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## Modi attacks dynastic politics

PM calls it threat to democracy, slams Opp for boycotting Constitution Day event at Parliament

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday once again unleashed a scathing attack on dynastic politics and said the “biggest threat” to the functioning of a healthy democracy is when a party is run by the same family generation after generation and the entire system of the party is controlled by it.

Without naming anyone, Modi at a Constitution Day event in the Central Hall of Parliament hit out at family-based parties, describing them as “party for the family, party by the family” and added, “I don’t think I need to say anything more.”

The event was skipped by 15 Opposition parties, on the call by the Congress, which have been alleging that the Government is “undermining Parliamentary democracy.”

Besides the constituents of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), parties such as the Biju Janata Dal, the YSR Congress, the Telangana Rashtra Samithi, the Bahujan Samaj Party and the Telugu Desam Party attended the



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses a function to commemorate the 'Samvidhan Divas' at Parliament in New Delhi on Friday

PTI

event. Addressing the gathering, Modi said, “This event was not that of any Government, or of any political party, or of any Prime Minister. The Speaker is the pride of the House. It is a dignified post. It is a matter of Babasaheb Ambedkar’s dignity, the dignity of the Constitution.”

In an apparent reference to the Congress and some other Opposition parties, Modi said that in the form of family-based parties from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, India is heading towards a kind of a crisis, which is a matter of concern for the people devoted to the Constitution and those who believe in democracy.

He said that more than one person from a family joining a party on the basis of merit and people’s blessings does not make a party dynastic, “but a party run by one family gen-

eration after generation and the family controlling the entire system of the party is the biggest threat to a healthy democracy.”

## Opp: Constitution being undermined by BJP Govt

Boycott against Govt’s ‘authoritarian’ functioning: Cong

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress and several Opposition parties on Friday boycotted the Constitution Day event in the Central Hall of Parliament to convey that the Constitution is being undermined during the current BJP regime.

Besides the Congress, several other parties, including the Left, TMC, NCP, DMK, Shiv Sena, IUML, RSP and the RJD, skipped the event.

On the issue of not participating in the event of Constitution Day, Congress Rajya Sabha member Anand Sharma said the protest was against the “authoritarian” functioning of the BJP Government as laws are enacted bypassing Parliamentary scrutiny and Parliamentary democracy is insulted.

“Our protest today is based on fundamental principles. We have protested to remind the country that the Constitution is not being respected, the Constitution is being undermined, Parliamentary democracy is being undermined and insulted with the enactment of laws bypassing scrutiny which is creating enormous problems because each law enacted by Parliament impacts the masses,” Sharma said at AICC Press conference.

## Protect judicial institutions from attack: CJ

Stand up for what is right, oppose wrong, Ramana tells lawyers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India (CJI) NV Ramana on Friday asked lawyers to assist judges and protect the judicial institution from “motivated and targeted attacks” besides lending a helping hand to those in need



for becoming worthy of the confidence reposed in them by the citizens.

“I want to tell all of you, that you must assist judges and

the institution. We are all ultimately part of one large family. Protect the institution from motivated and targeted attacks. Do not shy away from standing up for what is right, and against what is wrong,” said the CJI, who was speaking at the Constitution Day celebration organised by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) in the apex court’s lawns here.

The SCBA’s two-day event started on Friday to celebrate Constitution Day, also known

as National Law Day. On the same day in 1949, the Constituent Assembly of India had adopted the Constitution which came into effect on January 26, 1950.

Justice Ramana stressed the importance of “debate and discussion” and said that the Constitution is richer and a more complex document in comparison to when it was adopted because of the dialogue which took place inside and outside the courtroom.

## State adds 219 Covid cases, 2 deaths

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State registered 219 new Covid-19 positive cases in 20 districts and the State pool on Friday, with which the total tally surged to 10,48,228.

Among the freshly-infected were 32 children in the age group of 0 to 18 years.

Notably, the State had recorded 335 cases on Thursday. Of the new cases, 131 were from quarantine and 88 local contacts.

Khordha district recorded the highest 94 cases followed by Cuttack and Mayurbhanj with 15 each, Sambalpur and Sundargarh 10 each.

The districts which recorded below 10 cases were Jajpur nine, Ganjam six, Jagatsinghpur and Puri five each, Baleswar, Jharsuguda and Nayagarh four each, Kendrapada and Keonjhar three each, Bhadrak and Rayagada two each and Angul, Boudh, Dhenkanal and Malkangiri one each.

Besides, 22 cases were detected from the State Pool. The active cases stood at 2,385.

Two more persons succumbed to the disease, taking the total death toll to 8,403.

However, 222 more persons recovered on the day, increasing the total recoveries to 10,37,609.

## 88 infected in Bhubaneswar

96 cases had been recorded in the city on Thursday.

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Capital Bhubaneswar registered 88 of the State’s 219 cases on Friday, with which the total tally in the city rose to 1,20,986. The active cases were 1,378.

Notably, 96 cases had been recorded in the city on Thursday.

One more person succumbed to the disease in the city, taking the total death toll to 1,085.

## India raises terrorism, drug trafficking in Af



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar digitally chairs the 18th Russia-India-China (RIC) Foreign Ministers’ Meeting

PTI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Expressing concern over the developments in Afghanistan, India on Friday said it supported an inclusive and representative Government there and urged countries in the region to coordinate respective approaches to terrorism, radicalisation and drug trafficking. Making this point here at the 18th meeting of the Russia, India, China (RICS) trilateral dialogue at the External Ministers’ level, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar also said as a contiguous neighbour and long-standing partner of Afghanistan, India is con-

cerned about the suffering of the Afghan people.

Participating in the meeting in the virtual format along with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi and Russian Minister Sergey Lavrov, he also said India supports other provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 2593.

India has offered a supply of 50,000 MT of wheat to Afghanistan to address the drought situation and said the RIC countries need to work together to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches the Afghan people without hindrance and without politicisation, Jaishankar said.

## Farmers assemble at Delhi borders to mark 1 yr of protest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On the completion of one year on November 26 of the farmers’ agitation against the three farm laws, the farmer groups on Friday assembled in a large number at Delhi borders — Singhu, Tikri, Ghazipur and Shahjahanpur — to show support for the protesters on the first anniversary of the beginning of the farm agitation.

Farmers flaunting colourful turbans, sunshades, long beards and twirling moustaches danced on tractors, distributed sweets and hugged each other to mark the occasion that seemed like a festival and vowed to continue their agitation to fulfil other six demands, including legal guarantee of minimum support price, compensation to those who died during protests, memorial for them and the sacking and arrest of Union Minister Ajay Mishra.

On the day of completion



BKU spokesperson Rakesh Tikait and others raise slogans to mark the one year anniversary of farmers agitation, at Ghazipur border in New Delhi on Friday

Ranjana Dimri | Pioneer

of one year of farm agitation, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Friday tweeted farmers have always been victorious in India and will always continue to win in the future as well.

Priyanka lauded the movement and said that it would be known for the “unshakable ‘satyagraha’ of the farmers, the martyrdom of 700 farmers and the arrogance of the ruthless BJP Government and its atrocities towards the farmers,” in a tweet in Hindi.

## India to resume int’l flights to not ‘at-risk’ Covid nations

Op from Dec 15, move relief to students, travellers

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Good news for travellers, students, corporate and tourism sectors as the Ministry of Civil Aviation on Friday announced to resume scheduled international flights to and from India from December 15 with 99 countries.

The resumption will not cover countries such as China, South Africa, Singapore, Israel, Hong Kong, the United Kingdom, countries in Europe, Brazil, Bangladesh, Botswana, Mauritius, New Zealand and Zimbabwe, where Covid-19 is still not under control.

The decision was taken after consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of External Affairs, and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Scheduled international flights have been



on hold in India since March 23 last year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

In an order, the Ministry stated, “The matter of resumption of scheduled commercial international passenger services to and from India has been examined in consultation with the Ministries of Home Affairs, External Affairs and Health and Family Welfare and it has been decided that scheduled commercial international passenger services to and from India may be resumed from December 15, 2021.”

The announcement comes

two days after Civil Aviation Secretary Rajiv Bansal said international flight operations are expected to return to normalcy soon, “by the end of this year”.

The Ministry wrote a letter to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) asking it to take “further necessary action” for the resumption of scheduled international flights.

As per the order, the Ministry has divided countries into three parts based on Health Ministry’s Covid analysis and accordingly allowed resumption of flights.

## Dream to see SCB as AIIMS+ institute: CM



PNS ■ CUTTACK

“It is my dream that nobody from Odisha should be forced to go outside for better medical treatment. We shall provide the best in SCB. For 75 years, the SCB has supported us; now it is our turn to give it back.” Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said on

the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee celebration of the SCB Medical College & Hospital here on Friday.

Joining the celebration through videoconferencing, he said the number of lives saved by this institution and its alumni is unmatched.

“Hence, it is my dream to

see SCB transforming into an AIIMS plus institution to provide the best that modern medical science can provide,” he stated.

Patnaik said the alumni of SCB have been the ambassadors of Odisha in every corner of the world, from Manhattan to Tokyo.

## Jammu legislative complex faces fund dearth as delay escalates cost

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Successive Chief Ministers and even Governors who were at the helm of affairs in Jammu & Kashmir in the last decade spent lavishly on hard-selling the theme of “good governance”.

However, one such ambitious project still under construction for over one decade clearly exposes the “work culture” in the region.

It is not just any other infrastructure project but the new legislative complex in Jammu. There is no fund for its completion.

Ironically, no attempts have been made to expedite the construction work and check the “unproductive” cost escalation.

The foundation stone of the complex was laid by the former Chief Minister Omar

Abdullah in Jammu on July 1, 2011.

Initially, the project was estimated to be built at a cost of ₹113 crore. Now the project execution agency — Jammu Kashmir Project Construction Corporation Ltd (JKPCC) — is awaiting the nod of the UT administration to complete the project at a revised cost of over ₹190 crore.

According to the project engineers, the work on the project was going on smoothly till 2015 but the same hit the roadblock during the BJP-PDP alliance Government in office.

According to these official sources, it is around the same time the project executing agency had sought clearance from the Government as the revised cost was projected to be over ₹150 crore. So far around ₹80 crore has been spent by the JKPC.

## Highest-ever recovery of ₹41.77L cash

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Vigilance police have unearthed properties worth crores of rupees in possession of Santosh Kumar Das, Assistant Engineer in the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) office at Baripada in Mayurbhanj district, in multiple raids carried out on Thursday.

During the searches, the Vigilance officials recovered a total of Rs 41.77 lakh cash which is the highest ever cash recovery from a Government servant in the State, so far.

Raids were carried out at as many as 11 locations including Bhubaneswar, Baleswar and Mayurbhanj of Das.

During searches that were conducted till Thursday night, a total of Rs 41.77 lakh cash and 659 grams gold ornaments were recovered so far.

During the searches in Bhubaneswar a four-storied



building at Badagada Brit Colony, one flat at Sailashree Vihar and a semi-finished building at Kalinga Vihar were found. A four-storied building and three plots were detected at Baleswar, one four-wheeler and three two-wheelers were found in Das’ possession.

Meanwhile, a Vigilance team has brought Das to his Badagada Brit Colony residence in the capital city, which was being searched.



# 4 minor boys drown in Mahanadi in Cuttack

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The bodies of all four minor boys, who had drowned in the Mahanadi here late on Thursday, were fished out from the waters on Friday, police said quoting rescue teams engaged in the operation, which lasted for over 12 hours.

The bodies of the boys aged between 12 and 14 years were sent for postmortem and later handed over to their respective families.

The Commissionerate police here said the four boys of Potapokhari locality under the

Chauliaganj police station had gone to play in the riverbed. When they did not return home by evening, family members frantically looked for them in the nearby localities and spotted their bicycles on the riverbank near Gandhipalli, about two km from their homes. "Worried and anticipating the worst, they informed about it at the Chauliaganj police station around 9 pm," said Cuttack city DCP Prateek Singh, adding that Fire Service and ODRAF personnel were requisitioned to carry out a search operation. Around 11 pm, the rescue team spotted the

body of one of the boys near Bhadimul Ghat, about one km downstream from the spot where they had gone missing.

Although the rescue operation went on throughout the night, the team could trace the remaining bodies only on Friday morning, informed Chauliaganj PS IIC S Rout. All the boys belonged to Potapokhari and Vinayak Nagar and were identified as Om Prakash Behera, Subham Sethi, Chandan Behera and Ajintia Bahalia.

Police said it was yet to be ascertained how the boys drowned.

## ₹27L drug seized; 1 held in Cuttack

**Raja has 19 criminal cases pending against him at different police stations.**

PNS ■ CUTTACK

Police arrested a notorious criminal and seized 270 grams of brown sugar from his possession in Cuttack city on Friday. The peddler was identified as Raja Bastia.

Based on a tipoff, the Lalbag police conducted a raid and nabbed him. During frisking, the cops recovered a packet containing the brown sugar from Raja's possession. The market value of the seized contraband would be around Rs 27 lakh, police said.

Raja has 19 criminal cases pending against him at different police stations.

Further interrogation of the peddler was to unearth more information about the racket and drugs trade in the city. Notably, in 2021 the Commissionerate police had seized around 5 kg of brown sugar in Cuttack UPD.

## I hold CM responsible for attack on me: Aparajita

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Bhubaneswar BJP MP Aparajita Sarangi on Friday held Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik "responsible" for the pelting of eggs and stones at her at Acharya Vihar here allegedly by BJD workers on Thursday.

"As the head of the Government and the ruling party, he should be held responsible," she stated.

Addressing a Press conference, Sarangi said that as a woman MP, she feels she is 'unsafe'. "Women in the State are unsafe; it's the responsibility of the Government to protect the MP," she said.

Sarangi said, "I am not sure the Chief Minister is aware about the incident. We share the same locality where we stay. I suspect the information has not reached the CM. If it's so, this is gravely unfortunate situation for 4.5 crore Odias and 2.5 crore women of the State."

She appealed to the State Government to allow her to work. From Friday onwards, she announced, she would move around the State and the State Government is mandated to protect her.



Sarangi alleged that she was categorically targeted by the attackers. "I have complete faith on police and administration, but the action on the culprits needs to be taken within 24 hours," she stated.

She said, "I will raise the issue in the Parliament. I am not frightened of the incident. I am committed to working with renewed vigour."

BJP State president Samir Mohanty told reporters that it's a violation of the Constitutional obligations on the part of the State Government. The attack on the MP was a conspiracy of the BJD. The incident shows the political intolerance of the Patnaik Government.

# Create own identity, be honest, says Governor



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Dream high, be honest, create own identity without caring for success or failure as success and failure are a part of life, Governor Prof Ganeshi Lal told students at the 9th convocation of the Centurion University of Management and Technology here on Friday.

Australian High Commissioner Barry O'Farrell said India has always remained as a source of knowledge for the complete world. Centurion University by imparting skill

integrated education is adding value to the purpose of spreading fragrance of knowledge.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Supriya Patnaik, who presented the annual report, said the university has made all efforts to effectively implement the new educational policy; and as an institution, it always has tried to work for a better tomorrow by working to satisfy the needs of sustainable development goals.

Faculty members and research scholars of the university have got unique

achievement of publishing high number of research papers in journals and books and they have filed 27 patents and seven copyrights. To promote entrepreneurship, it has promoted 25 start-ups, she added.

On the occasion, 23 scholars received their doctoral degrees and 15 received gold medals also. University President Prof Mukti Kanta Mishra, Vice-President Prof DN Rao, Registrar Prof Anita Patra and Academics Dean Prof Prashant Mohanty were present.

# Tension in Utkal Varsity following ragging

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Tension prevailed in the Utkal University campus here on Friday following allegations of senior students ragging an IMBA first year student.

The IMBA first year students held a demonstration before the Vice-Chancellor's office in protest. "We are not feeling safe in the hostels as outsiders and nonstudents are involved in such harassments," the juniors said.



"Following the admissions of first year IMBA students, the seniors have been ragging the juniors, who are stripped naked, beaten up. Seniors are forcing the junior students to

call them 'Sir,'" alleged a student.

PG Council Chairman Prof Basant Mallick said, "Some students have alleged that some nonstudents have ragged them. We will conduct a detailed inquiry into the allegation."

He further said anti-ragging measures would be strengthened in the campus. "The existing security will be tightened and steps will be taken to regulate the entry gate (VSS Nagar side) after discussions," he added.

# Right policies, funding can transform agriculture in Odisha



ARABINDA KUMAR PADHEE

Agriculture sector in Odisha has shown noticeable performance in recent years. As per SAMRUDHI, the State Agriculture Policy 2020 of the State, "Odisha's agricultural GDP nearly doubled in real terms, clocking an annual growth rate of about 4.5 percent, higher than the all-India average of 3.1 percent" between 2000-01 and 2016-17. The State's Economic survey (2019-20) informs that agriculture and allied sectors contributed 19.9% to the State's GVA (gross value added). The share of agriculture and allied sectors has been fluctuating over time, as we all know, mainly because of natural shocks. The growth in livestock and fisheries sub-sectors has shown upward movements consistently for the last decade.

What could be the policy pathways to transform agriculture in Odisha, while keeping in focus the interests of small and marginal farmers, who account for as high as 92 per cent of the farm holdings? The policy intentions of the State Government broadly address them.

But I wish to suggest the following priorities for consideration.

I. Shifting to more sustainable systems or diversification: To tackle the twin challenges of climate change and malnutrition, diversifying existing cropping systems to more nutritious and environment-friendly crops has often been

advocated.

Rice is synonymous with agriculture in Odisha. So, diversification from rice to any other crop, even if scientifically prescribed, is not going to be easy. Research findings have already shown the potential benefits of crop diversification, particularly in those tracts where rice yields are low. It is now time, diversification to crops like pulses, oilseeds, vegetables, suiting to specific agro-ecological regions of Odisha, be planned, and implemented. A range of agroforestry models such as trees on field bunds, inline agroforestry, high density fruit orchards, etc. are available to help diversify existing farming systems and achieve medium to long term sustainability. The State Government may weigh all these options and consider giving incentives to farmers, at least during the transition, for such diversification.

Allied sectors of agriculture like livestock, fisheries, and aquaculture have huge potential to positively impact Odisha's rural economy, besides contributing to the food and nutrition security. Odisha's fisheries sector has shown impressive growth in recent years. So, policy support for growth of these sub sectors will be very important.

II. Strengthening value chains: As agribusinesses are important generators of employment and income, improving the efficiency and sustainability of agriculture value chains will benefit large segments of Odisha's farmers. Since agriculture in the State is dominated by smallholders, aggregating small farms could help reduce transaction costs for accessing value chains. This will also offset scale disadvantages and benefit the farmers to access inputs, technology, and the market.

As far as practicable, the Government should push for establishment of primary processing facilities closer to the farm gates. Digital agriculture tools, in the process, could

assist producers to gather market intelligence and provide inputs for better management of the entire value chain. The Government policies to incentivize agri-tech start-ups and the private sector, and to develop logistics to strengthen value chains, must also be put in place. Operationalizing local procurement of cereals, pulses, millets, and other nutritious food items for Government schemes and programmes must be given priority to achieve nutritional outcomes, and at the same time, enhance livelihood opportunities for rural people engaged in the production, primary processing, value addition and supply of these items.

State Government can facilitate enhanced usage of the agriculture infrastructure funds, as committed by the Government of India, which can play a great role in creating and augmenting critical logistical facilities in the value chain. Promotion of FPOs, with initial handholding and capacity building of the producers and stakeholders, as envisaged by the State Government, will also benefit a large section of farmers.

III. Modifying consumer behaviour: For the intended diversification to succeed, healthy and diversified diets need to be incorporated and promoted in the menu of consumers. Interestingly, there is already an increasing consumer interest on safe and nutritious foods. Post Covid-19 pandemic, this positive trend for healthy foods may further rise.

Initiatives of the State Government through Odisha Millets Mission, establishment of nutrition gardens in schools, Anganwadi centers, and individual households, etc. coupled with effective awareness campaigns and consumer education have the potential to fructify enhanced dietary diversity.

IV. Recognizing role of women and empowering them: The importance on the role of

women in agriculture and, on closing the gender gap is often being discussed in policy circles. The Mission Shakti initiative of Odisha is a unique programme in the entire country.

Large numbers of women SHGs and of late, few FPOs, formed under various schemes are actively involved in production as well as primary processing of farm produce like rice, millet, pigeon pea, ginger, turmeric, and a variety of vegetables. However, they are often deprived of access to improved cultivars, production technology, quality seeds, primary processing, and value addition opportunities. Strengthening of backward and forward linkages would be the key when we aim at establishing and promoting commodity-based value chains. Thus, targeted women SHGs and FPOs should be linked with right markets and value addition opportunities. All these activities cumulatively would contribute to increased household income and promotion of rural livelihoods.

V. Legalising Land leasing: This is a sensitive political and economic question. This is in fact the elephant in the room when we discuss reforms in State's agriculture sector. The numbers for sharecroppers remain indirect in absence of any authoritative statistics, largely due to the concealed tenancy in the State and under-reporting from the tenants/farmers in surveys like NSSO. The NSSO (2012-13) reported 36 per cent tenancy in coastal Odisha with sharecropping as dominant tenancy system. Odisha treats sharecropping as the synonym for tenancy. Interestingly, beneficiaries of KALIA- the income support or cash transfer scheme- include landless sharecroppers, besides small and marginal farmers. Interestingly, leasing in all forms is banned as per Odisha Land Reform Act, 1960. There is also no formal procedure to identify and record the lists of tenants in any

revenue law of the State.

A piece of legislation to legalize or formalize the land lease market in Odisha will have significant positive impact on the agricultural production systems.

VI. Investing more in agri research and innovation: Investments in research and innovation will play a key role in transforming Odisha agriculture. This is no secret that the agriculture R and D ecosystem is currently underfunded. Capacity building of scientists of OUAT- the State Agriculture University and relevant officials of the State departments, as well as of lead farmers, should also be a core and integral part of Odisha's agricultural development strategy. Inter-State, regional, and even international exposure visits and trainings on best practices, new farming technologies and systems need to be prioritized. This would motivate the machinery to take up and implement Government schemes and programmes. Collaboration, partnerships, and complementarity of OUAT, national and international research centers would also be much desirable.

VII. Ensuring inter-sectoral synergy: The silos between relevant departments and stakeholders are often attributed to poor delivery of intended objectives. As we know, agriculture sector cuts across many Departments of the State Government and therefore, their coming together and breaking the silos will ultimately help the farm sector and farmers.

Science-led and evidence-based integrated food systems solutions have the potential to bring inclusive development of agriculture sector in Odisha.

(The writer is Country Director-India, ICRISAT based at New Delhi. This article is an abstract of his keynote address at the 29th Annual Conference of Agricultural Economics Research Association held recently at Bhubaneswar. Views expressed are personal)

# Attainment of SDGs in State brought to focus

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Attainment and localisation of the globally-decided sustainable development goals (SDGs) has been brought to focus by the State Government. A dedicated PMU with experienced consultants has been set up in the Planning and Convergence Department under the guidance of Development Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Jena.

The PMU held a consultative workshop with all departments here on Friday for chalking out a collaborative initiative for realisation of the SDGs.

Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra said, "The State Government is strongly committed to mainstream the Sustainable Development

Goals-2030 and many efforts to that end have been initiated over the last few years. While in some indicators the State has done well, other indicators need focussed attention. SDG-linked developmental interventions and their outcomes need to be properly analysed, coordinated and evidenced with ground-level database."

He said, "Accomplishment of SDGs requires 'sustained efforts' through evidence-based planning, implementation, monitoring and continuous improvement at all levels."

Mahapatra directed the departments to nominate one nodal officer and two programme officers for SDG coordination. The nominated officers should be well-versed about the departmental plan-

ning, programme and activities. He also directed the PMU to organise a detail training and orientation programme for the nominated officers.

Development Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Jena said the team would soon update State SDG indicator framework in collaboration with the departments. Then, the PMU would prepare the baseline report for pursuance of the SDG attainment. The PMU would also assist in developing the standardised data management system for collection of data, their analysis and presentation in perspectives of the specific SDGs. Jena asked the Secretaries of all departments to extend necessary support to PMU in this collaborative exercise.

## New Covid variant: Travellers from S Africa, HK to be screened

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

In view of the emergence of a new variant of Covid-19, 'B.1.1.529' in South Africa, Hong Kong and Botswana, passengers coming from these parts would be thoroughly screened at the airport in Bhubaneswar to curb possible spread of the virus.

In view of recently relaxed visa restrictions and opening up of international travel, there is every possibility that the new strain of the virus might sneak in, said Director of Medical Education and Training (DMET) Rama Raman Mohanty on Friday.

"The Centre has issued an advisory on the new Coronavirus variant- B.1.1.529. As Bhubaneswar is an entry point being an international destination, there is a need to

conduct Covid test of the passengers coming from South Africa, Hong Kong and Botswana. We can prevent the spread if such travellers are screened and kept in isolation for 10 days," said Mohanty.

It is still premature to say anything on the transmission rate and severity of the new virus strain.

Extra caution should be undertaken along with increased surveillance, testing and isolation measures at entry points, he added.

On Thursday, the Centre issued directives to all States and Union Territories to conduct rigorous screening and testing of all international travellers coming from or transiting through South Africa, Hong Kong and Botswana from where the new COVID-19 variant has been reported.

## CM pays admission fee for poor boy

**Naveen Patnaik has sanctioned ₹ 96,500 to enable Tarachand Rana to get admitted to the NIIT, Warrangal.**

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has sanctioned Rs 96,500 to Tarachand Rana, a student belonging to Bangomunda block of Balangir district to enable him to get admitted to the NIIT, Warrangal.

Coming to know that Tarachand, a meritorious student, was unable to take admission in the college, Patnaik immediately sanctioned the money in his favour.

Tarachand's father Upsu Rana's annual income is reported to be Rs 45,000.



# Transformed schools in S'garh have no HMs, required teachers

MALAY RAY ■ SUNDARGARH

As many as 67 Government schools of Sundargarh district were transformed under 5-T initiative recently and the schools are shining and smart classes have also been introduced in these schools but surprisingly in most of the schools, there is no regular headmaster. Many teacher posts are also lying vacant in these schools.

These schools were transformed with the funding of DMF and OMBADC (Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation). The schools that were transformed in the first phase in the district are from all 17 blocks and three ULBs of Sundargarh, Rajgangpur and Birmittapur. These schools have been refurbished with amenities like smart classrooms, e-libraries with reading rooms, modern laboratories, sports infrastructure, safe drinking water facilities and lavatories.

12 new computers have also been installed in the computer lab in each school. Under 5T initiative, facilities like

smart class, modern science lab, e-library and ICT Lab, were being built. Sources said, about Rs 26.80 lakh was spent per school, for the transformation of the 67 high schools.

But surprisingly, the transformations in these schools notwithstanding, headmasters are not available in 36 high schools among these high schools for last nine years. These schools are under blocks of

Subdega, Rajgangpur, Kuanr munda, Nuagaon, Lahunipada, Gurundia, Koira, Hemgiri, Lepipara, Balishankara and Kutra of Sundargarh district. Due to non availability of headmaster of these schools, inexperienced teachers have been assigned to function as headmasters.

The position of headmaster is lying vacant in seven schools in Rajgangpur block since long. In Rourkela, there is no headmaster in Government schools at Panposh and Basanti Colony.

Similarly, there is no headmaster in high schools at Kacharu, Kadobahal, Dhangirnacha, Padampur,

Jharbada and Barabang for last nine years.

There are also about 669 teacher posts lying vacant in various high schools in the district.

“Advertisement for 574 teacher posts were released during the month of August and among the applicants, candidates were provisionally selected through computer based test. Certificate verification of provisionally selected candidates was completed on November 24. So the teachers vacancy problem in district will be solved very soon,” said District Education Officer, Sundargarh Amulya Pradhan.

“The Headmaster posts which are lying vacant in schools too will be filled up through promoted senior teachers and that will be done by Director, Secondary Education,” informed Pradhan.

Significantly, the 67 transformed high schools of Sundargarh district had been dedicated by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on November 11 under 5T initiative through video conference.

# BWI workshop: Concern over Chinese MNCs’ footprint in S Asia

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A workshop was organised in Ahybrid mode by the Building and Wood Workers International (BWI, Global Union Federation) on ‘Organised Value Chains in Chinese MNCs’ from November 17 to 19.

More than 60 trade unionists from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Australia and South Korea shared the challenges and also trade unions’ interventions at the Chinese MNCs sites vis-à-vis labour violations that pertained to working conditions, working hours, overtime, wages, social security, paid leaves and occupational health and safety.

A number of action points were deliberated including collective actions, networking, case filings, compliance to national laws, ILO core labour standards, invoking International Financial Institutions (IFIs) accountability mechanisms, social dialogue and also pushing for recognition of Covid-19 as occupational disease.

National vice president INTUC and BWI Indian Affiliates Council Chair former MP Dr Rama Chandra Khuntia delivered closing remarks where he voiced concerns on the expanding footprints of Chinese MNCs and undermining of trade unions and workers’ rights in their operations.

Dr Khuntia noted that in

countries where there are strong institutions and strong trade unions Chinese MNCs tend to comply with laws and honour labour standards. On behalf of the federation, he assured the trade union leaders from the Asia Pacific region of all support and cooperation to push for a decent work culture at the Chinese MNCs.

The other key speakers at the three-days event included Dave Noonan (Australia), Chair of BWI AP Regional Committee, Tos Anonuevo (Switzerland), BWI Educational Secretary, Apolinar Tolentino (Malaysia), BWI Regional Representative, Asia Pacific, Dr Rajeev Sharma and Prerna Prasad (India), BWI South Asia Office.

# Sarangi lays stone for B’swar rly stn infra

PNS ■ BALESWAR

The foundation stone for infrastructure development of the Baleswar railway station was laid by MP Pratap Chandra Sarangi on Thursday. Sadar MLA Swarup Das and senior officials of SE Railway were present.

According to the official sources, a new station building will be constructed with modern facilities. The new building will consist of base kitchen, parcel, store cloakroom ARM, First Aid, GRP post, rest room, RMS, RPF post and pay and toi-

let along with some essential rooms like IPS room, relay room and panel room etc.

It also includes development of circulating areas and additional entry facilities etc.

The work will be done in the first phase with an approximate cost of Rs 13 crore and the contract has already been awarded, it was informed.

In phase two, for other ancillary works including additional entry, platform, FOB, non-essential amenities at the station, another Rs 17 crore has been planned, sources informed.

# Jajpur’s renowned poet D Mallick honoured

PNS ■ JAJPUR

Young poet and well-known children’s writer Dharendra Mallick was conferred the “Spiritual and Cultural Award” by the Matilagna Sahitya Sansad, a literary institution in Malkangiri district.

Editor Kishore Chandra Pradhan, Mahadev Satapathy and adviser Durga Prasad Padhi honoured him with the honor.

Mallick regularly writes stories, poems, especially chil-

dren’s literature and publishes them on various social media, newspapers and magazines, and always strives to promote Odia language and literature. He has authored more than 400 poems.

His poems are regularly published in various newspapers and are well-received by readers.

The intellectuals and politicians of Dasarathapur area congratulated him on the occasion and wished him a long and prosperous life.

# Folk artists felicitated in Talcher



PNS ■ TALCHER

On the occasion of fourth annual ceremony of the Prachina Loka Nrutya Sangha, a grand felicitation programme was organised here at Talcher to promote and restore the ancient folk dances and culture those are gradually passing into oblivion.

On the occasion, the

General Manager, Hingula Area, MCL, joined as chief guest. He said that it was a very rare event to felicitate so many artists of ancient cultural troupes.

Senior journalist Dhiramohan Ray joining as chief speaker said praised the effort of Prachina Loka Nrutya Sangha for its contribution to promoting ancient art and cul-

ture. Social worker Bibhutibhusan Sahu, president of Suravi Mahila Mandal of MCL Dali Mishra and Dr Sasmita Sahu were the other guests. Over 60 folk artists were felicitated with flower bouquets, utariyas and certificates. The programme was presided over by general secretary of the organisation Soubhagya Chandra Nayak.



Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik releases the book "Contours of My Life" written by Prof Priyambada Mohanty Hejmadi, former Vice-Chancellor, Sambalpur University, in Bhubaneswar on Wednesday.

Pioneer photo

# Balangir murder video goes viral: Accused brandish weapon, issue threats

PNS ■ BALANGIR

After the Balangir police cracked the murder of one Biswadev Sahu, whose half-burnt body was found behind the Rajendra University PG Hostel on Tuesday, a video clip following the brutal killing has now gone viral on social media platforms.

The video clip showed the two accused Amit Manhira and Subham Singh burning the dead body of Sahu after killing him with a sharp weapon and brandishing the murder weapon.

Singh, while recording the video, can be seen issuing threats to someone who was yet to be identified.

“Dekh jalaya jaa raha hai

maar ke insaan ko. Main yahin jalaya hun. Dekh jaa rahein hain jalake, abhi nikalte hain” (See, a man is being burnt after being murdered. I have set him on fire at this spot. And, we are going after killing and burning him), Singh said in the clip.

Threatening fo someone by brandishing the murder weapon, Singh could be seen saying, “Dekh le beta issi se khoon hua hai, isse se khoon kiya hoon. Ab teri bari hai” (I have killed him with this weapon and it’s your turn now).

Earlier on Wednesday, Bolangir Sadar SDPO Tofan Bag had said Manhira and Sahu were in love with a girl and had a rift over it .

However, their friend Singh had turned into a mediator between them and was trying to solve the dispute.

In order to solve the dispute between the two, Singh had called Manhira and Sahu to the backside of PG Hostel. However, Sahu had an altercation with Manhira and Singh, the SDPO said.

The duo lost their cool and in a fit of rage, attacked Sahu with a sharp weapon killing him on the spot. Later, they set Sahu’s body on fire and fled from the spot.

Police picked up both of them for questioning suspecting their involvement in the case and during the interrogation, both confessed to the crime.

# Binka farmers spending sleepless nights

SHRIKUMAR MAHANTA ■ SONEPUR

The farmers are spending sleepless nights guarding their ready- to-harvest as well as harvested crops from boars and elephants in Binka area of Subarnapur district.

For last couple of days, hundreds of boars from Singhjuba, Jampali, Bhandara, Papi, Kadlipali and Chulimali reserve forests under Binka range are raiding the paddy fields and destroying the ripe crops in the farm lands.

Adding to their woes, elephants from Ullunda forest are frequently raiding Binika after crossing the Mahanadi river. These pachyderms are causing extensive damage to the crops and are not sparing even the harvested crops kept in farmlands.

When it comes to saving their crops, thinking about their safety as well as health is the last thing on the farmers minds. Braving winter and mosquito menace, they are guarding their crops at their farmlands and farmyards, remaining awake all through the night. Some have erected manchas from where they are keeping vigil on their crops



below.

As if the wild animals menace was not enough, the inclement weather has also posed a threat. With the paddy procurement centres, yet to be opened in Binka area, hundreds of farmers, who have already harvested their crops are in a fix. The unseasonal rain has aggravated the situation. They apprehend that the harvested paddy they have saved from marauding animals would be damaged due to the moisture in the atmosphere.

That apart, farmers are yet to receive their assistance money for the crops they lost to boars last year. This year these animals have already

destroyed huge acres of paddy crops.

While they are under the burden of loans, they are having a tough time making machine and labour payments.

The farmers of Sindurapur, Babupali, Bankighardi, Singhjuba and Papi have demanded that the administration consider their problem seriously and take steps to open the paddy procurement centres at the earliest and assess their crop loss. While contacted, Binika Ranger Sibaprasad Nayak assured the affected farmers would be compensated for the damages caused by wild animals last year and the current year.

# ₹10K cr to be spent for clean Paradip Port

PNS ■ PARADIP

Union Minister of State for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Shantanu Thakur came on Friday on a two-day visit to the Paradip Port to review the regular works and projects. The Minister was given a warm welcome by PPT Chairman PL Haranadh and Deputy Chairman AK Bose.

Thakur told a media meet that the Centre would invest over Rs 10,000 crore to make the Paradip Port a clean, green and smart port and this port would be the best one in the country on the east coast.

He also informed about the modernisation and ancillary



development work of the port. The completion of the 1,500-km pipeline from Paradip to Assam would increase the port’s cargo

traffic. A special terminal berth worth Rs 700 crore would be constructed for transportation of LPG.

# DCDRC vacancies; lawyers of Brahmapur hold stir

KRUSHNA CHANDRA PANDA ■ BRAHMAPUR

A four-day dharna by the District Consumer Court lawyers here in front of District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (DCDRC) here was withdrawn on Friday after a discussion with the district administration.

Led by Dr Siba Prasad Mishra and Kailash Chandra Mishra, they alleged that their notice given to the Principal Secretary, Food Supplies and Consumer



are lying vacant.

Mention may be made that, the State Government had advertised on 23.7.21 and 21.8.21 to fill up the vacancies under different Commissions of the State. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court reportedly passed an order directing the State Government to fill up the vacancies within eight weeks which too remained unheeded, the agitating lawyers alleged.

They further alleged that, due to the inactions of the Consumer Welfare Department of the State, the whole gamut of the consumer disputes redressal system in the

State not only has been jeopardised but also the consumers of the State are deprived of due justice. As a result, thousands of consumer disputes “for unfair trade practice of the traders” are currently pending under different Commissions thereby causing harassment to the consumers.

Similarly, the very non-filling of vacant post of President and Members lying vacant in the District Consumer Court at Brahmapur for years indirectly encourages unfair trade practice which is unjust and uncalled for, the agitators pointed out.

# Cyclone Jawad in Bay of Bengal by Dec 3

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Friday forecast formation of a low pressure area over the south Andaman Sea around November 29. It has led to apprehensions of the Bay of Bengal witnessing another cyclonic storm as environmental conditions are favourable for the same.

As per Skymet Weather Services, environmental conditions would support intensification of the forecasted system. Two decisive factors, sea surface temperature and wind shear would help in the growth and sustenance of the system for few days, after the formation of low pressure area.

Northeast monsoon season usually witnesses one or two storms originating over Andaman Sea or an offshoot of remnant system from Gulf of Thailand. However, the maiden storm is yet to form during

the season, this year. Hence, the possibility of the cyclone formation is fairly high, the weather office said.

Such storms generally head towards Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. Also, some of them reach close to the coast and start re-curving, it added.

The system would be named as Cyclone Jawad if it intensifies into a cyclonic storm.

Intensity of the system is predicted to be that of a depression by majority of the weather models by December 3 and further intensification into a severe category cyclone during subsequent 24 to 48 hours, the IMD said.

Adverse weather is likely to prevail over central and north Bay of Bengal as the system moves further. Fishermen are advised to be cautious and avoid venturing into central and north Bay of Bengal during December 2 to 5, the IMD said.

# Wounds of 26/11 attacks cannot be forgotten: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the nation in paying homage to the victims of the Mumbai terror attacks 13 years ago and said the wounds cannot be forgotten. The Pakistani envoy to New Delhi too was summoned here to those responsible for the dastardly incident in which 166 people including 26 foreign nationals were killed.

The attacks by a 10-member squad of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists began on November 26, 2008. Pakistan arrested seven LeT operatives, including operations commander Zakiur Rahman Lakhvi, but there has been little headway in their trial.

Remembering the victims, the Prime Minister said in a video, "India can't forget the wounds of the Mumbai attacks. Now, today's India is combating terrorism with a new policy and new ways."

"I pay my homage to all those who died in the Mumbai attacks. Many brave police personnel were martyred in this attack. I also pay homage to them," Modi said.

The video said victims of the terror attacks "from India and across the world await justice". It included images of the assault on Mumbai's iconic Taj Mahal Palace Hotel and tributes to security personnel killed in the attacks.

Footage of world leaders such as former UN secretary-general Ban Ki-moon condemning the attacks and paying tribute to victims during visits to Mumbai were included.



Among the leaders featured in the video were former US president Barack Obama, the duke and duchess of Cambridge, Belgium's King Philippe, and UK foreign secretary Liz Truss.

Meanwhile, India summoned a senior diplomat of the Pakistan High Commission here and issued a note verbale "reiterating India's call for an expeditious trial in the Mumbai terror attacks case".

The note also called on the Pakistan government "to abide by its commitment to not allow territories under its control for terrorism against India", according to a statement from the external affairs ministry said.

"It is a matter of deep anguish that even after 13 years of this heinous terror attack, the families of 166 victims from 15 countries across the globe still await closure, with Pakistan showing little sincerity in bringing the perpetrators to justice," the statement said.

"The 26/11 terrorist attack was planned, executed and launched from Pakistani territory. The former Prime

Minister of Pakistan had gone on record and admitted that the terrorists were sent from Pakistan's soil," the statement said, in a reference to former premier Nawaz Sharif.

"We once again call on the government of Pakistan to give up double standards and to expeditiously bring the perpetrators of the horrific attack to justice. This is not just a matter of Pakistan's accountability to the families of the innocent victims who fell to terrorists, but also an international obligation," it said.

"The Government of India will continue to make every effort to seek justice for the families of the victims and the martyrs," it said adding the government and people of India remembered victims of the "dastardly attack" on the 13th anniversary of the event.

A memorial event was organised by the Maharashtra government at the Police Memorial in Mumbai. Indian missions in the 14 countries whose nationals were killed in the Mumbai attacks also organised memorial events for the victims and reminded the world of the continuing global threat of terrorism.

# CBI gets nod to prosecute retd Allahabad HC judge in corruption case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has received sanction to prosecute retired Allahabad High Court Judge Justice S N Shukla in a corruption case linked to alleged favour granted to a private medical college through his judicial pronouncement.

The CBI had sought permission from the High Court to prosecute the retired judge, on April 16 this year, in line with compliance of Prevention of Corruption Act for prosecuting him, official sources said.

Having secured a sanction from the High Court, the CBI can now proceed with a chargesheet in the case against the retired judge as the probe in the matter has already been wrapped up, officials said.

The sanction to prosecute the retired judge, a prime accused in the case, was sought by the agency after the probe in the case suggested prima facie culpability of the named accused in the case, the sources said.

Besides Justice Shukla of the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court, the agency had also named retired Chhattisgarh High Court judge I M Qudusi (was earlier arrested in this case), Bhagwan Prasad Yadav and Palash Yadav of the Prasad Education Trust, the Trust itself and private persons Bhavna Pandey and Sudhir Giri as accused in the FIR, they said.

The accused persons and the Trust were booked under Indian Penal Code Section 120-B (criminal conspiracy) and provisions of the Prevention of

Corruption Act.

Illegal gratification was allegedly paid to one of the accused named in the FIR by the Trust in order to get a favourable court order, officials said referring to the FIR.

After registering the FIR, the CBI had conducted searches at multiple locations in Lucknow, Meerut and the national capital in December 2019, including at the then serving judge Justice Shukla's premises in Lucknow, they said.

It is alleged that the Prasad Institute of Medical Sciences was debarred by the Centre from admitting students due to sub-standard facilities and non-fulfilment of the required criteria in May 2017, along with 46 other medical colleges that were also barred on similar grounds for students' intake, they further said.

The decision to debar the Institute from admitting students was challenged by the Trust before the Supreme Court through a writ petition, they added.

Subsequently, a conspiracy was hatched by the accused persons and the Trust and the petition was withdrawn with the apex court's permission.

Another writ petition was filed before the Lucknow bench of the High Court on August 24, 2017.

It was further alleged in the FIR that the petition was heard on August 25, 2017 by a division bench of the court comprising Justice Shukla and an order favourable to the Trust was passed the same day, they added.

# SC to hear plea against Asthana's appointment as Delhi Police chief

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to hear the plea of Prashant Bhusan-led



NGO challenging the Delhi High Court order which upheld the Centre's decision to appoint senior IPS officer Rakesh Asthana as Delhi Police Commissioner. A bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and A S Bopanna issued notice to the Centre and Asthana and sought their response on the plea of the NGO, the Centre for Public Interest Litigation. The NGO has filed a writ petition and an appeal against the appointment of Asthana as Delhi Police Commissioner four days before his superannuation on July 31.

Advocate Prashant Bhusan, appearing for the NGO, said that they have filed the appeal as directed by the top court on November 18. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for Centre and Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, representing Asthana said that they would file their replies in two weeks.

On October 12, the Delhi High Court upheld the Centre's decision to appoint Asthana as Delhi Police Commissioner, saying there was "no irregularity, illegality or infirmity" in his selection. Dismissing a PIL challenging his selection, it had said the justification and reasons given by the Centre for appointing Asthana are plausible, calling for no interference in judicial review.

# Now, women outperform men as voters: CEC



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Taking note of the historical perspective of barriers and challenges faced by women in participation in elections in India, Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra said on Friday after seven decades and 17 General Elections since Independence, women's participation in India has exceeded that of men and stood at more than 67 percent in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

Addressing an international webinar on 'Enhancing Electoral Participation of Women, Persons with Disabilities and Senior Citizens', Chandra narrated how the Election Commission made special efforts to enhance the participation on women, people with disabilities, senior citizens and transgenders.

"Gender gap, a crucial parameter, which was -16.71% in 1962, has not only closed but reversed to +0.17% in 2019. In fact India has witnessed a 235.72% increase in female electors since the 1971 elections," he said. The poll panel,

Chandra said, has made consistent efforts and has gone that extra mile to empower and facilitate the participation of senior citizens and persons with disabilities.

In most countries and territories, voting rights were granted to women in a piecemeal manner, he observed. The United States took 144 years to give equal voting rights to women, he pointed out.

In India, women got the right to vote the year the country was born. This does not obviate the fact that many Indian women campaigned for equal right to vote. The Indian suffragette movement gathered momentum with the participation of more and more women in the freedom struggle, he said.

The real logistics issue came up in the preparation of electoral rolls when a large number of women, owing to customary practice, refused to disclose their own names and wanted to be registered as A's wife or B's mother, he recalled.

# Naravane reviews op preparedness of armed forces in Jaisalmer

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Army chief General M M Naravane on Friday reviewed the operational preparedness of the armed forces in Jaisalmer to fight modern-day war in a synergised manner.



He undertook the two-day visit ending Friday to Rajasthan to an exercise location in Jaisalmer to review exercise 'Dakshin Shakti' conducted by the Southern Command of Indian Army with an aim to ensure integrated application of forces in Multi-Domain Operations and upholding the nation's military aims over the entire spectrum of conflict.

During the past one week, units and formations of the Indian Army practiced tactical and operational manoeuvres by its Infantry, Mechanised Formations and Airborne troops in a fluid battlefield environment, operationalising future technologies.

This was effected by exploiting versatile and indigenous airborne platforms such as Advanced Light Helicopter (Weapon System Integrated), Swarm Drones

and enmeshing Artificial Intelligence to provide a cohesive operational and intelligence picture amalgamated within the Intelligence, Surveillance and Recce (ISR) Architecture.

A formidable display of the same including Special Heliborne Operations, Swarm Drone and ALH Manoeuvres and coordinated action by ground troops were also practiced.

The Army Chief commended the Southern Command for fielding and exploiting the capabilities of indigenous equipment inducted as part of the 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat' initiative. He also emphasised the need to constantly evolve tactics, techniques and procedure to fight "Future Wars" as well as capability enhancement in Manned and Unmanned systems.

# Sonia to hold rally on Dec 12 against price rise, inflation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress president Sonia Gandhi will address a public rally on December 12 as part of her party's drive against price rise and inflation. The Congress president and the party have decided to draw the country's attention to price rise and inflation by holding a massive "Mehngai Hatao rally" in Delhi on December 12, AICC general secretary K C Venugopal said.

The rally will be addressed by Congress president Sonia Gandhi and former party chief Rahul Gandhi and other Congress leaders from across the country. "It will give a decisive warning to the present Modi Government to stop its loot and reduce the backbreaking prices. We shall continue our struggle until the Modi Government backs down," he said in a statement.

Venugopal said "Modi and 'Mehngai' have become the bane of people's lives" and the unprecedented price rise and inflation have demolished the earnings, the household income and budget of every family in the country.

He said the people of India are suffering unbearable cruel-

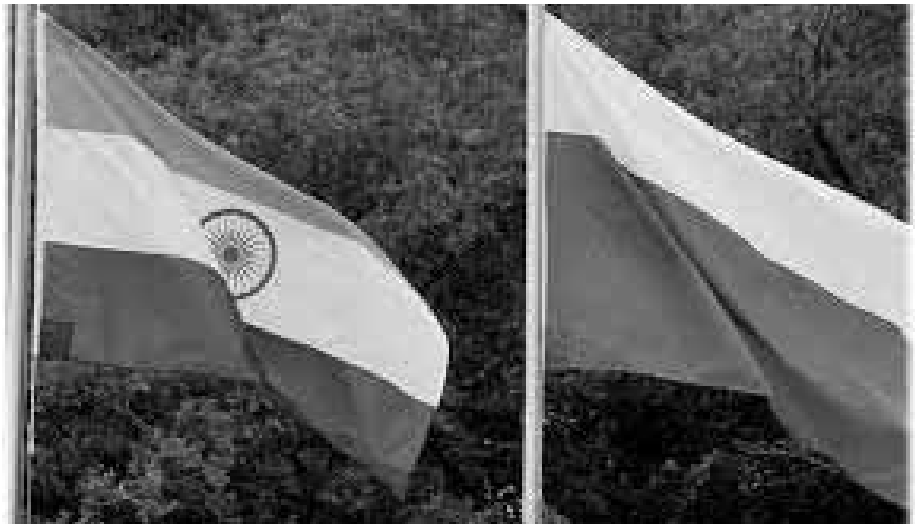


ty and untold misery on account of the BJP government-driven price rise and inflation.

The budget of every household bleeds, even minimum nutrition suffers and people are finding it difficult to buy and consume day-to-day food articles as also other consumables, he alleged. "The Modi government remains oblivious to this insurmountable pain and suffering of people. Backed by a section of the electronic media, the only solution offered by Modi government is a divisive religious discourse or sporadic diversionary statements to reset the agenda from fundamental issues affecting the lives of the people," he said in the statement.

The Congress has been protesting on the issue of price rise and inflation and have called for a check on them. The Congress leader said the real

# Putin, Modi to hold talks on December 6



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold summit level talks here on December 6. The two countries will also have the first two plus two dialogue on the same day between the defence and foreign ministers of their countries.

Making an official

announcement about Putin's visit, the ministry of external affairs (MEA) said here on Friday the Russian president will pay an official visit to New Delhi for the 21st India-Russia Annual Summit with the Prime Minister.

The Pioneer had reported about these two high profile events a few days back.

In an official statement, MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi further

confirmed that the first meeting of 2+2 dialogue between Foreign and Defence Ministers of India and Russia will be held in Delhi on December 6.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will represent the Indian side. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu will represent their country.

# Centre kicking off a three-day Int'l Tourism Mart in Kohima

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In keeping with its focus on promotion of the North-East, identifying new destinations and developing itineraries around them, the Centre is kicking off a three-day International Tourism Mart on Saturday in picturesque Kohima in Nagaland, which is blessed with breathtaking unexplored destinations.

Nagaland is holding the mart for the first time. It was earlier held in Guwahati (Assam), Tawang (Arunachal Pradesh), Shillong (Meghalaya), Gangtok (Sikkim), Agartala (Tripura), and Imphal (Manipur).

And the day after the Mart wraps up, the State Government will inaugurate the much-awaited Hornbill Festival, an annual tourism promotional event showcasing the rich Naga tradition and culture at the Naga Heritage Village, Kisama,

about 12 km from the state capital.

Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio, Minister of State for Tourism & Defence from the Centre, Ajay Bhatt and MLA and Advisor Tourism, Nagaland H Khehovi Yeputhomi will jointly inaugurate the International Tourism Mart.

"This edition of the Mart will put the spotlight on "Domestic Tourism". Besides deliberations on the promotion of tourism in the North East Region in general, the Mart will also give a platform for promoting cultural ties, providing enhanced connectivity to the States of North Eastern Region with other parts of the country," said an official from the Union Tourism Ministry which has organized the mega event.

The three-day Mart to be attended by a battery of stakeholders will see a string of cultural programmes, deliberations on the promotion of

tourism in the North East Region in general, promoting cultural ties, providing enhanced connectivity to the States of North Eastern Region with other parts of the country.

Among over 300 delegates including government officials, industry stakeholders and local participants, the event is also going to be graced by the High Commissioner, Brunei Darussalam, High Commissioner, Malaysia, Ambassador Extra Ordinary, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Ambassador, The Socialist Republic of Vietnam, amongst others attending dignitaries and diplomats.

The city is a tourist's delight, having been blessed with rich cultural heritage showcased in hotspots like Kisama Heritage Village, Kisama War Museum and Morungs, Khonoma Village and Kohima World War II War Cemetery.

# L-G Sinha's attention drawn towards recent incidents in Kashmir

PNS ■ SRINAGAR

Chairman of the Planning and Finance Committee at Union Minority Affairs Ministry and a member of the Central Waqf Council, Rais Khan Pathan, has written to Jammu & Kashmir L-G Manoj Sinha drawing his immediate attention to the recent incidents in Kashmir where senior journalist Sajid Yousuf Shah, who is also president of All JK Youth Society, received threats after he informed the authorities about nefarious plans of terrorists.

"The terrorists are plotting to contaminate the food given to the security forces by injecting poison in it. I state with deep anguish that the recent occurrence has become a crucial concern as informed to me by the journalist by tagging our official handle on Twitter

last week," Pathan mentioned in his letter and shared news clippings and news channel clips broadcast in the local media.

"Also, it has been informed that Shah has been attacked several times in the past and is on the top hit list of many terror attacks. The situation is grim and completely dreadful. The viral audios on Twitter with different names, IDs are disturbing and are jeopardizing the public safety. Looking at the situation, it stands as a major threat not only to the journalist but also to millions of security officers, which can risk the security and stability of our nation. In this regard, I request you to personally intervene in the matter and order an immediate high-level investigation to review the situation minutely," Pathan stated in his letter dated November 23.

# Staying away from Constitution day not good, says Speaker

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Expressing "pain" over Opposition parties boycotting the Constitution Day event organised by the Lok Sabha Secretariat on Friday, Speaker Om Birla said staying away from such non-partisan events held by Parliament is not good for the health of democracy.

Speaking to reporters after the programme, Birla said, "This culture of boycotting non-partisan events, which are of national interest, is not good for the health of democracy." He said he will sit with the representatives from the opposition parties and discuss how it can be ensured that all political parties attend such events.

"I am deeply hurt as the presiding officer of the Lok Sabha that several political parties boycotted the event organised by Parliament to

commemorate the Constitution Day," Birla said.

He found it strange that the parties boycotting the event did not even inform him about their decision. "If they had some issues, they should have discussed it with me. I would have tried to resolve their issues so that they could attend the event," the Lok Sabha speaker said.

The people of the country expect Parliament to function in an orderly manner and all political parties should try to ensure that the House runs smoothly, he added.

Arrangements were made for Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and his counterpart in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge -- both from the Congress -- to sit on the dais. It was also intimated to both leaders.

Speaking at the event, Birla

**The people of the country expect Parliament to function in an orderly manner and all political parties should try to ensure that the House runs smoothly, Birla added**

said the Constitution is like a modern version of the Bhagavad Gita that motivates every Indian to work for the nation. "The Constitution of India is like a modern version of the Gita for us that motivates us to work for the nation. If each one of us commits to working for the country, we can build 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'," he said.



**RAMBAGH ENCOUNTER**

# Shops, offices still shut in downtown Srinagar on day 2

## Mobile internet too remains suspended

**Srinagar:** Majority of the shops and business establishments in downtown Srinagar were shut on the second consecutive day on Friday while mobile internet remained suspended in many parts of the city following the killing of three militants, officials said.

The shutdown was observed mainly in interior areas such as Nowhatta, Gojwara, Khanyar, S a f a k a d a l, Nawakadal, Rajouri Kadal and MR Gunj, they said.

Traffic, however, was plying as usual, the officials said.

Police on Wednesday gunned down Mehran Shalla, a self-styled commander of The Resistance Front (TRF) and a resident of Jamalata area in Nawakadal, and Manzoor Ahmad Mir and Arafat Sheikh, both from Pulwama, in a brief encounter in Rambagh area of the city.

Police said Mir and Sheikh, too, were affiliated with TRF, an offshoot of Lashkar-e-Taiba.

Shalla was wanted by security forces in connection with several civilian killings, including those of two teachers belonging to minority communities inside a school in Eidgah area of the city last month, they said.

**PTI**

# Army foils infiltration bid along LoC in Poonch; Pak ex-Army man killed

**MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU**

An ex-serviceman of the Pakistan Army and well known terrorist guide, working in close coordination with Pakistan based terrorist outfits Lashkar-e-Tayyeba and Jaish-e-Mohammad since early 1990's, was gunned down by the alert Indian Army troops while foiling an infiltration bid along the line of control in Bhimbergali area of Poonch late Thursday night.

The terrorist guide has been identified as Mohd Arif alias Haji Arif, resident of village Matrian, Khuriratta, PoJK.

According to reports, Haji Arif's house was located close to the line of control and was used by the terrorist outfits as launching pads to push terrorists inside the Indian territory.

He was on the radar of the Indian army for a long time. Late Thursday night he ran out of his luck while leading a group of infiltrators inside the Indian territory.

According to the dossier pre-



pared by the security agencies, Haji Arif was well versed with the

topography of the region and was regularly ferrying small groups of terrorists inside the Indian territory.

According to the dossier, his name also surfaced during investigations after several operations, IED blasts and even BAT attacks by the Pakistan army regulars targeting Indian soldiers. He mostly operated in Tarkundi bowl along the line of control. In February 2018 when different agencies were investigating the role of different players behind the BAT attack his name too had surfaced and substantiated by multiple agencies.

His two sons, identified as Naseer Khan and Bilal Khan, are both working as labourers in Saudi Arabia and UAE respectively while one of his younger brothers is also working as a guide of LeT.

## KOLKATA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION ELECTIONS

# TMC, LF announce list of candidates ahead of BJP

**SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA**

Youth, women and minorities constitute a sizeable part of the ruling Trinamool Congress and Left Front's candidates' list for the upcoming Kolkata Municipal Corporation elections which would take place on December 19 about two years behind schedule.

Incidentally both the TMC and the Left, left principal opposition BJP behind in announcing their respective lists with a moribund Left on Friday coming out quite surprisingly with its own list beating the ruling outfit by several hours.

In an apparent bid to recognize the rise of women electorate that played a decisive role in this year's Assembly elections both the TMC and the Left Front have fielded a sizeable number of women candidates.

While senior TMC leader Partho Chatterjee emerging from a core committee meeting presided by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced that "we are fielding 80 male and 64 female candidates --- making it a 55%-45% percent affair --- the Marxists have nominated 56 female and 58 male candidates out of the 127 seats they are contesting.

TMC will contest from all the 144 seats the Left Front have left 17 seats for the

"Congress, ISF or any other party that can defeat the Trinamool and the BJP". The Left which announced the names of 114 candidates will publish the names of 13 nominees in a day or two, its leader Kallol Majumdar said.

While both the TMC and the LF have preferred the youth in deciding their candidates the average age of the Front candidates is about 48 years. For the Trinamool Congress it is a tad lower.

Out of the 144 nominations the ruling outfit has retained 87 councilors and dropped 39. "Those who have not been given tickets would be used in the organizational work," said Chatterjee. Six MLAs --- all sitting councilors --- figure in the TMC list. Among them are outgoing Mayor Firhad Hakim who is also a State minister, Deputy Mayor Atin Ghosh, Mayors-in-council Debashis Kumar and Debabrata Biswas.

Out of the total candidates the TMC has fielded 19 SCs and 23 minorities, Chatterjee said adding out of the minority candidates two are from the Christian community.

The West Bengal State Election Commission had on Thursday announced the date of elections amid rising demand from the Opposition parties to hold simultaneous elections to all the 118 municipal boards and corporations in the State.

# Param Bir to appear before commission looking into charges against Deshmukh on Monday

**Mumbai:** IPS officer Param Bir Singh will appear before the one-member commission probing corruption allegations against former Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh on Monday, his lawyer said. The Justice K U Chandiwal commission was formed in March this year to probe the allegations levelled by Singh, a former Mumbai police chief, against Deshmukh, an NCP leader. On Thursday, the commission had warned that if Singh did not remain present, he would face the execution of the bailable warrant issued against him.

On Friday, Singh's lawyer told the commission that the senior IPS officer won't be able to appear during the day as he was visiting Thane in connection with a case against him. Singh was ready to appear on Saturday or any other day, he said. The commission said it doesn't sit on Saturday and asked Singh to appear on Monday (November 29).

The commission had fined Singh on many occasions earlier for failing to appear. A bailable warrant had also been issued against him. Singh, transferred from the post of Mumbai police commissioner in

March in the aftermath of the Antilia bomb scare episode, alleged that Deshmukh, then home minister, had asked police officers to collect Rs 100 crore a month from bars and restaurants in Mumbai. Declared absconding by a Mumbai court in an extortion case, Singh surfaced in public on Thursday after six months, and appeared before the Mumbai crime branch to record his statement. Meanwhile, a man, claiming to be a social worker, on Friday approached the Justice Chandiwal commission with an intervention application, seeking inquiry against Singh for his 'misdeeds' during his tenure as Thane police commissioner. Singh implicated many builders, businessmen and common citizens in false cases, the plea alleged.

The commission took the application on record.

Incidentally, Singh appeared before Thane police on Friday in connection with an extortion case filed against him and some other police officials on the complaint of a local builder. The IPS officer is facing at least five extortion cases in Maharashtra.

# Drones to deliver vaccines, medicines in Jammu

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Indigenously manufactured drones by Indian scientists will be launched from Saturday for delivering medicines in the inaccessible and tough terrain of Jammu and surrounding areas with a focus on vaccine delivery initially.

"This is going to be a pilot project for the area. The drone is developed and manufactured entirely by our scientists," Union Minister for Science & Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh told reporters here. The use of drones has gained popularity in the last two years, beginning with the World Economic Forum's "Medicine from the Sky" project in India. Several States are piloting similar solutions for better access to medical care among rural communities.

Singh said he himself will be launching the project at Jammu.

The drone is developed by the scientists at Bengaluru's National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL), a constituent of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), an autonomous Society that is headed by the Prime Minister.

For now, the delivery would be limited to Covid vaccines and once successful, it would be expanded to be used for regular delivery of medicines in the remote, hilly areas. Used for surveillance

and in humanitarian aid delivery, drones are being increasingly developed to transport medical samples and supplies.

Jammu and surrounding areas are sensitive in terms of their strategic importance. Some months ago, there was an attack on an Army installation using drones.

An official from the Science and Technology Ministry said, "The drones would be deployed by authorised agencies such as hospitals, not anybody can use it, nor would any random person be permitted to use it."

NAL has called the drone an 'Octacopter'. It can fly at an operational altitude of 500 m AGL and at maximum flying speed of 36 kmph. It can be used for a variety of BVLOS applications for last mile delivery like medicines, vaccines, food, postal packets, Human organs (such as heart for heart transplantation) etc.

In an article published in Elsevier Connect in 2016, researchers from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the Pittsburgh Supercomputing Center had noted that the cost savings would come from drones being able to deliver vaccines more quickly and cheaply than land-based methods, which are limited by road conditions and the need for costly fuel and maintenance.

# Parl IT panel summons Facebook India officials

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology headed by Congress MP Shashi Tharoor has asked Facebook India officials to appear on November 29 to hear on the safeguarding citizens' rights and prevention of misuse of social/online news media platforms including special emphasis on women security in the digital space.

The committee is also expected to take view point of Facebook India on a report shared by whistle blower Sophie Zhang, a former employee of the company. The committee has earlier called Facebook India in June this year to take view

According to the agenda of the meeting, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on IT will "hear the views of the representatives of Facebook India on

the subject 'Safeguarding citizens' rights and prevention of misuse of social/online news media platforms including special emphasis on women security in the digital space'. The committee will also hear representatives of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology on the same.

The Congress leader has earlier stated that the committee would look into reports that Facebook did nothing to censor hate posts by some Bharatiya Janata Party leaders in the run-up to the Lok Sabha elections and ask the social media giant to respond to the accusations.

The committee has earlier called Facebook India in June this year to take view on new the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 on February 25, 2021. The Rules have come into effect from May 26, 2021.

# MGL hikes CNG, PNG prices for 3rd time in 6 weeks

**TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI**

In a development that would affect 24 lakh consumers in the metropolis, the Mahanagar Gas Ltd (MGL) increased the prices of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) and Piped Natural Gas (PNG) with effect from midnight of Friday.

This is the third hike in CNG and PNG prices carried out by the MGL since October 14. The hike will hit the domestic budgets of 16 lakh people living in the metropolis and neighbouring areas, eight lakh consumers using gas-powered vehicles will have to spend more because of the hike.

The MGL has increased the basic prices of CNG by

₹3.06/kg and domestic PNG by ₹2.26 per Standard Cubic Meter (SCM) for the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR).

As a consequence, the revised all-inclusive prices of CNG used by vehicles will go up from ₹57.54 per kg to ₹61.50 per kg, while the domestic PNG will be ₹36.50 per SCM, in a single slab henceforth.

Earlier, the MGL had hiked rates twice in the first week of October ahead of the festive season. It went in for one more hike on October 14.

On its part, the MGL has attributed the price increase to the shortfall in domestic gas allocation for which it is buying higher priced PNG

(imported RLNG) to cater to the growing numbers of CNG and domestic customers.

"In addition, owing to the substantial increase in natural gas prices in the international market, the MGL's input gas cost has also gone up. To partially offset the increase in the input costs of gas, we have gone in for the latest price hikes," an MGL spokesperson said.

However, the MGL said that despite the revised rates, its CNG would help the consumers save around 62 percent and 35 per cent respectively in comparison with petrol and diesel, while the PNG users were able to save 27 percent compared with the prices of domestic LPG.

# Homage paid to martyrs of 26/11 attack on 13th anniversary

**TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI**

Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari on Friday joined senior police officials, family members of the victims and brave hearts in paying homage to the martyrs of the 26/11 attack on Mumbai on its 13th anniversary at the Martyrs' Memorial erected inside the Mumbai Police Commissionerate premises near Crawford Market in south Mumbai.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, who is recuperating at the HN Reliance Hospital in Mumbai after a cervical spine surgery that he underwent on November 12, paid homage those who lost their lives during the terror strikes and expressed his gratitude to those who fought the terrorists.

Uddhav described the November 26-29, 2008 attack on Mumbai as "a cowardly act". He recalled the services of the police and security forces and the people of Mumbai for warding off the assault on the country's commercial capital and recovering from its effects.

Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil, Tourism Minister, Director-General of Police Sanjay Pandey, Police Commissioner Hemant Nagrale and other dignitaries also paid their respects at the Martyrs' Memorial.

A large number of Police personnel turned up to pay homage to their colleagues



Members of Police Charitable Trust hold placards at the Gateway of India to mark the 13th anniversary of the 26/11 terror attacks, in Mumbai on Friday

**PTI**

who were killed while fighting the terrorists at key locations in south Mumbai.

The 26/11 attack had claimed 166 lives and left more than 300 others injured. The sites targeted during the mayhem were the world heritage building Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT), Hotel Taj Mahal Palace & Tower, Hotel Trident, Nariman House, Leopold Café and Cama Hospital, Wadi Bunder.

While Abdul Rehman, Abu Ali and Abu Soheb marched to the Leopold Café in Colaba and then laid siege at Taj Mahal Palace Hotel, Abdul Rehman Chota and Fahad Ullah headed to the Trident-Oberoi Hotel.

Nasir Abu Umar and Babar Imran alias Abu Aakash targeted Nariman House housing the Jewish Chabad House, and trio - Isamal Khan, Abu Ismail and Ajmal Amir

Kasab unleashed terror at CSMT, Cama Hospital and its precincts, before proceeding towards Chowpatty.

All the targets were within a radius of around 4-5 km area in south Mumbai, where the state secretariat, business and commercial hubs, deluxe hotels, residences of ministers, bureaucrats, diplomats, scientists and business bigwigs are located.

Assistant sub-Inspector Tukaram Ombale was instrumental in catching Kasab alive at Gairgaum-Chowpatty in south Mumbai on the night of November 26, 2008. Ombale, it may be recalled, had held onto Kasab even after he had been grievously injured by bullets pumped into him by the latter. Ombale died before he could be rushed to the hospital.

While nine of the ten terrorists were killed by the security forces during the attack, the remaining one -- Mohammed Ajmal Kasab -- was caught alive by the police at Girgaum Chowpatty on the intervening night of November 26-27, 2008.

Kasab was sentenced to death by a trial court on May 6, 2010. Later on February 21 this year, the Bombay High Court confirmed Kasab's death sentence. After the high court's verdict, Kasab wrote to the Supreme Court on July 28, challenging his conviction and death sentence in the 26/11 case. The apex court is likely to hear his case in the coming months.

## Raj: 6 detained for pelting stones at Dalit man's wedding procession

**Jaipur:** Six people were detained after they pelted stones at a Dalit man's marriage procession after he rode a mare against their wish, police said on Friday.

Nearly a dozen people were injured in the incident that took place in Jaipur's Kotputli town late on Thursday, police said.

"Some people from a certain community had objected to Dalits riding a mare during marriage ceremonies," Prapura Station House Officer Shiv Shankar said. "Anticipating trouble, the Dalit groom's family members had given a police complaint prior to the marriage. Accordingly, a police team was deployed to ensure smooth conduct of the ceremony. However, some people managed to pelt stones at the procession," the offices said.

The accused have been booked under Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, and the Indian Penal Code, Shankar said.

He said another person from the victim's family is slated to get married a few days later, and adequate protection will be provided to them.

**PTI**

## Three infant deaths in four days at Attappady; Kerala Govt orders enquiry

**Palakkad:** The death of a three-day old infant at a tribal hamlet at nearby Attappady on Friday, the third such in the last four days, prompted the Kerala government to order a multi-departmental enquiry into the incident.

The deaths occurred at Agali and Puthur regions in the area.

Health Minister Veena George directed the Directorate of Health Services (DHS) to investigate the incident.

Minister for Welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes, K Radhakrishnan, will visit the backward hamlet in the district on Saturday to take stock of the situation.

T V Anupama, the Director of the Scheduled Tribes Development Department, has been entrusted to enquire into the matter and submit a report soon.

The Minister will also take part in a meeting in the morning at Agali in the district.

The infant died at Mannarcaud hospital in the district on Friday, Palakkad DMO Ramadevi told PTI, adding that this was the third such incident in the last four days.

"The post-mortem will be conducted at the District Hospital in Palakkad," the DMO said, adding that this was the seventh infant death in the tribal hamlet this year. Medical officers said some were Intrauterine Deaths (IUD) and other children died due to sickle cell anemia.

**PTI**

# Man held for raping 'minor' in UP town

**Ballia (UP):** A 27-year-old man has been arrested here for allegedly raping a minor on pretext of marriage, police said on Friday.

The arrest came on Thursday on complaint of a 22-year-old woman, who alleged that the accused raped her for two years beginning in 2014 promising her that he will marry her, they said.

She alleged she was 15 when the accused first raped her and he continued to do so for the next two years.

She approached the police after he allegedly broke his promise and



married another woman, Gadwar police station in-charge Durgeshwar Mishra said.

The woman also alleged that the accused not only abused and assaulted her but also threatened to kill her.

A case has been registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code, and the woman has been sent to the district hospital for medical examination, Mishra said.

**PTI**





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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Cash cow

India is far from joining the top milk-exporting nations because of its large domestic demand

This Friday was the birth centenary of India's Milk Man, Verghese Kurien. He was the brain behind 'Operation Flood' and made dairy farming India's biggest self-sustaining industry and the largest employer in the rural sector. With an annual production touching 200 million tonnes, India accounts for over a fifth of the world's milk production. The per capita availability of milk is around 400 grams a day against the world's average of 300 grams. The sector's respected brand is Amul, which stands for Anand Milk Union Limited, managed by the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation that played a pivotal role in the 'White Revolution'. The Milk Man left behind him a proud legacy, but he would, as a man used to look far and ahead, notice several uncanny challenges and controversies facing the dairy sector. India is still far away from joining the ranks of milk exporting nations because much of the production caters to its large domestic demand. India may be self-sufficient in milk production, but only 10 States produce over three-fourths of the total milk. Only nine States compete with the national average when it comes to the per capita availability of milk. Most States still lack a healthy dairy cooperative network. Most farmers in these States do not get remunerative prices. Steps are needed to enhance their return on investment. Take the quality of cows, for example. The yield from indigenous cows is much lower than that of exotic crossbred cows. Crossbreeding is the answer and the country took baby steps only



in 2019 through the Nationwide Artificial Insemination Programme. However, crossbreeding has to first tackle the sensitive issue of India's renewed interest in the socio-cultural and nationalist affinity towards cows and dairy products which has created a political movement for promoting indigenous breeds.

In India, like in the United States, farm animals like cows have a central place in the Indian way of life, politics and culture. The United States has a vast legal framework concerning milk whereas the Indian constitution has a clear provision on cattle welfare. For separate reasons, cows are enmeshed in both countries in exclusionary politics, reflecting existing differences between religious communities and ideologies. The right of farmers to sell ageing cows for slaughter is caught in a Hindu versus Muslim debate, ignoring the role slaughter plays in preserving the species by replacements with younger stock and protecting farmers' livelihoods. A Government move to introduce milk instead of eggs in the mid-day meal scheme in schools has generated debates over milk versus egg and vegetarianism. Currently, milk and dairy products are stuck in a double controversy, with People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) asking Amul not only to switch to vegan milk but also stop cruelty to animals in the dairy industry. And around the corner is another issue with the potential to raise a 'white' storm: including milk in the public distribution system because the poor also have a right to drink milk.

## PICTALK



Women make bamboo baskets to sell on the eve of Hosto Silpo Mela, in Kolkata

PTI

## Intolerance

More than 70 years since Independence, we as a nation haven't grown up enough to grow together

Where are we going? What have we become? Is this what we've learnt from Hinduism; a religion that teaches tolerance and harmony towards all? What has happened in Gurugram recently yet again proves that we, as a nation, have missed the whole humane point. Certain right-wing Hindu groups on Friday interrupted Muslims while the latter were offering *namaz* (prayers) at a designated open site in Gurugram's Sector 37, leading to tensions yet again. This is not the first time that communal hatred has erupted in Gurugram; several sectors of the region have been witnessing disruptions for the last few months and barely any measures were taken. The Gurdwara Sri Guru Singh Sabha in Gurugram, however, had opened its doors for the Muslims to offer their Friday prayers but *namaz* could not be offered in any of the gurdwaras. The right-wing groups creating a hostile environment for the people of a particular community or religion will only drag the country back to square one, from where it all began. Chanting 'Jai Shri Ram' and 'Bharat Mata ki Jai' at those offering *namaz* only shows vulnerability, and continuing the *namaz* despite the chants shows sanctity.



Just a couple of days back, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath — while making a veiled attack on the Samajwadi Party — had said that the nation

has to decide "if the sweetness of sugarcane will grow or the followers of Pakistan's founder MA Jinnah will cause mischief" in the State. Training his guns at the Opposition, he made a passionate case to prove that UP was moving ahead on the path of development. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav had earlier in the month equated Jinnah with Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Jawaharlal Nehru, saying that all of them had helped India achieve Independence. The incumbent Chief Minister was apparently peeved over the recent developments involving Akhilesh that involved his meetings with Aam Aadmi Party leader Sanjay Singh and Apna Dal's Krishna Patel as part of his apparent attempts to cobble up alliances with relatively smaller parties to challenge the BJP in the upcoming Assembly elections which are due in the first quarter of 2022. Besides, there are indications that the Samajwadi Party would like to reach out for further alliances. That's all fair game in electoral politics but the moot point here is that votes or the voters should not be mobilised by stirring the communal pot.

# Can't expect the Taliban to change

The restrictions are vague and vulnerable to varying interpretations, which would give the Taliban ample opportunity to crack down on anyone



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

It increasingly seems that the Taliban's second innings in power is headed to being a clone of its first (1996-2001). Women had been shorn of all basic human rights — to work, education and even healthcare, during the Taliban's previous tenure. They could also not appear in public unescorted by a "close" male relative — husband, father, son or brother — and wrapped from head to foot in a burqa. Men were deprived of all sources of entertainment and amusement and imprisoned in a life full of taboos. A savage criminal justice system was in place with public executions and punishments like amputation for theft.

Indications that it will be the same this time as well are emerging gradually as restrictions are imposed. The latest, according to the AFP and BBC, are the new "religious guidelines" issued by the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice. These direct Afghanistan's television channels to, among other things, stop showing plays and soap operas featuring women actors. Women journalists and presenters have been ordered to wear Islamic *hijab* on the screen. Films showing Prophet Mohammad or other revered figures are not to be shown, nor should films considered against the principles of Sharia — or Islamic law — and Afghan values. Comedy and entertainment shows that insult religion or may be considered offensive to Afghans are also forbidden from being shown.

The restrictions are vaguely worded and vulnerable to varying interpretations, which would give the Taliban enforcers ample opportunity to crack down on anyone they consider to be an offender. This has already been happening with musicians. While, unlike during Taliban's first innings, music has not been banned, musicians are being harassed. Their establishments are being raided and instruments broken. They live in fear. Many of them are trying to leave the country. There is a growing feeling that music is set to disappear from the lives of Afghans. It would be a tragedy if this hap-



pens. Afghanistan has a vibrant tradition in music, influenced by Indian and Iranian classical music. Besides, it has had a thriving pop music scenario marked by the syncing of electronic instrumental and dance beats with more traditional rhythms.

The justice system also appears to be set to return to what it was under the Taliban's first innings. On September 25, 2021, corpses of four men, alleged kidnappers killed in a shootout with policemen, were hung in public areas at several places in the city of Herat to convey, in the words of the province's deputy governor, Mawlawi Shir Ahmad Mujahir, the "message" that kidnappers would not be tolerated. That this was not an aberration is clear from the fact that it happened just after Mullah Noroddin Turabi, one of the founders of the Taliban and the head of the dreaded Department for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice, which had savagely enforced the draconian rules and laws prevailing during the Taliban's earlier rule, had told the AP's Kathy Gannon during an interview that the punishments administered then will return, though these may not be carried out in pub-

NOTHING MAKES THE TALIBAN'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS WOMEN MORE OMINOUSLY CLEAR THAN THE SHUTTING DOWN OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S AFFAIRS AND THE REINCARNATION OF THE MINISTRY FOR PROMOTION OF VIRTUE AND PREVENTION OF VICE

lic. "Cutting off hands is very necessary for security", he had said, adding that it had a deterrent effect.

The media is under severe pressure. The 11-point guidelines announced by Qari Muhammad Yusuf Ahmed, the interim director of the Government Media and Information Centre, on September 19, 2021, include directives against publishing matters in conflict with Islam or insulting to national personalities and instruct journalists to produce news reports in coordination with the Government media office. The announcement, a requiem for media freedom, comes in the wake of sustained attacks on journalists and other forms of pressures on them, which have sent many into hiding and effectively closed down 153 media outlets since the Taliban came to power.

The plight of women, it increasingly seems, may be the same as during the first Taliban regime. Not one of them was included either in the first set of 33 ministers in the caretaker Government announced on September 7, 2021; nor in the second one of 44, announced on September 21, 2021. The Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid

held out the possibility of women being included later but suggested no time frame. The Taliban's record during its present incarnation in power does not hold out much hope. The order not to telecast IPL matches because of the presence of women in the audience, the Kabul Mayor's ordering of women — with the exception of those whose jobs could not be done by men — to stay at home, the reopening of secondary schools with boys and not girls, the order by the Taliban-appointed vice-chancellor of the Kabul University barring women from the campus as long as "a real Islamic environment is not provided for", are instances which reflect an attitude towards women which does not augur well for the future of their rights under the present dispensation.

Nothing, however, makes the Taliban Government's attitude towards women more ominously clear than the shutting down of the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the reincarnation of the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice, in the building it had occupied.

(The author is Consulting Editor, The Pioneer. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### FARMERS ARE TAKING IT TOO FAR

Sir — Last week, the Prime Minister in his address to the nation had politely and apologetically said that the Government could not make the farmers understand the benefits of the contentious three farm laws which were passed last year and as a result, these laws were being repealed. In over seventy years of Parliamentary history, no Prime Minister has ever apologised in such a humble way as PM Modi did. Many Opposition leaders have been claiming it as their victory as their concerted and persistent efforts have borne fruits.

My personal opinion is that the Government should not have withdrawn these laws as the farmers would further up the ante with their neo demands, and it has come true. The farmers, without applauding PM Modi for his bold and magnanimous stand, have added five more demands to their lone remaining demand of MSP guarantee. Almost all the Opposition parties are backtracking from their main demand of rescinding the three farm laws, to which they had said, "if these bills are not withdrawn, no going back to home." Not only this, the recalling of these bills has opened a Pandora's box for the withdrawal of other bills such as the Article 370 and the CAA. The Government should deal with troublemakers by not accepting any more demands.

Sagar Singh | Muzaffarnagar

### INDIA'S FIRST VIRTUAL SCIENCE LAB

Sir — Recently, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh launched India's first virtual science lab for children under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Jigyasa program. The target audience of the lab will be students from class 6-12. The primary vision of the lab is to provide quality research exposure to school students to drive their scientific curiosity. It will enable curiosity-driven research-based concepts, encourage higher-order thinking skills and promote entrepreneurship.

In this inspirational science lab, students will have fun and carry out exper-

## Indian Navy gets a new beast



After the valuable commissioning of INS Visakhapatnam earlier on Sunday, here, on Thursday, adding the teeth to India's naval prowess, INS Vela, the country's fourth Scorpene-class submarine, was delivered to the Indian Navy after more than two years of sea trials. The delivery of the attack submarine, which was launched in May 2019, is seen as a major shot in the arm for the Indian Navy in terms of strength and capability. The INS Vela will be seen as another 'Atmanirbhar' success story in the field of submarine manufacturing. The INS Vela, built

in India by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders, Mumbai in collaboration with the Naval group, France, is equipped with cataclysmic weapons and advanced technologies which are capable enough to monitor and counter enemy movement in the waters.

This is the second major induction in the Indian Navy within a week. The delivery of four submarines — Kalvari, Khanderi, Karanj and now, Vela, will reaffirm India's presence amongst an elite group of countries with the capability to design and build submarines with advanced stealth and combat capabilities. It is a proud moment for the country which proved that India is no longer dependent on other countries when it comes to protecting its waters. However, at the same time, we must remember that while the Pakistani Navy is far behind ours, the Chinese Navy is much more sophisticated and has more than 60 submarines while India doesn't even have half of it. It's time to equip the Indian Navy with more such beasts.

Shivesh Patidar | Ujjain

iments. It will help connect students with scientists across the country. It is also in tune with the National Education Policy (NEP), where students are allowed to choose any subject of their choice. It is an open source platform and students will be able to access content in regional languages. Science and research webinars will be performed to connect with more students across the country. This will enable students to learn theoretical concepts with practical experiments and presentations.

Vishal Patidar | Ujjain

### CHILDREN ARE NOT PARENTS' 'ASSETS'

Sir — The Coronavirus pandemic has given rise to a vicious cycle of loss of jobs and decreased income. Professionally independent men and women were on the backfoot when the pandemic was at its zenith. Their woes have spilled over. Reduction in income and increased expenses pushed families to a corner. An exponential increase in child labour hap-

pened during the pandemic. Even as schools are opening doors, children are being "protected" by their parents in a different way — through disguised child labour.

The youngsters "employed" in their own family enterprises are being pressured to stay put by their parents. Forced labour is being disguised as "training and assisting" by parents. Almost two years and counting, following the pandemic, "well trained" children are being seen as assets by parents for their occupation. This is not to say that it was the pandemic that solely bred pressure labour. COVID-19 may have augmented parents' proclivity for forcing their children into family businesses. It may not appear as exploitation in the literal sense but the damage it does to the overall personality of the child is indescribable.

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## SOUNDBITE

Mamata Banerjee means what she says and says what she means. In Indian politics, that is a rare quality.



BJP leader — Subramanian Swamy



As we give thanks for what we have, we also keep in our hearts those who have been lost and those who have lost so much.

US President — Joe Biden

I have learnt to be clear about what I am comfortable with, what works for me and what doesn't.



Actor — Lara Dutta



I am honoured to accept this role (Test captain) ahead of what will be a massive Ashes summer.

Australian fast bowler — Pat Cummins

The way Kangana Ranaut is abusing everybody...she is hurting the sentiment of various communities.




NCP leader — Nawab Malik




FIRST COLUMN

KILLER DRONES:  
DEATH FROM ABOVE



GWYNNE DYER

Commercially available quadcopter drones carrying small amounts of explosives are “the most concerning tactical development since the rise of the improvised explosive device in Iraq,” US Marine Gen. Kenneth McKenzie Jr., senior US commander for the Middle East, said last February. But now drones are political weapons as well, and it will get worse. Two weeks ago, three quadcopters flew into the heavily fortified ‘Green Zone’ in Baghdad to attack the home of Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi. Two of the drones were shot down, but the third dropped explosives that blew in Kadhimi’s front door, injured at least five guards, and wounded the prime minister’s wrist. If he had died, he would have been the first senior politician killed by a drone, but that honour will have to go to someone else. Long-range, million-dollar drones have been killing people remotely for a more than a decade, but those are big aircraft making big explosions and they usually avoid densely populated urban areas. They won the war for Azerbaijan against Armenia last year, which was their first decisive use in a ‘conventional’ war. But now we are seeing something quite different. General Mackenzie explained: “I’m talking about



ones you can go out and buy at Costco right now for \$1,000.” If you have some people who are good at making improvised explosive devices, then buy yourself a clutch of drones big enough to carry two or three kilos each and you can go into business right away.

The golden age of political assassinations, dormant for a century, is probably on its way back in. You can shoot down quadcopters, of course, but they are small, fast-moving targets. They can be launched in large numbers, and they can avoid detection until the last moment by staying low amid the urban clutter. If they are actively guided you can jam the signal, but if they are following a pre-programmed flight path using GPS there’s no signal to jam. They’re also untraceable. Even if you find the bits after the thing exploded, there will be no markings on the pieces that let you trace it back to the person who bought it. What caused the recent unpleasantness in Iraq was that Khadhimi’s party won the right to form the new Government in the October election, while the pro-Iranian militias lost two-thirds of their seats in parliament. It was a surprisingly fair election, but the militias automatically claimed foul. (They even borrowed Trump’s slogan: “Stop the Steal”.) On 5 November stone-throwing militia supporters marched on the Green Zone to protest. The police opened fire, dozens of people were injured, and at least one demonstrator, maybe two, died. The drone attack on Kadhimi’s house, ‘safe’ inside the Green Zone, came just two days later. It’s inevitable that this technique will spread rapidly far beyond Iraq, and that politicians and other prominent public figures will be vulnerable to it in every country, even the well-run ones. They will need more security than before, perhaps much more, and even that will not guarantee their safety. And there may be one more step in this dance. It’s not normally a good idea for a killer drone to be in direct radio contact with the person who launches it, but if that person has access to face-recognition software it might be possible to make remote attacks outdoors on individual people with relatively little ‘collateral damage’. Is nothing safe? Of course not. It never was, really. Kings needed food-tasters to avoid being poisoned; presidents and prime ministers just need different kinds of protection. (Gwynne Dyer’s new book is ‘The Shortest History of War’. The views expressed are personal.)

Development of Metro:  
An eastern perspective



PRADYOT KUMAR  
CHATTERJEE

There has been no proper techno-economic and socio-economic study for planned expansion of Metro rail in the twin cities of Kolkata and Howrah

“

Transportation has long been viewed as a means of energising and sustaining economic growth, generating employment and fostering holistic development. Unlike other sectors, the demand-supply gap cannot be bridged by increasing imports, but only through capacity-building. It is this unique feature which makes transportation the backbone of a nation’s development and improved quality of life. However, with the ever-increasing population and growing urbanization, the stress on transportation is increasing, which is adversely affecting the environment, seamless travel of people, and asset life deterioration. A balance needs to be maintained for inclusive and environmentally sustainable growth to ensure a better livelihood and right to life, a constitutional right.

“

Today in India, around 760 km. of Metro Rail system is in operation and nearly 580km. is under construction. Of the five most populous states, UP, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh have a much larger share of Metro system in multiple cities. Only Kolkata features in the Metro map West Bengal. Populous states like Bihar lag behind with the Metro project only recently taking off in Patna. States like Telangana, Karnataka and Gujarat having lesser populations have larger route kms. per capita. The development of Metro rail system has been mostly concentrated in Western and Southern states besides Delhi-NCR. Eastern states like Bihar, West Bengal, Assam, Odisha have lagged behind.

Transportation has long been viewed as a means of energizing and sustaining economic growth, generating employment, and fostering holistic development. Unlike other sectors, the demand-supply gap cannot be bridged by increasing imports, but only through capacity-building. It is this unique feature which makes transportation the backbone of a nation’s development and improved quality of life. However, with the ever-increasing population and growing urbanization, the stress on transportation is increasing, which is adversely affecting the environment, seamless travel of people, and asset life deterioration. A balance needs to be maintained for inclusive and environmentally sustainable growth to ensure a better livelihood and right to life, a constitutional right.

Rail-based mass transit system is by far more efficient and climate friendly. It reduces transport congestion on road and associated pollution. Any congested city with large transport volume is ideal for the provision of Metro.

Though Kolkata was the first city to have metro rail, no further metro project was sanctioned for any eastern states till recently when metro rail was sanctioned for Patna and Guwahati.

Kolkata with high population density

and only six-eight per cent of road space deserves Metro rail as a means of Mass Rapid transit. Congested roads not conducive to building the Metro along roads poses a great challenge to planners.

Kolkata Metro was set up before any guidelines or policy on MRTS was issued by the Ministry of Urban Development and is the only system that is under direct control of the Ministry of Railways.

There has been no proper techno-economic and socio-economic study for planned expansion of Metro rail in Kolkata to overcome travel issues of citizens in the twin cities of Kolkata and Howrah. In 75 years since independence only two road bridges have been added across the river Ganges which are miles apart unlike cities like London, Paris, Moscow, et cetera, that have extensive underground rail and road networks criss-crossing the rivers that pass through the cities.

It is unfortunate that no planning of rail-based transport system for urban conglomerates like Asansol — Durgapur, Siliguri-Jalpaiguri, which have proximity to fairly busy airports like Bagdogra and Andal has been conceived.

Metro rail projects in Kolkata have always suffered for one reason or the other and 36 years after the first Metro started in Kolkata, only 32.25 km of one N-S line and seven km of East-West line is commissioned. Around 28 km of routes can be added in next two-three years with the likely commissioning of Phoolbagan-Howrah Maidan (9.34 km), Noapara-NSCBI airport(6.87 km), Joka-Majerhat (7 km) and New Garia-Ruby(5 km) sections.

This will leave around 36 km more to be completed on the Joka-Esplanade and New Garia-NSCBI airport lines which may take four or five years. Another about 25 km. route where the Metro was sanctioned a decade ago for expansion on the northern fringes of the city is yet to take off with no funds sanctioned.

Kolkata and Howrah need metro systems with increased frequency and faster travel to reduce dependency on road transport to provide seamless travel to citizens. The suburbs of Kolkata need to be brought into the Metro map to reduce dependence on suburban rail and road.

Apart from routes under construction or planned, Kolkata needs more east-west and north-south routes with interchange facility and a ring route on its outer periphery. Some of the routes that could benefit a large population with metro connectivity can be: Extension of E-W metro to Uluberia; New East - West route from Shalimar to Jadavpur covering west and south kolkata

Extension of N-S route to sonarpur; New North south route from Bally to Garia-IIM/Joka in south; Extension of Joka-Esplanade route to Diamond harbour.

The feasibility of the various options needs to be explored critically.

Two important projects sanctioned a decade back, Baranagar-Barrackpur and NSCBI Airport-Barasat, which can serve a large population, are presently on hold due to civic issues. These need to be revived using modern technology.

We need to rope in top-class technical expertise wherever available to find ways and means to overcome the constraints.

Project delays lead to cost and time overrun and citizens are denied the benefits. These projects will considerably ease pressure on land routes and as such, a final decision by stakeholders cannot be delayed.

Besides, the Metro rail system in places like Siliguri-Jalpaiguri area including Bagdogra Airport, Durgapur-Asansol area including Andal Airport, Kalyani-Krishnanagar-Shantipur-awadip area need to be planned now to address the congestion due to sectoral urbanization and developing industrial conglomerates.

It takes at least 8-10 years for a project from planning stage till it sees the light of the day if all goes well at every stage. The state must identify routes and areas to be served and quality DPRs need to be prepared identifying possible routes through established agencies like RITES, DMRC with clear Right Of Way. Duly approved DPRs can be basis for generating demand at the centre with prioritizing projects.

The stake holders need to remove bottlenecks for expeditious completion of sanctioned works. It is the common man who will reap the benefits of such state of art infrastructure.

Metro rail contributes tremendously on environment front, generates carbon credits, reduces greenhouse gas emissions. It has huge potential to generate solar power and contribute towards India’s dream of fulfilling its target for alternate energy.

POINT COUNTERPOINT



PUNJAB TOPPED THE COUNTRY IN SCHOOL EDUCATION IN THE NPGI SURVEY. PUNJAB WAS ABOVE DELHI ON ALL FIVE PARAMETERS. —PUNJAB EDUCATION MINISTER PARGAT SINGH



I’M READY FOR AN OPEN DEBATE. PARGAT SINGH SHOULD COMPARE THE 10 BEST GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS OF PUNJAB WITH DELHI’S. —DELHI EDUCATION MINISTER MANISH SISODIA

It’s time to think seriously about defecation



SHISHIR CHANDRA

We have to make efforts to ensure environmental cleanliness so that when we look around, we see and feel cleanliness in both visible and invisible things

Septic Tank



There is a saying, “out of sight out of mind”, that means we forget about things we don’t see. It’s the same thing with sanitation and hygiene. As long as the filth or faeces is visible to our eyes, we are concerned about it, but as soon as it’s flushed, we stop thinking about what happened to it faeces, whether it was properly disposed of or covered up ostentatiously. It happens because either we are careless or we lack correct information.

Now take the example of septic tanks built in cities, how many of us know about the ‘sanitation value chain’? How many of us know how to make the correct septic tank, what is the right design and measurement? How many of us are aware that to keep the septic tank working smoothly and effectively, the septic tank should be cleaned every 3 to 5 years? How many of us know that due to the lack of regular cleaning of the septic tank, the sewage treatment process in the septic tank stops and untreated septage causes health problems? How many of us know that untreated septage from the septic tank goes into small and big rivers through drains and contaminates rivers?

All we know is that we flushed the toilets and the excreta was out of sight, now whether it has gone to the septic tank, went to the drain or river, what difference does it make to us? In many cities sewer treatment plants or faecal sludge treatment plants are in the process of being built, and in cities where they exist, they are insufficient. So, the question arises whether we are even aware of this issue, the environmental problems it causes, and if we want to understand and play a part in this.

Generally, in urban areas or even in villages nowadays, the septic tank is nothing but a container without any proper process or method for sewage treatment and it is safe in the long run. Local builders and contractors are also not concerned with how the structure should be. The owners understand it as a big-room like structure under the ground built as a septic tank for which they do not have to worry for 30-50 years.

Cleanliness cannot be achieved by making rules and regulations. We can definitely control it temporarily but ‘behaviour change’ is the solution. It should become a mass movement.

When talking about sanitation, there is a need to go beyond just the construction of toilets. Faecal Sludge Management has been called the missing and ignored component of the sanitation as safe management of faecal sludge requires more than just access to a toilet and use of a mere septic tank. Improving city-wide urban sanitation is complex as it must consider both on- and off-site systems, encompass the entire service chain, serve different customers and be acceptable to a broad range of stakeholders.

As much as it is the responsibility of the government and the government machinery, it is our responsibility also to understand the problem. The population is yet to be fully persuaded to change the age-old practice of defecating in the open, construct proper septic tanks, get into the habit of scheduled desludging and not neglect basic sanitation practices. We also have to be aware of the correct structure and design of the septic tank, in how many days it is necessary to empty the septic tank, who is the concerned authority to contact to get the septic tank emptied. We also have to monitor that solid waste from the septic tank is disposed of properly and not put in the drain or open ground. Single houses which do not have any drainage channels should have a soak-pit system unless the local panchayat or municipality makes some other concrete arrangement. Every effort has to be made to avoid waterlogging, whether through pit or by planting trees that absorb water or by applying other environmentally friendly methods.

We have to make efforts to ensure environmental cleanliness so that when we look around we see and feel cleanliness in both visible and invisible things.



# World takes action as new variant emerges in southern Africa

**Brussels:** A slew of nations moved to stop air travel from southern Africa on Friday, and stocks plunged in Asia and Europe in reaction to news of a new, potentially more transmissible Covid-19 variant.

"The last thing we need is to bring in a new variant that will cause even more problems," said German Health Minister Jens Spahn, amid a massive spike in cases in the 27-nation European Union, which is recommending a ban on flights from southern African nations.

Within a few days of the discovery of the new variant, it has already impacted on a jittery world that is sensitive to bad COVID-19 news, with deaths around the globe standing at well over 5 million.

Medical experts, including the World Health Organization, warned against any overreaction before all elements were clear but nations who acted said their concerns were justified.

"Early indications show this variant may be more transmissible than the delta variant and current vaccines may be less effective against it," British Health Secretary Sajid Javid told lawmakers. "We must

move quickly and at the earliest possible moment," he said.

Belgium became the first European Union country to announce a case of the variant.

"We have one case of this variant that is confirmed. It's someone who came from abroad," said Health Minister Frank Vandenbroucke. "It's a suspicious variant. We don't know if it's a very dangerous variant."

Israel, one of the world's most vaccinated countries, announced Friday that it has also detected the country's first case of the new variant, in a traveler who returned from Malawi. The traveler and two other suspected cases have been placed in isolation. It said all three are vaccinated but that it is currently looking into their exact vaccination status.

The new variant immediately infected stock markets around the world. Major indexes fell in Europe and Asia and Dow Jones futures dipped 800 points ahead of the market opening in the U.S.

Investors are likely to shoot first and ask questions later until more is known," said Jeffrey Halley of foreign exchange broker Oanda.

## WHO hosts special meeting on worrying new Covid variant

**Geneva:** Advisers to the World Health Organisation are holding a special session in Geneva to flesh out information about a worrying new variant of the coronavirus that has emerged in South Africa, though a top expert says its impact on Covid-19 vaccines may not be known for weeks.

The technical advisory group on the evolution of COVID-19 was meeting virtually to discuss the so-called B.1.1.529 variant that has caused stock markets to swoon and led the European Union to recommend a pause in flights to southern Africa.

The group could decide if it's a "variant of concern" — the most worrying type, like the well-known delta variant — or a "variant of interest", and whether to use a Greek letter to classify it.

"We don't know very much about this, yet. What we do know is that this variant has a large number of mutations, and the concern is that when you have so many mutations it can have an impact on how the virus behaves," Maria Van Kerkhove, WHO's technical lead on COVID-19 Maria Van Kerkhove said in a social-media chat on Thursday (local time). Fewer than 100 full genome sequences of the variant are so far available, she said.

"It will take a few weeks for us to understand what impact this variant has on any potential vaccines, for example," Ms Van Kerkhove said. **AP**

## EU wants to stop flights from southern Africa over variant

**Brussels—** The European Union said Friday it is planning to stop air travel from southern Africa to counter the spread of a new COVID-19 variant as the 27-nation bloc is battling a massive spike in cases.

"The last thing we need is to bring in a new variant that will cause even more problems," said German Health Minister Jens Spahn.

EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said in a statement that she "proposes, in close coordination with the member states, to activate the emergency brake to stop air travel from the southern African region."

A new coronavirus variant has been detected in South Africa that scientists say is a concern because of its high

## Israel warns of 'emergency' after detecting new strain

**Jerusalem:** Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said on Friday that Israel is "on the threshold of an emergency situation" after authorities detected the country's first case of a new coronavirus variant and barred travel to and from most African countries.

The Health Ministry said it detected the new strain in a traveler who had returned from Malawi and was investigating two other suspected cases. The three individuals, who had all been vaccinated, were placed in isolation.

A new coronavirus variant has been detected in South Africa that scientists say is a concern because of its high number of mutations and rapid spread among young people in Gauteng, the country's most populous province.

At a Cabinet meeting convened Friday to discuss the new variant, Bennett said it is more contagious and spreads more rapidly than the delta variant. He said authorities were still gathering information on

whether it evades vaccines or is deadlier.

"We are currently at the threshold of an emergency situation," he said. "I ask everyone to be prepared and to fully join in the work around the clock."

government later said that all countries in sub-Saharan Africa would be considered "red countries" from which foreign nationals are barred from traveling to Israel. Israelis are prohibited from visiting those countries and those returning from them must undergo a period of isolation.

The Israeli military will work to locate all individuals who have been to red countries within the past week and instruct them to go into isolation while testing is carried out, it said. Israel launched one of the world's first and most successful vaccination campaigns late last year, and nearly half the population has received a booster shot. Israel recently expanded the campaign to include children as young as 5. **AP**

## French fishermen block ports in spat with UK

**Calais (France):** French fishing crews are threatening to block French ports and traffic under the English Channel on Friday to disrupt the flow of goods to the U.K., in a dispute over post-Brexit fishing licenses.

It's the latest tension point between the neighboring countries, who are also trading blame for not doing enough to prevent the deaths of at least 27 migrants whose boat sank Wednesday off Calais, in the choppy waters of the world's busiest shipping route.

French fishermen are angry at the British government for not granting more licenses to fish in U.K. waters — and angry at their own government for not doing more to defend them.

The fishing industry is economically tiny but symbolically important for both Britain and France.

Friday's threatened blockades are "a warning shot," Olivier Lepretre, president of the regional fishing committee, told reporters.

Fishing crews are expected to use their boats to block ports in Calais, Saint-Malo and Ouistreham, and to use cars to block the highway leading to the tunnel beneath the Channel.

The fishers are protesting to "respond to the derisive and humiliating attitude of the English," Gerard Romiti, president of the national fishing committee, told reporters.

A spokesman for Prime Minister Boris Johnson said the U.K. was "disappointed by threats of protest activity."

Before Brexit, French fishermen could fish deep inside British waters. **AP**

## US lawmakers meet with Taiwan Prez in surprise visit

**TAIPEI, Taiwan:** Five U.S. lawmakers met with Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen Friday morning in a surprise one-day visit intended to reaffirm the United States' "rock solid" support for the self-governing island.

The bi-partisan group of lawmakers from the U.S. House of Representatives arrived in Taiwan on Thursday night and were planning to meet with senior leaders including Tsai, said the American Institute in Taiwan, the de facto embassy. No further details were provided about their itinerary.

The visit comes as tensions between Taiwan and China have risen to their highest level in decades. Taiwan has been self-ruled since the two sides split during a civil war in 1949, but China considers the island part of its own territory.

"When news of our trip broke yesterday, my office received a blunt message from the Chinese Embassy, telling me to call off the trip," Representative Elissa Slotkin, D-Mich., who is part of the delegation, wrote on Twitter.

Representatives Mark Takano, D-Calif., Colin Allred, D-Texas., Sara Jacobs, D-Calif., and Nancy Mace, R-S.C., are also part of the visiting delegation. **AP**

## UN envoy: Sudan's new deal saved country from civil war

**CAIRO:** The deal struck in Sudan to reinstate the prime minister following a military coup is imperfect but has saved the country from sliding into civil strife, the U.N. envoy to Sudan said on Friday.

Special Envoy Volker Perthes was speaking of the agreement between Sudan's military leaders and Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok, who was deposed and put under house arrest following the coup last month that stirred an international outcry.

The military takeover threatened to thwart the process of democratic transition that the country had embarked on since the ouster of longtime autocrat Omar al-Bashir.

The deal, signed on Sunday, was seen as the biggest concession made by the country's top military leader, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, since the

coup. However, the country's pro-democracy groups have dismissed it as illegitimate and accused Hamdok of allowing himself to serve as a fig leaf for continued military rule. "The agreement of course is not perfect," Perthes told The Associated Press.

"But it is better than not having an agreement and continuing on a path where the military in the end will be the sole ruler." Both signatories felt compelled to make "bitter concessions" in order to spare the country the risk of more violence, chaos and international isolation, he added.

"It would not have been possible to exclude a scenario which would have brought Sudan to something close to what we have seen in Yemen, Libya or Syria," Perthes said.

He spoke to the AP via videoconference from Khartoum. **AP**

## Putin to host leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan for talks

**MOSCOW:** Russian President Vladimir Putin is hosting the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan for talks on Friday, during which the three are expected to discuss ways to resolve the tensions over the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh.

In the southern city of Sochi, Putin held a bilateral meeting with Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Friday. After that, the Russian president is to sit down with Aliyev and Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan together, and then have a separate bilateral meeting with Pashinyan.

Armenia and Azerbaijan have been locked in a decades-old dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh, a region that lies within Azerbaijan but was under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by Armenia since a separatist war there ended in 1994.

The Azerbaijani military routed the Armenian forces in 44 days of fierce fighting in the fall of 2020, which ended with a Russia-brokered peace deal that saw Azerbaijan gain control of a significant part of Nagorno-Karabakh and reclaim all the regions controlled by Armenian forces outside the separatist region. **AP**

## Japan seeks extra defense budget amid China, N Korea concern

**TOKYO:** Japan's Cabinet on Friday approved a 770 billion yen (\$6.8 billion) request for an extra defense budget through March to expedite the purchase of missiles, anti-submarine rockets and other weapons amid rising concern over the escalation of military activities by China, Russia and North Korea.

The request, still pending parliamentary approval, brings Japan's military spending for the current year to a new high of more than 6.1 trillion yen (\$53.2 billion), up 15% from 5.31 trillion yen in 2020.

The Defense Ministry says its "defense power reinforcement and acceleration package" is designed to speed up deployment of some of the key equipment from the 2022 budget request. **AP**

### Appeal for Identification



General public is hereby informed that one person Name: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: 25-30 Yrs., Height: 173 CM, Sex: Male, Complexion: Fair, Built: Thin, Face: Oval, Hair: Long Black, Wearing: Brown Colour Sweater and Orange Pant, Place of Recovery: Found dead on dated 14.11.2021 near DDU Hospital, on footpath in front of C-38/A, Hari Nagar, New Delhi.

In this regard DD No. 31A, Dated 14.11.2021 has been lodged at Police Station, Hari Nagar, New Delhi. Any clue come to notice please inform undersign.

**SHO**  
P.S. Hari Nagar, New Delhi  
DP/643/WD/2021

### PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

(See Section 82 Cr.P.C.)

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Ahmad Sher S/o Late Sh. Kallu, Mrs. Noor Bano W/o Sh. Ahmad Sher, Ms. Nargis D/o Sh. Ahmad Sher & Ms. Sama D/o Sh. Ahmad Sher all are R/o N-96, Vishnu Garden, New Delhi have committed (or are suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 593/2021 Dated: 09.07.2021 U/s 498-A/304-B/34 IPC P.S. Khayla, New Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said Ahmad Sher, Mrs. Noor Bano, Ms. Nargis & Ms. Sama can not be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said Ahmad Sher, Mrs. Noor Bano, Ms. Nargis & Ms. Sama have absconded (or are concealing themselves to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Ahmad Sher, Mrs. Noor Bano, Ms. Nargis & Ms. Sama of FIR No. 593/2021 Dated: 09.07.2021 U/s 498-A/304-B/34 IPC P.S. Khayla, New Delhi is required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 15.01.2022

By Order  
Abhinav Pandey,  
Metropolitan Magistrate-04 (West)  
Room No. 268, Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi  
DP/639/WD/2021

### APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

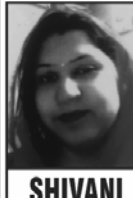


General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male Age: About 30-35 years, Complexion: Shallow, Height: 5'7", Built: Medium, was wearing Blue Jeans and Bare feet, was found dead at Divider on SPM Marg, in front of Metro Gate No. 2, near Kodiya Pul, Chandni Chowk, Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 89A dated 22.11.2021, has been lodged at P.S. Kotwali, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

**SHO**  
P.S. Kotwali, Delhi  
DP/1738/N/2021 Ph.: 011-23977100, 8750870121

### SEARCH FOR MISSING



General public is hereby informed that a lady namely Shivani, W/o: Amardeep, R/o: 195, Vasant Village, Vasant Vihar, New Delhi has been missing on 14.11.2021 from his residence. In this regard DD No. 40A dated 15.11.2021 has been lodged at Police Station Vasant Vihar, New Delhi. The description of found lady is as under:

Name: Shivani, Age: 32 Years, Height: 5'5", Face: Round, Complexion: Weatish, Built: Strong, Wearing: Black Suit and salwar and juti in feet.

If anyone has any information about this found old lady please inform P.S. Vasant Vihar, New Delhi.

Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, Email: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in)  
Ph.: 011-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639  
**SHO**  
Police Station, Vasant Vihar, Delhi  
Ph: 011-26152577, 7065036221  
DP/929/SW/2021

**BEFORE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, DELHI**  
4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001

**OA No. 16/19**      **DATE:- 10.09.2021**

**STATE BANK OF INDIA**      **APPLICANT**

**DHARMENDRA KUMAR & ORS.**      **RESPONDENT**

**DEFENDANT**

**2. M/S IDEABUILDER PVT. LTD.**  
C-294, 1st FLOOR NEAR PARK VIVEK VIHAR DELHI-110095

Whereas the above named applicant (s) has/have instituted a case for recovery of Rs 21,62,639/- (RUPEE TWENTY ONE LAKH SIXTY TWO THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED THIRTY NINE ONLY) against you and where as it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in the ordinary way therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance in the Tribunal on **08.12.2021 At 10.30 A.M.**

Take notice that in default of your appearance on the duty before the mentioned, the case will be heard and determined in your absence.

Due to ongoing Pandemic situation, all the matters will be taken up through video Conferencing and for that purpose:-

(i) All the Advocates/Litigants shall download the "Cisco Webex" application/Software;

(ii) "Meeting ID" and Password for the date of hearing qua cases to be taken by Registrar/Recovery Officer-I/and Recovery Officer-II shall be displayed in the daily cause list itself at DRT Officer portal i.e. drt.gov.in

(iii) In any emergency qua that the Advocate/Litigants can contact the concerned official at Ph. No. 23748478.

Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal this the 10th day of Sept., 2021.

**BY ORDER OF THE TRIBUNAL**  
**ASSISTANT REGISTRAR DRT-II, DELHI**

**उत्तराखण्ड पेयजल संसाधन विकास एवं निर्माण निगम**  
कार्यालय: अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, निर्माण मण्डल, उत्तराखण्ड पेयजल निगम, देहरादून नगर, 'U'मार्ग, आलम सीड मोहोद शाहिदे आलम रो 32/493, ब्लॉक नो-32, त्रिकुपुरी, दिल्ली 110091  
दूरभाष: 246001 फोन नं. : 0135-2751879 ईमेल: [es@rcirciltdc@yahoo.com](mailto:es@rcirciltdc@yahoo.com)

**पत्रांक-6089 /निविदा / 750**      **दिनांक:- 26.11.2021**

**ई-निविदा सूचना**

अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, निर्माण मण्डल, उत्तराखण्ड पेयजल निगम, देहरादून के कार्यालय पत्रांक 6066 /निविदा / 742, दिनांक 26.11.2021 द्वारा जल जीवन मिशन कार्यक्रम के अन्तर्गत जनपद देहरादून के विकासखण्ड सहसपुर की नौगँव माण्डुवाला एवं कण्डोली पेयजल योजनाओं के निर्माण एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्यों हेतु राज्य सरकार की वेबसाईट [www.uktender.gov.in](http://www.uktender.gov.in) के माध्यम से दिनांक 27.11.2021 को 5.00 बजे से दिनांक 16.12.2021 को 5.00 बजे तक ई-निविदा (e-tender) (Two Bid System) आमंत्रित की जा रही है। निविदा की नियम व शर्तें उपरोक्त वेबसाइट से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

**अधीक्षण अभियन्ता**

**NORTHERN RAILWAY**  
**Invitation of tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)**  
The Sr. Divisional Engineer-IV, Northern Railway, Delhi Division for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Tender on prescribed form for the following work.

<b>Name of work with its location</b>	1. Multi-utility vehicle and Truck for misc. work of Track maintenance/ renewal for a period of 02 years in the section of ADEN/JHI. (NIT 23-W-IV-21-22) 2. Balance work for construction of approaches at level crossing no 117, 118, 122 & 123 on DLI BTI section in the s/o SSE/W-1 (Main Line)/JHI Under ADEN/JHI (NIT 25-W-IV-21-22) 3. Repair of cess and yard drain at Nangloi on DLI-BTI section in the section of ADEN/ROK. (NIT 26-W-IV-21-22)
<b>Approx Cost of work</b>	(1) Rs.99,91,061.05 (2) Rs.1,51,00,511.29 (3) Rs.1,87,70,280.96
<b>Earnest Money</b>	Nil
<b>Date and Time of submission of tender and opening of tender</b>	Bidding Start date for work 15:00 hrs. on 07.12.2021 opening of e-Tender at 15:00 hrs. on 21.12.2021
<b>Website particulars, published e-tender notice location etc. complete details of tender can be seen and web site where the tender form can be downloaded</b>	Above tender available on IREPS site, <a href="http://www.ireps.gov.in">www.ireps.gov.in</a>
<b>No. 128-W/260/Tender Notice/NIT 23,25&amp;26-W-IV/21-22/W-IV</b> <b>Date : 25.11.2021</b>	<b>2752/2021</b>

**Serving Customers With A Smile**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
That I am a citizen of India and have obtained the age of majority. That I declare to know to all that I, Umair Alam S/O Mohd Shaifque Alam R/o 32/493, Block No-32, Trikopuri, Delhi 110091 hereby declare/ disown our son Akash Saini his wife Chandrika Sood and our younger son Aman Saini from all our movable and immovable property as they are disloyal, disrespectful and distrustful as they are disturbing the environment, peace and tranquility of our house by having regular fight with us and each other every now and then without any reason as they had misbehaved with us and they are not cooperating with us, as we have no choice but to do them, as Chandrika Sood (our daughter-in-law) always threatens us to implicate us in false cases i.e. cruelty, dowry & abetment to suicide etc. So we decided to debar/disown our son Akash Saini and his wife Chandrika Sood and our younger son Aman Saini from all our movable and immovable properties and if anything happens to them we should not be liable for the same. Further, if anyone deals with them in future and biological father's name (Umar Alam S/O Mohd Shaifque Alam) and mother's name Ansari R/o Village-Kadwa, P.O. Haldiya Vihar, Distt. Araria (BIHAR) on record.

**Metro Railway, Kolkata**  
Tender notice for e-tendering is invited by Principal Chief Signal & Telecom Engineer, Metro Railway, Kolkata for and on behalf of the President of India for the following work to be open on 22.12.2021 at 15:00 hrs. : Replacement of Relay Interlocking with Electronic Interlocking System at Dum Dum and Kavi Subhash stations of Metro Railway, Kolkata. Tender Value: Rs. 4,01,14,420/- . Completion Period : 12 months. For full details visit [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) The tender/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate & must be registered on IREPS Portal. Open Tender Notice No. : S&T/Works/31-2021, dtd. 25.11.2021

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
It is informed to the general public that the original document i.e. allotment letter, possession certificate and letter of clearance & possession in respect to flat number L-243 Jalayu Vihar Sector 25 Noida has been lost somewhere, whose complaint has been filed on 24/11/2021 in the P.S. Crime Branch Delhi. Therefore, if the above documents are found by any person or if have any right or claim in this regard, then he/she should be lodged its claim within 10 days from the date of publication, either to group housing department of Noida Authority or AFNHBS New Delhi. Failing which the claim, right on the said documents will be considered completely free and abandoned.

**GP capt. Yogesh sharma**  
L-243 , Jalayu Vihar Sector 25 Noida

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR**  
**Office of the Executive Engineer P.H.E Division**  
**Budgam, H.Q: Budgam.**

**NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS:**  
**Short Terme-NIT No: 76/PHE/Bud/Civil of 2021-22.**

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu Kashmir U.T., **e-tenders** are invited (in Single Cover System) on "**item rate basis**" from Registered/Approved and valid Civil class of contractors/agencies registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments and whose registrations are renewed for current financial year for the following works:

**S. No. . 1 Name of work :- Laying of water pipe line from sump to Bashir Medicate at Kawoosa Jagir. (DDC Grants)**  
**Estt Cost (Rs in Lacs) :- 2.00, Cost of tender doc. (In Rs) :- 200/- , Amount of earnest money (in Rs) :- 4,000/- , Time for completion (in Days) :- 10 Days, Class of contractor :- D, Major head of account :- DDC Grants, Tender Call :- 1"**

**S. No. . 2 Name of work :- Laying of water pipe line from sump to Buchipora Kawoosa Khalisa-B. (DDC Grants)**  
**Estt Cost (Rs in Lacs) :- 2.00, Cost of tender doc. (In Rs) :- 200/- , Amount of earnest money (in Rs) :- 4,000/- , Time for completion (in Days) :- 10 Days, Class of contractor :- D, Major head of account :- DDC Grants, Tender Call :- 1"**

**S. No. . 3 Name of work :- Realignment of pipe network 150 mm dia D.I coming under the house of Mohammad Maqbool Dar at Chutbugh water supply wadwan wahabpora. (M&R)**  
**Estt Cost (Rs in Lacs) :- 0.46, Cost of tender doc. (In Rs) :- 100/- , Amount of earnest money (in Rs) :- 920/- , Time for completion (in Days) :- 8 Days, Class of contractor :- D, Major head of account :- M&R, Tender Call :- 1"**

**Position of AAA:- Available; Position of funds:- Available; Position of TS:- Under Process; The Bidding Documents and other details can be downloaded from the website: <https://jktendersgov.in>**

**From (10:00 AM) (upto 4:00 PM)**

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings (if any), Book of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms, conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from the website: [www.jktendersgov.in](http://www.jktendersgov.in) As per schedule of dates given below

**01. Date of publishing of Tender Notice :- 25-11-2021**  
**02. Period of downloading of bidding documents :- From 25.11.2021 10:00 a.m To 26.11.2021 upto 04:00 p.m**  
**03. Bid Submission Start Date :- 02.12.2021 from 10:00 a.m**  
**04. Bid Submission End Date :- 02.12.2021 upto 04:00 p.m**  
**05. Date and time of opening of Bids (Online) :- 03.12.2021 from 11:00 a.m**

**1. Bids must be accompanied by bid security viz: Earnest Money, COR/FDR and Treasury Receipt (mentioning therein the NIT No., S.No. of work and Advertised Cost as per the NIT) under M.H 0215 to be pledged in favor of the Executive Engineer PHE Division Budgam (as specified in the table (I) (Page 1st). Bid security will have to be in any one of the forms as specified in the bidding documents and shall be valid for 90 Days after opening of bid. Bids will be opened in the Office of the Executive Engineer PHE Division Budgam (H.Q. Budgam) on 03.12.2021 at 11:00 a.m. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.**

**All other terms and conditions shall be the same as are laid down in P.W.D Form No: 25 / 33 - Double with due modifications (if any) made by the U.T Government from time to time.**

**Sd/- (Er. Najeeb A Tramboo)**  
**Executive Engineer, PHE Division Budgam.**

**No. DIPK-13637/21 Dated: 26-11-2021**

## UN decries attack on court in Libya ahead of national vote

**CAIRO:** The U.N. mission in Libya condemned on Friday an attack by armed men on an appeals court as it was set to re-examine an earlier decision that disqualified the son of longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi from running for president.

On Thursday, armed men surrounded the court in the southern town of Sabha and prevented judges from convening to look into Seif al-Islam Gadhafi's appeal.

Earlier, the country's electoral body had deemed Seif al-Islam ineligible to take part in the presidential race set for next month, citing his previous convictions.

"Attacks against judicial or election facilities or judicial or elections personnel are not only criminal acts, punishable under Libyan law, but also undermine Libyans' right to participate in the political process," tweeted the U.N. mission, known as UNSMIL.

Libya is to hold the first round of presidential elections on Dec. 24, after years of U.N.-led attempts to usher in a more democratic future and end the country's civil war. However, the upcoming vote faces many challenges, including unresolved issues over laws governing the elections and occasional infighting among armed groups. Other obstacles include the deep rift that remains between the country's east and west and the presence of thousands of foreign fighters and troops.

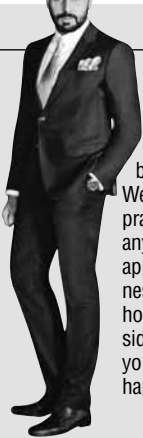
The oil-rich North African country is currently governed by an interim government that was elected by Libyan delegates after U.N.-led talks in Geneva in February.

Interim Interior Minister Khaled Mazen vowed to hunt down and prosecute the assailants in Thursday's attack. **AP**



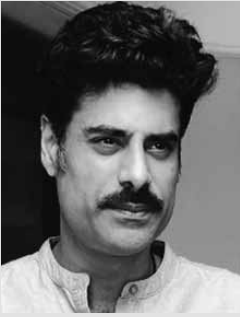







**ABHISHEK BACHCHAN**

'If someone says, 'I don't believe in awards', it is because they didn't get one. We are artistes, if we are praised, that is greater than any award. We work for appreciation. This is our business, we have to run our houses, there is a financial side to it, absolutely. But if you praise an actor, he will be happy. We work for praise.'




**SIKANDAR KHER**

'Donning the director's hat while also starring in the film is no easy feat but you have to see the ease and calm with which Dev Patel handles it. He is focussed and knows what he wants. We have spent a lot of time together which only helps create a good understanding between a director and his actor.'




**AAYUSH SHARMA**

'I read comments like 'Salman Khan should have launched a dog instead of Aayush Sharma' and I look like a girl and should not act. After that, I stayed away from social media. I have a public account on Instagram that I don't handle, I'm not on Twitter. I hardly read comments on social media now.'



**ANDREW GARFIELD**

'I definitely think Andrew Garfield's Spider-Man would be pretty suspect of the MCU Iron Man. I think he would be turned off by the excess, the billionaire trillionaire status of Iron Man. Maybe, my Peter Parker could wake Tony Stark from his own egoic drives a little bit. We'll never know.'



**JARED LETO**

'I think audiences will be very surprised. *House of Gucci* is in theatres. It is fun to have a film that's exclusively in theatres, and I'm excited about that because I love going to the movies. I actually worked at a movie theatre when I was a kid. And I got fired for selling weed out the back door. I was just an entrepreneur.'

**D**rummond William Thomas Money-Coutts, also lovingly known as DMC, is one English magician and card shark specialist you ordinarily will not find but, at the same time, a person whose friendliness and tricks (magic tricks, duh) you'd fall for instantly. The heir apparent to the Latymer Barony, DMC decided to take the road least travelled and make a name for himself. Somebody was right, when you love what you do, you've already won at life. I recently had the opportunity to converse with one of the most eminent magicians in the world, where he opened up about how magic was a choice that made itself. Read on for excerpts from the interview:

**You have many successfully running shows, *The Card Shark*, *Beyond Magic* with DMC, *Death By Magic* and so on. Tell us about your journey.**  
My journey started as a child. I was one of the strange children who was always obsessed with unusual things, magic and mysteries. When I was eight, my father took me to a magic show. Now, my father comes from a very old banking family, called Money-Coutts. It originally used to be a part of the family, it's a private bank in UK. Underneath the bank was the oldest magic shop in UK. He took me there and that's when I learnt that magic was something that could be learnt and that could give other people that incredible feeling that magic has always given me. I, very quickly, decided that that's what I will give my life to, and I never looked back.

**You've risked your own life during the stunts. What is it like?**  
It's a crazy thing, you know. Because part of it is making a show like *Death By Magic*. There's never enough time. There were six episodes back-to-back and six cities that we had to cover across four different continents. So, we almost never have enough rehearsal time or prep-time. Of course, when you're dealing with very dangerous stunts, things go wrong. And, unfortunately, things did go wrong. I had to see a medical team thrice in the course of eight stunts, so almost half the show went badly south. It was ironical that we were creating a show that was a eulogy to very incredible magicians who had given their lives in pursuit of magic.

**On those lines, how real is *Death By Magic*? What type of illusions do you create around it?**  
I've always thought of myself as the forger of the impossible. So, I create what look like forgeries of impossible moments and, of course, in order to do that, we, as magicians, use very many different techniques — some are more psychological, some are the tricks of hand. Many different elements are at play and, of course, we use all manners of different techniques. But for me, the secret is a very small part of the entire experience. Many people seem to be fascinated by the secret of how it is working. For me, it is not so much about that but more is about the journey and the experience that is created out of it.

# BEYOND MAGIC

DRUMMOND MONEY-COUTTS, the heir to Baron Latimer, discusses his shift to magic which is equivalent to love for him and reveals his extraordinary adoration for India. By KHUSHBU KIRTI



**We know a magician never reveals his tricks, but one always wonders... What are your thoughts about shows like *Magic's Greatest Secrets Revealed*?**  
To me, it feels like one of the things that when a person learns makes him disappointed. It is rare that a person learns the mystery behind a trick and they are blown away. Usually, it's something very clever but more often than not, something

extremely simple. I believe it is like a snake. If a magician stops running away from it, it'll stop chasing him. If a child is holding on to a toy fiercely, then other children want it even more but as soon as the toy is left on the ground, people lose interest. I can vouch for it, the secrets behind magic are absolutely not the most fascinating part of what we do. It's just, magicians make a big fuss about guarding the secret. So, of course, in doing so, they encourage people to come and chase after them. So, if they gave less importance to it, our audiences would do the same.

**You travel around the world and enthrall people with magic tricks. What does magic mean to you? Is it an escape or a world where the surreal seems real?**  
It's one of those beautiful questions, what magic is, and I've thought about it a

lot over the years. As a child, it was very much an escape. It was a happy place that I would dissolve into. I would read about my heroes and great stories from the past. Now, for me, magic is equivalent with love on some level. What magic means to you or me, to a monk or let's say a young girl, will all mean very different things. Everyone will have their unique interpretations of magic based on their experiences. For everyone, their experiences dictate their judgment. Someone might have seen a brilliant magician when they were a kid, while others might have experienced a terrible magic show at a party. That will inform, of course, their understanding and definition of magic.

**What is it that keeps calling you back to India?**  
Magic can be so much richer, deeper.



We can find magic in almost anything in life. That is one reason why I keep returning to India. There's an energy here. There's a sense of magic that I get from India — and its culture, history, people — which is very hard to capture, define or explain in words. But I put it on a very similar level of magic. In India, you have this beautiful tapestry of magic in many forms, this can be a mere belief in the magic, but also you have a very long history of people performing magic. I've travelled to parts of the world where magic is something darker and seen as something much more sinister and can be associated with witchcraft and black magic and voodoo. People are scared of it, generally. Because there's no history of performing magic. So, for me, India is very unique. There's a wide interpretation of magic here, a real appetite of magic that I can feel.

**You've performed a lot of public stunts like public treasure quests. What is your objective behind these?**  
You know, that was just an idea. I think when I started my professional career, I was beginning to make money and I have always loved the thrill of treasure hunts. I put it at an equal level with the exhilaration of magic. I had an idea one day. I bought little

envelopes and stuck into them what must be lakhs of rupees. I hid them then and walked around, watching people find them. They'd be overjoyed and confused, both. It was very special, wasn't particularly magical but it made me very happy to watch. **You come from a royal background. And are an heir to Baron Latimer. When and how did you decide to drift away from the lineage and become a self-made magician?**  
I don't know if that was a particular moment. That realisation was something always there. As soon as I found magic, I knew it would be my life. I attempted more conventional/professional careers for a while, worked at banks, but none of these things touched. The strength of magic was something else. I couldn't bring myself to sit if I knew I could bring magic into other people's lives. In many ways, it was a choice that made itself. I was 18 and my father and I were climbing a mountain in Africa. I don't remember this but he tells me that he asked me what my plan A was. I answered, 'magic'. He then asked what plan B was and I responded, 'to make plan A work.' Magic was everything for me.

**You've a tattoo on your left ear that says 'Hausla Pyaar Wishwas', if I'm not wrong. Could you elaborate what that means to you?**  
Yes (smiles). When I came to India, it was my second time, and I had committed to be coming a magician. I was in Rajasthan and was inside a book shop. I was reading books that spoke of mantras and guiding principles in life. I decided I wanted three foundational mantras for myself, things I would hold on to, and wrote these three phrases. When I landed in London, I wrote to my friend in Udaipur and asked what these principles in Hindi would be captured as. He said they'd be 'hausla, pyaar, wishwas'. It is my little piece of India. No matter what happens in my life, I return to these mantras and my guiding principles.

**What do you prefer more: Live performances or recorded shows?**  
I far prefer live performances because it's uniquely my own work. And I love the challenges of television, it's different, many dozens of people making dozens of creative choices, but not all of which you're gonna agree with. With Netflix, we had 100s of people in the crew. So not everything would go my way. It is big and cumbersome. I love it for many reasons but it is slower. There's immediacy with live magic, it is right there. I can do it every day.

## Unleashing talents

It will help aspirants' inner songwriters to step into the sunlight, comments SAMEER ANJAAN on his lyrics-writing class on Unlu. By TEAM VIVA



**U**nlu, a learning platform in creative education, has onboarded India's popular lyricist Sameer Anjaan to teach lyrics-writing on their platform. This lyrics-writing class will help aspiring content creators learn the art of lyrics writing from an industry veteran and will open avenues to commercialise their content to build a sustainable career in songwriting. Anjaan moved to Mumbai in 1980 to pursue his career. In a short span of time, he became one of the most sought-after lyricists in the Bollywood industry. He is an award-winning songwriter and a Guinness World Record holder for writing the most songs. With his immense knowledge and experience, Anjaan will help the aspirants learn the process of lyrics writing in his Unlu class. Commenting on his exclusive class, Anjaan said, "It has always been my dream to teach people to become songwriters so when Unlu came to me, asking to take this opportunity, it was really a no-brainer. When you write lyrics there are

many nuances one needs to take care of, but if you know how to approach all the challenges that are going to come your way, you can really excel." He continued, "So, here's the opportunity that will help aspirants' inner songwriters to step into the sunlight and show them the way forward to express their ideas and emotions." In this class, Anjaan will share what it took for him to become a successful songwriter and how one can use his methodology/process to become a songwriter in their own right. Beginning from his journey as an artist to helping them in discovering themselves, he will take the learners through the complete process of making it as a lyricist. The course will help the students become familiar with the structure of lyrics, language and its process. Apart from this, they will be taught about the types of lyrics writing, genres and how to make a mark in the industry. On the completion of the course, students will receive a certificate of completion.



## Don't hide glaring issues

Director and script writer, GOPI PUTHRAN calls for immediate action on violence against women. By TEAM VIVA

**A**ce Bollywood director Gopi Puthran has been vocal about rights of women which came through in Yash Raj Films' *Mardaani* and *Mardaani 2*, for which he wrote the script too. Gopi wants society to be open about admitting that violence against women is an epidemic and hopes that people engage with each other immediately on how to tackle this menace.

Gopi says, "Violence against women keeps breeding because of a toxic, stagnant culture that refuses to acknowledge the equal existence and independent agency of women in the fabric of society. And this culture has little to do with the socio-economic strata and has to do with the patriarchal values which have seeped into our day to day behaviour, cutting across economic and social con-

ditions." He adds, "But cultures don't change overnight and they definitely don't change by shoving glaring issues under the carpet. The more we talk about the extent and impact that violence has on women's lives and the permanent trauma that it causes, the more we can hope to bring about some behavioural change." He further states, "As someone

who's been raised and influenced by strong, independent women I feel deeply that one of the ways that crime against women can be curbed is by talking about such crimes openly and without attaching 'shame' and 'guilt' to the women who go through it. They are not 'victims' that need rescuing, they are 'humans' who seek justice for the wrongs they've faced."

## Salman Khan's revelations

The actor had an interesting incident to relate about singer ADITYA NARAYAN. By TEAM VIVA

**L**ast month, Zee TV returned with its longest-running singing reality show, *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* 2021. With a legacy of over 25 years, *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* has been successful in discovering some gems of music fraternity. The show's contestants have managed to impress the audience. However, viewers are in for a treat this weekend... The upcoming episode of *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* will see Salman Khan as the special guest. During the shoot, he will not only be seen sharing some memories from his career, but also share screen time with the three judges, host and contestants from the show. In fact, during the shoot, Salman shared a never heard before



anecdote about *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* host Aditya Narayan. Salman revealed, "I had worked with Aditya when he was just three or four

years old. We shot for *Jab Pyaar Kisise Hota Hai*. I used to wipe his nose when he was a kid." Narayan also added, "I always had a runny nose, and he came to

my rescue. But look how I've grown up, but Salman Bhai is still the same young, dashing man." While Salman Khan's revelations will leave you surprised, Sanjana and Neelanjana's soulful rendition of songs like *Kahe Toh Se Sajna* and *Tere Naam Humne Kiya Hai* cannot be missed! (Tune into *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa* this Saturday and Sunday at 9 pm, only on Zee TV.)



Bollywood actor Ajay Devgn during the teaser launch of forthcoming film, *RRR*, at PVR Plaza in New Delhi on Thursday. Photo by Pankaj Kumar



TRAVEL BUG



IMPOSSIBLE... IS NOTHING

If Dubai believes in making everything magnificent, Atlantis, The Palm, epitomises the phenomenon, says Saimi Sattar as she experiences life queen size

The expanse of sand spread endlessly, interspersed with scrub, a few high rises, and cars that were moving at a speed that is possible only when viewed from the air. But as the plane circled and swooped to land, like the desert falcon, the high-rises that Dubai is known for suddenly came into view. The spectacular buildings are just one of the many things that add up to create an unmatched aura of the foremost of the seven Emirates, which exercises an unimaginable pull over blue- and white-collar workers, holidaymakers and shoppers alike. Dubai is nothing short of a man-made mirage, where every flight of fancy, howsoever much bizarre, finds a ready-to-take-off runway.

But then, all of these thoughts crossed my mind much after I had been through a gruelling 10 hours before hitting the tarmac in the 'Promised Land' of shopaholics. I say, 'gruelling' as international travel post-pandemic is a beast that is unrecognisable from its predecessor. Despite that, having been hemmed in within the boundaries that answer to the political description of India — for almost two years now — the break was welcome. What wasn't met with equal enthusiasm was the mandatory arrival at the airport six hours before the flight for a RT-PCR test. For people like me, who even earlier found the long check-in hours burdensome, this was excruciating, to say the least. So for a seven o'clock flight, I had to reach no later than 1 in the morning! The sight that greeted me was unlike any that I had seen at any airport before. Queues of people — who were awaiting results — sleeping on parapets, rows of cubicles where their details were noted and bills generated as well as tests conducted while the luggage lay in a bit of disarray while the owners ran helter-skelter.

With the tests done, the reports finally filtered in two hours later. And another queue to pick it up followed by yet one more to confirm whether the two reports and visas were in order. And finally, check-in! However, one thing hadn't changed at the T3 airport in Delhi. If you wanted to catch a wink, all the sleeperettes were sure to be occupied.

It was only when the flight landed that we were ushered into more cubicles where yet another test was conducted. But post that, it was business as usual... Except for the heat. It seemed to have been channelled straight from a blast furnace... that is if you had the bravado to step outside the air conditioning. I quickly took shelter in the waiting car at the airport. Making my way to Atlantis, The Palm — which was to be my abode for three days — I sped past chrome and glass buildings, cars in every imaginable colour that could put a woman's wardrobe to shame, malls on roads that were so smooth that would have you stepping on the accelerator with glee.

We were headed towards Palm Island, the largest man-made island which is referred to as the 'eighth won-



der of the world'. The Palm's shape was selected to ensure all buildings on the island would have a sea view and beach access. The finished island covers an area equivalent to 600 football pitches and is four times as big as London's Hyde Park. Today, the 17 fronds are home to around 1,500 beachfront mansions, with a further 6,000 apartments on the trunk.

Soon enough, the car was running parallel with the beach and a turn led it to the hotel. And since Dubai does not do anything which is less than grand, Atlantis is spread over 46 hectares or — to make a layperson understand its scale — is the size of 64 Wembley football pitches. Atlantis was the first resort to open its doors on The Palm. With 1,548 rooms, seven signature suites and 22 storeys, it has played host to citizens of 227 different countries. Its signature Royal Bridge Suite, measuring 924 sq m costs US\$27,000 per night, is an attraction — especially for Indians — as actor Shah Rukh Khan has stayed here. Another, the Underwater Suite — at 165 sq m, has a master bedroom with direct views of The Ambassador Lagoon aquarium, creating an illusion of being beneath the sea — is another popular option. The hotel is a microcosm of the Emirate which does not believe in living life which is not king size.

Checking in, I couldn't help but admire the handblown glass installation in a myriad of colours and kept stealing looks as the Russian lady at the front desk completed the formalities. The priceless Dale Chihuly sculpture was created using 3,000 hand-blown pieces that were individually placed to build the 10-metre-high entry centerpiece. Even in Dubai where everything competes for attention — by being even more mammoth than larger than life and opulent — this is a showstopper.

Ushered in my room, I immediately raced to the balcony as views from a hotel room have often been behind



my impulsive decisions to stay or leave a place since childhood. The vista that greeted me, despite the heat, had me tongue-tied (a rare occurrence) for some time. From the 13th floor, the view that spread out till the horizon had the deep blue sea with several yachts skimming on the surface (remember habibi, money CAN buy you happiness in Dubai), the Burj Khalifa shimmering in the heat, a stretch of greenery before it was interrupted by the new Atlantis, The Royal slated to open sometime next year, a monorail speeding past and also a teeny weeny glimpse of the famous Palm with its fronds that houses the whos who (including our very Shah Rukh Khan who is also the brand ambassador of Dubai). Peeking down, I saw another water body just below. I wondered what it was but couldn't ponder over it for too long as I had to leave for lunch.

It was the descent from the lobby to the ground level which brought us face to face with a glass wall with a myriad of sea animals — stingrays, sharks, eels and 65,000 others — swimming (it seemed without care) in what could be closest to viewing them in their natural habitat without getting wet. I watched on mesmerised as realisation dawned that this was the water body I saw from above. This aquarium recreates Atlantis, the fictional island mentioned in an allegory on the hubris of nations in Plato's works Timaeus and Critias. Since the hotel is named after it, it is not surprising that floor-to-ceiling unbreakable glass practically brings in the water world at every turn. I would have stared on, lost in thought, had not my stomach let out a low growl complaining about the hours of neglect and in anticipation of the feast that I knew was in store.

We were headed towards Gordon

Ramsay's (yes, THE Multi-Michelin starred British chef and star of the small screen known equally well for his food and his temper) Bread Street Kitchen & Bar. This is just one of the 29 restaurants including three outlets

by celebrity chefs, Nobu Matsuhisa, Giorgio Locatelli and Gordon Ramsay.

Done up in wood, with a profusion of lights in different shapes and sizes, the restaurant had an eclectic appeal that was tough to miss despite me being consumed by a state of sleep deprivation. While one might assume that it would be meats that dominate the menu, since Ramsay has often expressed his dislike for vegetarianism, the vegan trend has made inroads into his restaurant — certainly as unlikely a place as can be. And surprisingly, it was the Rigatoni with handpicked mushrooms — without even so much as a hint of animal protein — that was the star of the table despite an array of treats that were cooked and plated to perfection. But the side-effects of stuffing oneself with a dish of creamy carbohydrates soon became apparent. The four people at the table began to nod off... especially since the night before had been less than restful. However, since no meal is complete without a dessert, an assorted platter followed. The Medjool date & banana sticky toffee pudding had us nodding in approval (and digging in several spoonfuls immediately after loud proclamations of being stuffed to the gills).

An afternoon siesta was called for after such an immensely satiating meal. Waking up refreshed, I was raring to head out for the Fish Tales Tour at The Lost Chambers Aquarium. For a hotel in the centre of a desert, the abundance of water, even if it is saline, is certain-



ly a feat. And if you add the upkeep of a whopping 65,000 marine animals of 250 species, it certainly becomes even more mind-boggling. The Ambassador Lagoon at Atlantis is an 11 million litre marine habitat and one of the top 10 largest aquariums in the world. Its viewing pane is 10 meters long and 70 cm thick and if all its water was drained it would fill 4.5 Olympic-sized swimming pools!

While I, along with three others, explored the site on my own, it was the behind-the-scenes during the guided tour that had us holding on to every word. A fish hospital (my, my, did you know that existed?), a kitchen to prepare their food

(400 kg of the same quality as is served to the hotel's guests), a water filtration plant, a testing centre, several fish tanks where the young are kept and more were oohed and aahed over.

We wandered around before ending with a dinner at Hakkasan. While we were still quite full from the lunch, the hostess' recommendation of Stir-fry vegetable and pine nut lettuce wrap was certainly a revelation and was quickly wrapped up (pun intended). However, we could not do justice to the main course as our stomachs collectively groaned under the onslaught of a constant barrage of delicacies. Practically collapsing into bed, we were soon off to la-la land,

Post a delicious spread of South-East Asian, local and international offerings at the breakfast buffet at the Saffron, we were up for some activities that were a little more adventurous than eating and walking about to take in the sights. We headed towards the White Beach, the seafront of the eponymously-named restaurant, which is exclusively used by the hotel guests. The sun beating down in all its intensity did not flag our spirits as we bravely ventured where we had never gone before — a session of paddleboarding. Donning the life jackets ensured that our courage was boosted manifold and we weren't daunted by the open sea that stretched out till the horizon. If we were being marked, the first person to take off from the start point would have scored a perfect 10. Paddling gently on both sides, she stood up with perfect poise without losing balance and after a carefully executed pirouette, she headed back to safe shores exultant to have done it in one



perfect sweep. I was up next and I have always been pretty confident — that balance is something I always take time to achieve while perseverance is my strong point. And yet again, my hunch was not off the mark. Within minutes (or was it seconds?) of standing up, a loud splash followed and I was floating on my back. While the instructor was telling me not to panic, I promptly responded

by standing up in the neck-deep (okay, okay for a 5'1" me) water and wading back to the shore to attempt it yet again. And yes, this time I was successful.

But I was not yet done with the water (blame it on me being a water sign) and dragged out a kayak along with a companion. The 20 minutes we paddled around were frequently interrupted by peels of laughter as we tried to manoeuvre the kayak without bumping into obstacles. Deeply tanned but exuberant, we made our way back...

Lunch was at White, the beachfront restaurant which specialises in Mediterranean cuisine. An all-white decor, fresh ingredients and a meal that was light were just what we needed. But it was the dessert, with its seemingly incongruous nomenclature of 'bread' that had everyone floored. Called the Monkey bread, with a hint of cinnamon and coffee, we eyed its large size when it arrived at the table and thought we would never finish it. We could not have erred more. And that was just another incorrect assumption about the dish. We sliced off a small bite and then another, and one more... till the plate was almost empty. And yes, even now, I can almost taste its delicious gorgeousness. Sigh.

However, there was more to come. On the last day of our stay, we were lined up for a dolphin and sea lion tour where we learnt the intricacies. The Dolphin Bay, spread over 4.5 hectares, is home to Indo-Pacific Bottlenose dolphins that eat between five and seven kg of fish per day. The Sea Lion Point is the only one of its kind in the region. Its residents are South African Fur Seals and are cared for by experienced Marine Mammal Specialists.

The trainer explained that diet regulation, regular health check-ups, exercise and more were some of the things that ensured that both the physical and emotional well-being of these marine animals were well looked after. With the dolphin parks having come in for increased criticism from animal rights activists, we watched the marine animals from afar.

From there we headed straight to Aquaventure, the water playground of more than 18 million litres of water. With 79 rides spread across three towers 26 marine and water-sport experiences, anyone who loves water parks this is a dream destination. While I debated whether I should take the Leap of

Faith — a sheer drop of 98-feet mega plummets in a near-vertical fashion at frightening speed of 60 km/h in three seconds, shooting you through a clear acrylic tube surrounded by sharks and cownose rays —

I took some of the relatively tamer rides. So I went on a safari of a different kind in Shark Attack, where the fibreglass gives a 360° view of the shark-filled lagoon. Then, there were the Rapids, a 1.6-kilometre river and the Aquaconda, a 210 metres long and 25 metres high six-person waterslide tube.

Certainly, impossible is not a word that exists in Dubai's dictionary.



# SOUTHEE, OPENERS BRING NZ BACK IN GAME

PTI ■ KANPUR

Tim Southee bowled an incisive morning spell to take five wickets which was then brilliantly complemented by openers Will Young and Tom Latham as New Zealand dominated India to reach 129 for no loss on the second day of the opening Test here on Friday. The only highlight for India in an otherwise disappointing day was Shreyas Iyer's (105 off 171 balls) debut hundred.

Playing his 80th Test match, Southee (5/69) took his 13th five-wicket haul on an unresponsive track to send India packing for 345 after they started the day at 258 for 4.

Young then held centre-stage in his fourth Test appearance as he looked composed and unperturbed during his unbeaten knock of 75 off 180 balls.

Latham (50 batting off 165 balls), the seasoned campaigner, survived three on-field decisions (two leg before and one caught behind), negated by DRS, and decided to frustrate the two Indian spinners with a gritty defensive game. The Green Park track became better for batting on the second day and the turn that was on offer was minimal. The variable bounce wasn't also there for the better part of the 57 overs that they batted.

Since it was slow turn, the



Black Caps duo mostly plonked their front-foot and neutralised the turn. And when they played on the back-foot, there was enough time to manoeuvre on both sides of the wicket.

Both were able to adjust on the back-foot against Ravindra Jadeja (14-4-28-0) and Ravichandran Ashwin (17-5-38-0), both of whom didn't look threatening on the day.

Also what made it worse for India was that hardly any delivery kept dangerously low, which



could have brought the leg-before into the equation.

The most disappointing of all was Axar Patel (10-1-26-0), whose accuracy on the leg stump line was of little or no value and it was once again proved that without assistance from the track, he is not even half the bowler that he is with some help from surface.

Young, in particular, got as many as 12 boundaries while Latham helped himself to four hits to the fence.

While Indian spinners can come back on the third day if the pitch considerably deteriorates but New Zealand would like to take the game deep by getting somewhere close to India's first innings total and take it from there.

In the morning, Iyer became the 16th Indian cricketer to score a hundred on Test debut but the home side's lower-middle order caved in meekly save Ashwin (38 off 56 balls), whose counter-attacking effort took

them close to 350.

The credit for that went primarily to Southee (27.4-6-69-5), who was tirelessly bowling an extended spell of more than 10 overs from one end, causing extensive damage. The seasoned campaigner's 13th five-wicket haul came in his 80th Test.

Resuming on his overnight score of 75, Iyer followed the great Gundappa Vishwanath in reaching the milestone at this ground.

Ashwin did the bulk of scoring in the morning session as India added only 87 runs, losing six wickets in the process.

Southee was on target with the second new ball first up as he sent back Ravindra Jadeja (50) on his overnight score.

He used the width of the crease cleverly to trouble Jadeja and got the ball to move from length which was too much for the lower-order players to negotiate. Wriddhiman Saha and Axar Patel nicked at those deliveries that moved away at drivable lengths. Sensing that he is now batting with the tail as Saha (1 off 12 balls) is no longer a batter on whom one can repose his faith, Iyer hit a flurry of boundaries but the best shot was a cover drive off Kyle Jamieson (22.2-6-85-3) which took him to 96.

A glide towards wide of third man off Jamieson got him a double and the moment that every batter dreams of.

## Paine takes mental health break from cricket



AP ■ MELBOURNE

Former Australia Test cricket captain Tim Paine is set to miss the first Ashes Test and is taking an indefinite mental health break from the game.

The news comes a week after Paine tearfully quit as captain after revelations of a scandal involving the sending of inappropriate texts to a female co-worker in 2017.

Cricket Australia said on Friday that Paine advised them he would be "stepping away from cricket for a period of time."

"We recognise that this is an incredibly difficult time for Tim and his family and are committed to supporting them," Cricket Australia chief executive Nick Hockley said in a statement.

"We respect and under-

stand Tim's decision to have a break at this time to focus on his and his family's well-being."

Paine's teammates were hoping for the wicketkeeper to play on December 8 — his 37th birthday — when Australia's five-test series against England begins in Brisbane. As of Thursday, the veteran was scheduled to join the test squad this weekend.

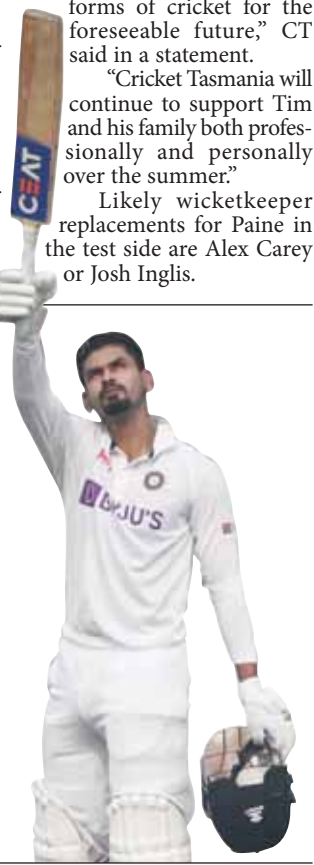
Paine was called up and set to bat in Tasmania's one-day match against Western Australia on Friday, giving him a chance to play five consecutive days of cricket after a low-key return via the state's second XI.

But Cricket Tasmania (CT) said Friday that Paine would not take his spot in the side.

"Following discussions over the last 24 hours, Tim Paine has advised Cricket Tasmania that he will be taking a leave of absence from all forms of cricket for the foreseeable future," CT said in a statement.

"Cricket Tasmania will continue to support Tim and his family both professionally and personally over the summer."

Likely wicketkeeper replacements for Paine in the test side are Alex Carey or Josh Inglis.



## He is not bowling so can we call him all-rounder? asks KAPIL ON HARDIK

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Legendary former India captain Kapil Dev on Friday asked whether Hardik Pandya can be called an all-rounder given that he has not been bowling as much as the role demands.

A vital cog in India's scheme of things in white-ball cricket, the flamboyant Pandya bowled in just two matches in the recent T20 World Cup where India went out in the group stage itself.

He is also under fire for not revealing the extent of his several fitness issues and was dropped from the home T20 series against New Zealand, which India won 3-0.

"He has to do both the jobs to be considered an all-rounder. He is not bowling so can we call him all-rounder? Let him bowl, he has come out from the injury," Kapil said at the Royal Calcutta Golf Course here. "He is an extremely important batter to the country, for bowling he has to play a lot more matches, perform and bowl and then we will say," added India's first World Cup-winning captain. Kapil



also predicted that Rahul Dravid the coach will be a bigger success than the immensely accomplished Dravid the cricketer.

Dravid began his new innings as the Indian team's head coach in the ongoing series against New Zealand, a post he has been given till the 2023 ODI World Cup in India.

"He's a good man, a good cricketer. He will do a better job as a coach than as a cricketer because in cricket nobody has done better than him. I'm just keeping my fingers crossed," Kapil said. Dravid earlier served as the head of National Cricket Academy and was also the coach of India's Under-19 and A teams, nurturing several young talents who went on to represent the country with distinction.

## Shreyas Iyer 16th Indian to slam 100 on Test debut

PTI ■ KANPUR

Shreyas Iyer on Friday became the 16th Indian batter to make a hundred on his Test debut, joining an illustrious list which includes the legendary Lala Amarnath, Gundappa Viswanath, and BCCI president Sourav Ganguly among others.

The elegant right-hander, who hails from Mumbai's Worli area, achieved the feat in the ongoing first Test against New Zealand on the second day of

the match at the Green Park Stadium here. Iyer scored 105 off 171 balls, striking 13 fours and a couple of sixes during his brilliant effort.

He was dismissed by Tim Southee. He became the second batter after Viswanath to score a hundred on his Test debut at Kanpur.

The 26-year-old is also the third Indian to score a hundred on debut against New Zealand.

Arjan Kripal Singh, who achieved the feat in 1955, and Surinder Amarnath, who

THE ILLUSTRIOUS LIST			
1	Lala Amarnath v England 1933	9	Pravin Amre v South Africa 1992
2	Deepak Shodhan v Pakistan 1952	10	Sourav Ganguly v England 1996
3	Arjan Kripal Singh v New Zealand 1955	11	Virender Sehwag v South Africa 2001
4	Abbas Ali Baig v England 1959	12	Suresh Raina v Sri Lanka 2010
5	Hanumant Singh v England 1964	13	Shikhar Dhawan v Australia 201
6	G Vishwanath v Australia 1969	14	Rohit Sharma v West Indies 2013
7	Surinder Amarnath v New Zealand 1976	15	Prithvi Shaw v West Indies 2018
8	Mohd Azharuddin England 1984	16	Shreyas Iyer v New Zealand 2021.

scored a hundred against the Black Caps on his debut in 1976, are the other two Indians

to have achieved the same.

Iyer is also the third Mumbai player after Rohit

Sharma and Prithvi Shaw to slam a hundred on Test debut.

## Sindhu fights her way into Indonesia Open semifinal

PTI ■ BALI

India's two-time Olympic medal-winning shuttler P V Sindhu came back from a game down to beat South Korea's Sim Yujin and enter the semi-finals of the Indonesia Open Super 1000 tournament here on Friday.

The men's doubles duo of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty later beat Malaysia's Goh Sze Fei and Nur Izzuddin 21-19 21-19 in straight games to also make the semi-finals of the tournament, making it a great day for the Indian contingent.

Third seed Sindhu, the reigning world champion, had to toil hard to get the better of Yujin 14-21 21-19 21-14 in the quarterfinal that lasted an hour and six minutes.

The Indian will play second seed Ratchanok Intanon of Thailand, who got the better of Japan's Asuka Takahashi

21-17 21-12 in another women's singles quarterfinal match, in her last four clash of the USD 850,000 event. It was not smooth sailing from Sindhu against Yujin.

The Indian started confidently racing to a 7-1 lead before the Japanese pocketed six straight points to draw the first game level.

But once Yujin took a slender 11-10 lead at the break, she didn't look back and won the game comfortably to grab the early momentum.

The Japanese continued in the same vein in the second game and matched Sindhu stroke for stroke till the first seven points before the Indian upped her game.

Sindhu displayed better control and authority over her strokes and engaged her rival in long rallies to surge ahead 14-8 before Yujin fought back.

Sindhu used her vast experience



and held her nerves to draw the contest level.

In the decider, Sindhu enjoyed the early exchanges to race to a comfortable 11-4 lead but the Japanese secured seven consecutive points to make it 11-11. Sensing trouble, Sindhu took her game to the next level just at the right time to outwit her rival and seal the match in her favour.

The combo of Satwik and Chirag took 43 minutes to win their men's doubles quarterfinal against the Malaysians.

The other Indian in fray, B Sai Praneeth, will play Olympic champion and former world No.1 Viktor Axelsen of Denmark in the men's singles quarterfinals later in the day.

Praneeth, world No.16, staved off a spirited fight from France's world No.70 Christo Popov, claiming a 21-17 14-21 21-19 win in a gruelling second round match on Thursday.

## INDIA BEATEN 1-6 BY BRAZIL IN WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

PTI ■ MANAUS (BRAZIL)

The Indian women's football team scored one goal and kept mighty Brazil at bay till late in the first half but eventually lost 1-6 in its first match of the four-nation international tournament here on Friday.

Manisha Kalyan equalised in the eighth minute for India after Debora Oliveira had put the 2007 World Cup runners-up in the lead in the very first minute of the match.

Giovana Costa put Brazil in the lead again in the 36th minute to give the home side the advantage at the breather.

## West Ham, Rangers, Lazio win; Celtic exit



AP ■ LONDON

Celtic's chances of progress in the Europa League were ended by a late Bayer Leverkusen rally to lose 3-2 in Germany on Thursday as Real Betis, Lazio and Galatasaray secured their places in the knockout stages.

Leverkusen had already qualified but made sure of top spot in Group G and a place in the last 16 thanks to two goals in the final eight minutes at the Bay Arena.

Robert Andrich headed the hosts in front before Josip Juranovic equalised from the penalty spot.

Jota's sweet strike 11 minutes into the second half had Celtic on course for their first ever win on German soil. But Andrich smashed home his second of the game between Joe Hart's legs before Moussa Diaby beat the former England international from the edge of the box. Celtic are

assured of dropping into the Europa Conference League in the new year, but cannot now catch Betis, who beat Ferencvaros 2-0 to guarantee second in the group. Lazio and Galatasaray will face off in two weeks' time for top spot in Group E after securing qualification in style.

The Italians were 3-0 winners over Lokomotiv Moscow, who are set to lose head of sports and development Ralf Rangnick to Manchester United according to reports.

Ciro Immobile scored two second half penalties before Pedro Rodriguez rounded off the scoring. Galatasaray hold a three-point lead at the top of the group after ending Marseille's chances of progress in a 4-2 thriller in Istanbul. West Ham's fine return to European football continued with a 2-0 win over Rapid Vienna despite David Moyes naming a much-changed line-up.

## Indian team announced for Asian Champions Trophy

PNS ■ NEW

Delhi Hockey India on Friday named the 20-member Indian Men's Hockey Team for the upcoming Hero Men's Asian Champions Trophy which is scheduled to be held between December 14- 22, 2021. Defending Champions India begin their campaign on the opening day against Korea (Dec 14).

In this edition, they will battle it out against Korea, Japan (Dec 19), Malaysia (Dec 18), Pakistan (Dec 17) and hosts Bangladesh (Dec 15) in the single-pool tournament for top honours.

The Semi Finals will be played on 21 December followed by the Final on 22 December.

The Indian team will see Manpreet Singh captain the side along with Harmanpreet Singh who will be his deputy.

The team includes goalkeepers Krishan B Pathak and Suraj Karkera. India's defence will see Harmanpreet Singh lead the charge along with Gurinder Singh, Jarmanpreet Singh, Nilam Sanjeev Xess, Dipsan Tirkey, Varun Kumar and Mandeep Mor.

With this line-up India will have four options for dragglick.



## Pakistan takes 4 early wickets vs Bangladesh in 1st test

AP ■ CHATTOGRAM

Pakistan bowlers used some variety to take four wickets in the first session of the first test against Bangladesh on Friday, leaving the home side in trouble at lunch. Fast bowlers Shaheen Afridi and Hasan Ali, medium pacer Faheem Ashraf and offspinner Sajid Khan shared the four wickets to leave Bangladesh at 69-4 after Bangladesh captain Mominul Haque opted to bat first after winning the toss.

Liton Das was batting on 11 with Mushfiqur Rahim on 5 at the break.

Saif Hasan hit Ali for two boundaries in the second over to give a hint of a good start for Bangladesh.

But his opening partner Shadman Islam struggled against Afridi, who moved the ball well, but Saif grew with confidence, driving the left arm pacer through mid-off for four.

Afridi broke through in the next delivery when Saif fended a short delivery to short leg for 14.

Shadman also fell for 14, as Hasan had him leg-before after leaking runs in his opening spell.

Khan gave the side a big breakthrough when he reviewed successfully to dismiss captain Mominul Haque for 6. Najmul Shanto then followed him, giving a straight catch to point for 14 as Bangladesh crumbled under pressure.

## India face Poland in must-win match in Junior Hockey WC

BHUBANESWAR: Their campaign might be back on track following a massive win over lowly Canada, but defending champions India are still not out of the

woods and would need to beat Poland in their final Pool B match to qualify for the quarterfinals of the FIH Men's Junior Hockey World Cup here on

Saturday. The Indians, one of the pre-tournament favourites, were given a rude shock in their opener when France stunned them 5-4.

PTI

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, BAISINGA CANAL DIVISION, AT/PO:- LAXMIPOSI, DIST:-MAYURBHANJ	
Government of Odisha "e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE Bid Identification No. 16 / 21-22 of SE, BCD, Laxmiposi	
i	Name of Work
ii	Estimated Cost (Lakh)
iii	Period of Completion
iv	Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal
v	Last date/time for receipt of bid in the portal
vi	Name & Address of the O.I.T
Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal "https://tendersodisha.gov.in". OIPR-32281/11/0005/2122	
Superintending Engineer, Baisinga Canal Division, Laxmiposi	

Govt. OF ODISHA, "e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE Bid Identification No. S.E. PKL(R&B)- 23 /2021-22 B-678 E-mail address- esgwed.ekl@rediffmail.com	
1. Name of the work:	- Road work
2. Numbers of work	- 1 (One)
3. Estimated cost:	- Rs. 44.64 Lakh
4. Period of completion	- 3(Three) calendar months
5. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	- From 11.00 A.M. of dt.18.11.2021 to 05.00 P.M. of dt.29.11.2021
6. Last Date/ Time for receipt of bids in the portal	- 05.00 P.M. of dt.29.11.2021
7. Date of opening of Bid	- 11.30 A.M. of dt.30.11.2021
8. Name and address of the officer inviting Bid	- Superintending Engineer, Panikoiil (R&B) Division, Panikoiil.
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal https://tendersodisha.gov.in	
Superintending Engineer Panikoiil (R&B) Division	
OIPR-34067/11/0014/2122	