corporation, a Schedule - A Maharatna CPSE and India's leading NBFC for the power sector has paid ₹369.57 crores to Government of India and ₹290.45 crores to other shareholders, totalling ₹660.02 crore as second interim dividend for the financial year 2021-22 on December 10.

The second interim dividend @ 25 per cent, that is, ₹2.50 per equity share of face value ₹10 each was declared by the Board of Directors in its meeting held on November 11, 2021 and is in addition to the first interim dividend amounting to ₹332.61 crore paid to Govt of India and ₹261.4 crore to other shareholders totalling to ₹594.01 crore on September 10, 2021 @ 22.5 per cent i.e. ₹ 2.25 per equity share of face value ₹10 each for the financial year 2021-22.

With this PFC has so far paid interim dividend amounting to ₹1,254.03 crore to its shareholders @ 47.5 per cent i.e. ₹4.75 per equity share of face value ₹10 each for the financial year 2021-22.

Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai has signed a MoU with Linguee Global Solutions for joint development of a novel all-in-one Human Resource Management System (HRMS). Linguee offers end to end HR, Payroll, Financial administration, Training & Development services and solutions. The proposed AI driven digital platform, with automation and privacy as integral components, will introduce the much needed innovation in HRMS.

Dr. Susan Elias, Deputy Director, Centre for Advanced

Transforming human resource sector

VIT Chennai signs MoU with Linguee Global Solutions for joint development of a novel all-in-one HRMS

Data Science and Arhit Das, Student Lead, Google Developer Student Club, VIT Chennai will facilitate the development and deployment of this product, intended for a global market.

During the occasion, Hari Guha, Director Linguee, motivated the team and reiterated the need for developing a product



that will transform the human resource management sector. Dr V S Kanchana Bhaaskaran, Pro Vice-Chancellor, VIT Chennai, extended all support to this endeavour and highlighted the positive impact and significance of such joint product development activities for the students, faculty and industry.

Individual savings life insurance plan

LIC introduces Dhan Rekha (Plan 863), a new policy with special premium rates for females

Life Insurance Corporation of India has introduced a new plan — Dhan Rekha — with effect from December 13 which is a non-linked, non-participating, individual savings life insurance plan. The product has various benefits and unique features. There are special premium rates for female lives. All benefits under the plan are fully guaranteed.

Plan provides a percentage of the basic Sum Assured as Survival Benefit at regular intervals starting from end of premium paying term provided policy is in force. Guaranteed additions shall accrue

at the end of each policy year starting from the 6th Policy Year to the end of the Policy Term provided the policy is in force. The unique benefit of this plan is that on maturity, the policyholder receives full sum assured without deduction of the money back amount received along with accrued guaranteed additions. This plan provides financial support for the family in case of unfortunate death of the policyholder during the policy term.

This plan also takes care of liquidity needs through loan facility. Optional Riders are available under this plan on payment of addition-

al premium subject to conditions. The minimum sum assured under this plan is ₹ two lakhs and no limit for maximum sum assured. The minimum age at entry ranges from 90 days to 8 years as per chosen policy term. The maximum age at entry ranges from 35 years to 55 years depending upon the chosen policy term. The plan is available for purchase offline mode through Agents/Intermediaries including POSPLI/Common Public Service Centres (CPSC-SPV) as well as online directly through their website.

Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai team 'Quinproc' has bagged fourth position and received an award of ₹20 lakhs in the Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge, conducted by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) held in New Delhi on December 2-3. Quinproc team comprising of AR Mirunalini, S Shwetha, S Varsha Sri and Dr A Annis Fathima from School of Electronics Engineering, was led by Dr John Sahaya Rani Alex.

Product wins

VIT Chennai's team, Quinproc, bagged fourth position and received an award of ₹20 lakh in the Swadeshi Microprocessor Challenge by the MeitY



Swadeshi Microprocessor challenge is to provide a strong ecosystem of startups, innovators & researchers in the country to promote a culture

of innovation and entrepreneurship by creation of complex designs and innovation of frugal solutions around home-grown processors, SAKTHI developed at IITM and VEGA at CDAC.

The team proposed a Wireless Maternal Health Monitoring system using SAKTHI processor, integrated with a mobile application, which enables the care takers and doctors, to remotely monitor the vital signs of pregnant women. The product is intended for use in Primary Health Centres and rural health care centres.

TRIBUTE TO FREEDOM FIGHTERS

Metro Railway organised a cycle marathon at Central Park Depot as a part of celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mohatsav

As a part of celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mohatsav, Metro Railway organised a cycle marathon at Central Park Depot of East-West metro corridor on Tuesday.

SS Mukherjee, Dy chief electrical engineer/E&W, Aparna Ghosh, Dy secretary (sports and general) along with members of Metro



Railway Sports Association and the staff of this depot participated in this cycle marathon.

All the participants covered the entire Central Park Depot to make all aware about the importance of this Mahotsav and pay tribute to freedom fighters for their supreme sacrifice and valour.

The need of the present

Rajasthan's first government institute to adopt Mandal Green Building concept

All the buildings of Rajasthan Housing Board are being built on Green Building Concept Presentation on Green Building Concept by CII-IGBC Green Building Concept is economical as well as environment friendly.

Housing Commissioner, Pawan Arora, informed that all the under-construction multi-storey buildings are being built on green building concept by Rajasthan Housing Board keeping in view the environmental improvement and future requirements. He said that mainly multi-storey buildings are being built on green building concept under MLA Housing Project, AIS Residency, Coaching Hub and under Mukhyamantri Jan Awas Yojna under construction in Pratap Nagar and Indira Gandhi Nagar Yojna.

Arora was addressing a workshop on 'Green Building Concept — the need of the present' organised under the joint aegis of CII IGBC (Indian Green Building Council) Jaipur and Rajasthan Housing Board in the conference room located at the Divisional Headquarters on Tuesday.

GREEN RIDE

Actor MILIND SOMAN, as part of 'Hawa Badlo' initiative, cycled 1,000 km from Mumbai to Delhi to raise awareness against air pollution

After a 1,000 km long bicycle journey from Mumbai to raise awareness against air pollution, fitness icon Milind Soman reached Delhi where he culminated the 'Green Ride — Ek Pahal Swachh Hava Ki Ore' powered by GAIL (India) Limited. GAIL Chairman and MD Manoj Jain, Director (Marketing), E S Ranganathan, Director (Finance) R K Jain, Chief Vigilance Officer Shubha Naresh Bhamhani and other senior officials were present on the occasion.

The Green Ride entourage started on December 3 from Mumbai and passed through Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Haryana before arriving at New Delhi.

"Delighted, grateful and exhilarated! This sums up my

journey on cycle from Mumbai to Delhi. The GREEN RIDE was an effort to explore and promote healthier modes of transportation," Soman shared.

"I hope I was able to create some more awareness about how we are polluting the air we breathe, and efforts we all can make to reduce this pollution! Every small step that we take, like opting for a car pool, planting a tree, choosing to cycle rather than take a car, quitting smoking and so many other small ways, plays a huge role in making our environment healthier for us and all life on the planet. Will continue to champion for this cause and other important ones through more such initiatives in the future," he added.

Wasn't asked to reconsider quitting T20 captaincy: Virat

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India Test skipper Virat Kohli on Wednesday said the BCCI never asked him to reconsider quitting T20 leadership as claimed by the Board and his removal from ODI captaincy happened 90 minutes before the team's selection for the upcoming South Africa tour.

At the pre-departure press meet before the South Africa tour, the Indian skipper took all the tough questions head on and said that he would put his full support behind new white-ball skipper Rohit Sharma and head coach Rahul Dravid's "vision". He said he understands that not winning an ICC white ball trophy led to his removal.

"Whatever was said about the communication that happened about the decision that was made was inaccurate," Kohli said with obvious reference to BCCI president Sourav Ganguly's statement about the Board requesting him not to quit as split captaincy might not work in the white-ball format.

"I was contacted one and half hours before selection meeting on 8th for Test series and there was no prior communication to me at all since I announced my decision on T20 captaincy."

"...The chief selector discussed the Test team to which we both agreed. Before ending the call, I was told that the five selectors have decided that I will not be the ODI captain to which I replied 'okay fine,' the 33-year-old added as he recalled the sequence of events.

"In the selection call afterwards we chatted about it briefly and that's what happened."

The discord between Kohli and the BCCI mandarins came

out in the open when he was asked the next question.

But you had only stated that you wanted to remain captain till 2023 ODI World Cup?

"Was it a question?" Kohli smiled.

"Yes, it is a question because you had only said you wanted to remain India's ODI captain?", the reporter again asked.

"When I left the T20 captaincy, I had first approached BCCI and intimated them of my decision and laid down my point of view in front of them (office bearers).

"I gave the reasons why I wanted to quit T20 captaincy and my view point was received very nice-

ly. There was no offence, no hesitation and not for once was I told that 'you should not leave T20 captaincy,'" Kohli said, in complete contradiction to what Ganguly had stated a few days earlier.

Kohli said the BCCI brass called his decision a progressive one.

"On the contrary, the BCCI called it a progressive step and in the right direction.

At that time I had communicated that, yes I would like to continue in Tests and ODIs unless office-bearers and selectors think that I shouldn't carry on with this responsibility. "I had clarified on my call and communication to BCCI it was clear.

I had given that option if office bearers and selectors think otherwise, then it's in their hands (their call)."

Ganguly had stated that Kohli's decision to not reconsider giving up T20 captaincy prompted the selectors to go for Rohit as the sole white-ball skipper as two different captains in the two formats would have led to "too much leadership."

"We had requested Virat not to step down as T20 captain but he didn't want to continue as captain. So, the selectors felt that they cannot have two white ball captains in two white-ball formats. That's too much of leadership," the BCCI president and former India captain had told PTI.

Rohit also replaced a woefully out of form Ajinkya Rahane as Kohli's deputy in the Test format.

Rohit is able captain and will have my 100 percent support, tired of questions on equation with him "Tired" of quelling never-ending speculation about a rift with Rohit Sharma, India's Test skipper Virat Kohli on Wednesday described his white-ball successor as an "able and tactically sound" captain, who will have his complete backing as a senior player.

Kohli, who was removed by the BCCI from ODI captaincy, made it clear that he was never spoken to about being replaced till chairman of selectors Chetan Sharma intimated him 90 minutes before the scheduled team selection meeting for the South Africa tour.

Asked how he sees his role under Rohit Sharma's captaincy, Kohli said: "My responsibility is obviously to push the team in the right direction, something that I've always looked to do even before I became captain, so that mindset has never changed and it will never change."

"But Rohit is a very able captain and tactically very sound. We've seen that in the games that he's captained for India and in the IPL as well. So is (Rahul) Dravid bhai, who's a very, very balanced coach, great man manager."

We can do something special in South Africa this time around: Kohli

South Africa is the final frontier that the Indian Test team is yet to conquer but skipper Virat Kohli firmly believes that his side can do "something special" in its upcoming tour of the Rainbow Nation with a maiden series win there.

India would look to improve on their recent impressive record overseas when they take on South Africa in a three-match Test series, starting December 26, under Kohli's captaincy.

"We are very well placed in terms of experience, belief and confidence that this time around we can do something special and get the results

that we want as a team and overcome probably the toughest conditions to go and win a series," Kohli said on Wednesday.

"South Africa is one place where we have not won a series yet.

So we are very motivated to do that. And the mindset is always to go there and win a series in any country that we play.

"We don't anymore think of just winning a Test here and there and we will do our absolute best that we can as a team and make sure that we keep contributing towards that cause," he added.

India had created history by beating Australia on their own turf twice, and were leading England 2-1 before their UK tour was abruptly suspended earlier this year.

India have played 20 Tests in South Africa, winning only three, and in their last tour in 2018, they gave a tough fight but still lost the series 1-2.

India recently defeated New Zealand 1-0 in a two-match Test series at home.

In the history of Test cricket, there are only three teams — England, Australia and Sri Lanka — who have managed to beat South Africa in their own backyard.

"We can take a lot of motivation from that of course. We probably won in the toughest conditions on that tour. So that should give us a lot of confidence," Kohli said.

Prannoy in pre-quarters of BWF World C'ships

PTI ■ HUELVA (SPAIN)

India's HS Prannoy registered a straight-game win over Daren Liew of Malaysia to reach the pre-quarterfinals of the BWF World Badminton Championships here on Wednesday.

Prannoy beat his Malaysian opponent 21-7 21-17 in a men's singles second round match that lasted 42 minutes.

He will play the winner of another second round match between Luis Enrique Penalver of Spain and Rasmus Gemke of Denmark in the pre-quarterfinals.

Prannoy joined two other Indians, Kidambi Srikanth and Lakshya Sen, in the men's singles pre-quarterfinals of the showpiece tournament.

Prannoy faced little resistance from Liew in the first game. From 8-5, the Indian took eight straight points to zoom to 16-5 before pocketing it easily.

The second game was more competitive and the two players were levelled

at 6-6. But from there, Prannoy never fell behind as he cruised to 16-11.

The Malaysian narrowed the gap but Prannoy was up 19-16 before pocketing the second game and the match.

The women's doubles pair of Ashwini Ponnappa and N Sikki Reddy also entered the pre-quarterfinals after a hard-fought 21-11 9-21 21-13 win over the Chinese pair of Liu Xuan Xuan and Xia Yu Ting in a 51-minute second round match.

In the men's doubles however, the Indian pair of MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila lost to 11th seeded Russian pair of Vladimir Ivanov and Ivan Sozonov 11-21 16-21 in a second round match that lasted 41 minutes.

On Tuesday, defending champion PV Sindhu reached the women's singles pre-quarterfinals with an easy 21-7 21-9 win over Martina Repiska of Slovakia. Sindhu had got a first-round bye. She will face Pornpawee Chochuwong of Thailand in the pre-quarterfinals.

India trounce Bangladesh 9-0 in ACT hockey



PTI ■ DHAKA

Striker Dilpreet Singh struck a Shat-trick as defending champions and Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist India thrashed hosts Bangladesh 9-0 to register their first win in the Asian Champions Trophy men's hockey tournament here on

Wednesday. Dilpreet (12th, 22nd and 45th) scored three field goals for India, while Jarmanpreet Singh (33rd, 43rd) struck a brace from penalty corners situations.

In between Lalit Upadhayay (28th) deflected in a variation from vice-captain Harmanpreet Singh's

flick from a penalty corner. Akashdeep Singh (54th) also found the net from a field effort before Mandeep Mor scored his debut goal for the country from a set piece in the 55th minute.

If that was not enough, Harmanpreet also put his name on the score-sheet, perfectly converting India's 13th penalty corner in the 57th minute.

Playing their first tournament with some new players after the historic Tokyo Olympics campaign, the Manpreet Singh-led India had earlier drawn 2-2 against Korea in their tournament opener on Tuesday.

India will next play arch-rivals Pakistan in the round-robin stage here on Friday.

Held to a draw by Korea in their lung-opener, the Indians came out with purpose against lowly Bangladesh and controlled the proceedings in the entire first two quarters.

No one is bigger than the sport: Thakur on speculation surrounding Kohli-Rohit equation

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

There to launch the Khelo India U-21 Women's Hockey League, Sports Minister and former BCCI president Anurag Thakur ended up being asked about the conjecture surrounding Test skipper Virat Kohli and limited-overs captain Rohit Sharma but he sought to steer clear of the matter by stating "no one is bigger than the sport". Thakur, who served as the BCCI president from May 2015 to February 2017 before leaving the position after a Supreme Court directive, was speaking on the sidelines of the launch.

"Nobody is bigger than the sport. I can't give you information as to what's going on between which players and in which game. It's the job of concerned federations/associations. It's for the concerned association to deal with the matter. It'll be better that way," said Thakur when a question on the speculation about the equation between Rohit and Kohli.

After Test vice-captain Rohit was ruled out of the upcoming series in South Africa due to the recurrence of a left hamstring injury, reports emerged that Kohli will take a break from the ODI series in the Rainbow Nation to spend some time with his young family.

India play opener against Pakistan on March 6



PTI ■ DUBAI

India will open their campaign against arch-rivals Pakistan in the Women's ODI World Cup beginning in New Zealand on March 4, the ICC announced on Wednesday.

The first set of games will see two massive rivalries take the centre stage, with Australia taking on defending champions England at Seddon Park in Hamilton on March 5 and last edition's

runners-up India facing Pakistan in Tauranga on March 6.

A total of 31 games will be played across 31 days, with the eight teams clashing to get their hands on the coveted World Cup trophy.

Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, Hamilton, Tauranga, and Wellington will be the six cities that will host the tournament.

Australia, England, South Africa and India qualified for the event on the basis of their position in ICC Women's Championship 2017-20 while New Zealand automatically qualified as hosts.

On the basis of team rankings, Bangladesh, Pakistan and West Indies were the final three teams to book their berth for the World Cup after the Women's Cricket World Cup Qualifier was called off due to COVID-related uncertainty.

Tearful Agüero announces retirement for health reasons

AP ■ BARCELONA

Fighting back tears, Barcelona striker Sergio Agüero announced his immediate retirement on Wednesday for health reasons.

The 33-year-old Argentina striker underwent heart tests after leaving the field, holding his chest, during Barcelona's match against Alaves in the Spanish league on October 30.

His condition

has since been evaluated, and a sobbing Agüero said at a Camp Nou press conference — attended by Barcelona players and board members, family and former colleagues — that he had decided to stop playing.

"I'd like to stay here and keep helping my teammates," Agüero said, "but things happen for a reason."

Agüero said he made the decision

10 days ago. He was told after his first heart test that there was a big possibility he could not play again.

He took deep breaths and shook his head before making the announcement, then looked on in sadness as a highlight reel of his career highlights was shown on the screen.

Agüero is one of the world's most well-known players, having only joined Barcelona in the off-season after ending a 10-year stint at Manchester City during which he became a great of the English game.

Man City ruthless, Leeds woeful in 7-0 Premier League rout

AP ■ LONDON

Seven goals — even without a recognizable striker. A seventh successive victory. Manchester City is looking ruthless in its Premier League title defense.

Kevin De Bruyne struck twice, while Phil Foden, Jack Grealish, Riyad Mahrez, John Stones and Nathan Ake also got on the score-sheet as the champions overpowered Leeds 7-0 on Tuesday.

In a tight title race, the flurry of goals moved City within two of Liverpool's goal difference of plus-33.

"We didn't score as many goals this season," manager Pep Guardiola said, "but today was a good run to be close to Liverpool and Chelsea."

2020 champion Liverpool, which plays Newcastle on Thursday. That's when Chelsea, which is a point further back, hosts Everton.

The seven-goal defeat equaled the worst losing margin in the history of Leeds. Marcelo Bielsa's team is five points above the relegation zone.

"There is nothing positive to take away from our performance. I can't find anything that can be valued," Bielsa told BT Sport.

"As is natural in these cases, it is not the individuals that fail but the organization.

"There is no justification I can offer," he continued, "the game was exactly how we thought it was going to be. We prepared ourselves to avoid everything that happened and we didn't manage to get anything"



Guardiola had warned that Leeds' high-tempo style would need to be countered and City did this by

tearing into the visitors from the outset. "We lost five points last season playing Leeds," Guardiola said.

"We tried to prepare well and maybe the players felt it was a more serious team than people think about. We saw the game against Chelsea (a 3-2 loss for Leeds on Saturday) and they deserved to take a point with the way they fought. Maybe they were a little bit tired."

With Rodri producing one of his best performances in a City shirt, the hosts attacked at will and with great fluidity.

City was absolutely relentless after Foden guided in a shot from outside the box in the eighth minute.

Another goal followed just five minutes when Mahrez curled the ball back into the area for Grealish to head into the net.

Rodri played in De Bruyne to thump in a low shot in the 32nd and the only surprise was it took City

until four minutes into the second half to score again when a shot from Mahrez deflected in off Junior Firpo.

De Bruyne was on target again with a ferocious long-range strike in the 62nd and Stones scored in the 74th.

Ake's powerful header completed Leeds' misery four minutes later. Bayern hammer Stuttgart 5-0 to extend Bundesliga lead to nine points

Serge Gnabry scored a hat trick as Bayern Munich stretched its lead in the Bundesliga to nine points with a 5-0 hammering of Stuttgart.

Stuttgart survived an early string of chances for Bayern to score, and even created a couple of its own, before Gnabry curled the ball into the top-right corner in the

40th minute to open the scoring on Tuesday.

Thomas Muller set up Gnabry for a second goal just after halftime before a run of three goals in five minutes finished off Stuttgart.

Robert Lewandowski chipped the ball over the goalkeeper in the 69th before tapping in a Gnabry cross three minutes later.

Soon after, Gnabry completed his hat trick when a cross from Muller was palmed into his path by the keeper.

Stuttgart brought 15th after a defeat which brought Pellegrino Matarazzo's team back down to earth following a 2-0 upset win over Wolfsburg on Saturday.

The game was played in an empty stadium because of state-level restrictions following a rise in coronavirus cases.