

OPINION 8
JINNAH COULD NEVER
FIGHT FOR PAKISTAN

WORLD 12
STUDY WARNS CHINA OF
'COLOSSAL OUTBREAK' OF COVID

SPORT 14
IYER, SAHA SET UP
INTRIGUING FINAL DAY

Published From
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

Late City Vol. 157 Issue 319
*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

LUCKNOW, MONDAY NOVEMBER 29, 2021; PAGES 14 ₹3



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Covid-19 could again ground global flights

Dec 15 flight plan in danger; Govt to watch world scenario

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In view of the emerging threat from the new variant of the coronavirus, the resumption of scheduled international flights could be delayed. The Centre on Sunday said it would take a decision after reviewing the evolving global scenario as well as the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on testing and surveillance of incoming passengers, especially from countries identified as 'at risk'. The international flight operations were to resume from December 15.

Alert to the looming threat from Omicron, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and Jharkhand Health Minister Banna Gupta have urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to not allow flights from the countries affected by the new variant.

At the same time, States have begun to tighten curbs



- Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla held a meeting with all stakeholders and it was decided that the Centre would take a decision on the resumption of international flights as per the evolving global scenario
- The Centre asked all States and UTs to focus on intensive containment, active surveillance, enhanced testing, monitoring of hotspots, increased coverage of vaccination and augmentation of health infrastructure
- Delhi CM wrote to PM Modi to stop international flights from countries hit by the new Covid variant Omicron
- Delhi airport started RT-PCR tests of all passengers from affected countries.
- Karnataka and Jharkhand also requested Modi to ban travel from affected countries
- The Uttarakhand Govt, too, has asked authorities to test and isolate people returning from African nations
- BMC introduced new restrictions on arrival from affected countries; started the RT-PCR test at the airport and if a traveller tests positive for Covid-19, they will be sent to institutional quarantine

again and urgently trace people who arrived from abroad especially those coming from 'at risk' nations. Several countries have already temporarily suspended flights to southern African nations.

Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla on Sunday held an urgent meeting with all stakeholders to discuss the spread of the new variant of the Covid-19 strain Omicron. The meeting decided that the Ministry of Home Affairs would take a

decision on the date of resumption of scheduled commercial international passenger service.

Dr VK Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog, Dr Vijay Raghavan, Principal Scientific Adviser to Prime Minister, and senior officers from Health, Civil Aviation and other Ministries were present in the meeting. The meeting was held a day after a high-level review by Modi on the new variant of

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New rules for int'l travellers!

New Delhi: The Government on Sunday said global passengers must submit 14 days' travel history and upload negative Covid test results. Travellers from countries deemed "at-risk" will also undergo a mandatory 7-day home quarantine if they test negative, the Union Health Ministry said

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UPTET cancelled after paper leak

29 arrested; CM Yogi says will invoke NSA against culprits

PREETAM SRIVASTAVA ■ LUCKNOW

Asserting that Uttar Pradesh (UP) would maintain 'transparency' and 'fairness' in recruitments, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday announced to invoke the Gangster Act and National Security Act (NSA) against those involved in the UPTET-2021 paper-leak. The paper was cancelled within minutes after it was leaked through WhatsApp on Sunday.

"Those who are involved in this misdeed must know that a case is being registered against them under the Gangster Act and their property will be confiscated along with imposition of National Security Act," said the CM while addressing a public gathering in Deoria. Sending a warning to all those who tend to vitiate the transparent recruitment process, Yogi asserted: "If someone is trying to play with the life of the youth, then he should be aware of the consequences. Be it a job or any test, utmost transparency must be maintained. The current Government has given jobs to more than 4.5 lakh youths in UP with full transparency and the process will be continued further."

In a statement issued here on Sunday night, the UP government said 29 people have been arrested in this connection while Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said he will invoke



Additional Director General (ADG) Law and Order Prashant Kumar at a press conference in Lucknow following the cancellation of the UPTET exams

the National Security Act and Gangster Act against the culprits. Of the 29 arrests, 16 were made from Prayagraj, the government statement said.

Those arrested in Prayagraj include Satya Prakash Singh, an assistant teacher at a primary school in the city's Shankargarh area.

When searched, he was found to have the solved question paper in his WhatsApp. Rajendra Patel — the alleged mastermind of the whole operation — and Chaturbhuj Singh, one of the key players, were also among those arrested from Prayagraj, according to the statement.

ing solvers from Bihar, the statement said.

Four persons were arrested from Lucknow district and one each from Kaushambi, Ayodhya, and Ambedkarnagar.

Three persons were arrested from Shamli district. These three had procured 10 copies of the question paper for Rs 5 lakh and had taken Rs 50,000 from 50-60 candidates each to give them access to the papers for reading and memorising.

Search is on for the rest of the members of the gang, the government said.

"A question paper was leaked. I issued an order to cancel the examination and arrest the entire racket. Instructions were also given to conduct the exam within a month, and that no candidate should be

charged additional fee," Adityanath said addressing a function in Deoria district on Sunday.

Meanwhile, the CM also assured that the exam will be re-conducted in a transparent manner within a month. No extra fee will be taken from any examinee and the Government will arrange for their free movement through UPSRTC buses. The Government has also made it clear that the examinees will not have to fill any forms and submit application fees.

Uttar Pradesh Additional Director General of Police (ADG), Law and Order, Prashant Kumar said. The exam, scheduled to be held on Sunday, was cancelled as reports of paper leaks in Mathura, Ghaziabad, Meerut and Bulandshahr came in before the exam started. "A few photocopies of the question papers were found from those arrested. The STF will probe the case and take action against those found guilty," Kumar asserted. The exact date of the fresh UPTET exam will be notified in due course of time by the Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Board (UPBEB), informed ACS UPBEB, Deepak Kumar.

As many as 19,99,418 candidates had registered for the UPTET 2021 exam which was scheduled to be conducted at several exam centres across 75 districts of UP.

'Omicron spike mutations may hit jab efficacy'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Underlining the grave threat emerging from the new Omicron variant of the coronavirus, AIIMS Director Dr Randeep Guleria has said the effectiveness of the vaccines against the new mutant will have to be critically examined since the variant has reportedly got over 30 mutations in the spike protein, giving it the potential to develop an immunoevasion mechanism.

The presence of spike protein facilitates a virus' entry into the host cell and is responsible for making it transmissible and causing infection.

"The new variant of the coronavirus reportedly has got more than 30 mutations at the spike protein region and, therefore, has the potential of developing immunoevasion mechanisms. As most vaccines (work by) forming antibodies against



the spike protein, so many mutations at the spike protein region may lead to a decreased efficacy of Covid-19 vaccines," Dr Guleria said.

In such a scenario, the efficacy of vaccines, including those in use in India, needs to be evaluated "critically," he said. The future course of action

will depend on what more data on its transmissibility, virulence and immunoevasion shows, he said.

The Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomic Consortium INSACOG is closely tracking the new variant of Covid-19 called B.1.1.529 and its presence has not been detected yet in the country, officials have said.

Dr Guleria emphasised the need to be very vigilant and having an aggressive surveillance both for international travellers and in the region where there is a sudden increase in the number of cases.

"Also, we must ask everyone to religiously follow Covid-appropriate behaviour and not let their guards down. Also, it has to be ensured that people get both the doses of the vaccine and those who have not yet taken the jab are encouraged to come forward to take it," he said. The

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BJP sweeps Tripura civic polls

PTI ■ AGARTALA/KOLKATA

Tripura's ruling BJP pulverised Mamata Banerjee's TMC and the Left on Sunday, capturing with surprising ease the Agartala Municipal Corporation and 13 other civic bodies where it now has 329 of the 334 seats.

Contesting its first civic polls after it stormed to power in the northeastern State in 2018, the saffron party steam-rollered a feeble challenge from the Opposition after a vitriol-filled campaign marked by communal tension, clashes and court battles that forced the Supreme Court to intervene and order peaceful polls.

Not a single Opposition candidate could win from any ward of the 51-member Agartala Municipal Corporation all of which went to the BJP.

The saffron party's domination was so complete that it

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Opp miffed as PM skips meet

No tradition of PM attending all-party meeting, says BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday skipped an all-party meeting called by his Government, a day before the start of the Winter Session of Parliament. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) staged walk-out and the Congress-led Opposition demanded a law for the Minimum Support Price (MSP), compensation for the families of 'martyred' farmers and a discussion on fuel prices and inflation.

The violence in Tripura, the Pegasus spying controversy and the safeguards to prevent a potential third Covid-19 wave are on the Opposition's agenda for the Winter Session of Parliament. The session comes barely a few months before the crucial Assembly polls to the five States of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa, Manipur — ruled by the BJP — and Punjab run by the Congress.

The Government is looking for a smooth session of Parliament after it 'bowed-down' to farmers' demands to



Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi holds an all-party meeting ahead of the Winter Session of Parliament in New Delhi on Sunday PTI

scrap the controversial farm laws.

In addition to the withdrawal of the three farm laws and the Cryptocurrency Bill on the first day itself, the Government has listed as many as 26 Bills for introduction in Parliament during the Winter Session, which is set to take place from November 29.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal were present from the Government's side in the meeting.

The Opposition leaders present at the meet included Mallikarjun Kharge,

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TMC to skip Opp meet in Parl called by Cong today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The differences in Opposition ranks, namely between the Congress and the TMC — after the poaching of leaders by the latter from the grand old party — came to the fore on Sunday with the TMC saying it was "disinterested" in coordinating with the Congress during the forthcoming Winter Session of Parliament. The TMC has decided not to attend the meeting of Opposition floor leaders called by the Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge of the Congress on November 29 ahead of Parliament's Winter Session. At the same time, Mamata Banerjee's party maintained that it would cooperate with other Opposition camps on various issues concerning people's interests.

"I think all the Opposition parties should come to the meeting on Monday to create a consensus over the issues to be raised in Parliament. The issues that are on priority shall be discussed in the meeting," Kharge said reacting to the TMC's stand.

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PM to unveil Kashi Vishwanath corridor in December

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will unveil the Kashi Vishwanath corridor in Varanasi during a two-day visit to his Lok Sabha constituency on December 13 and 14. Before that, he is also expected to visit Gorakhpur on December 7 to inaugurate AIIMS, nine hi-tech ICMR laboratories at BRD Medical College, and a fertiliser plant. The fertiliser plant, once operated by a central PSU, was closed for the last three decades.

On December 13, Modi will be inaugurating his dream project, 'Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham', following which each house in Varanasi will receive 'prasad' from the temple as also a book on the project. Also, a programme, 'Bhavya Kashi Divya Kashi', will be organised on both days of his visit.

PM lauds 'collective effort' to rejuvenate Noon river in Jalaun

Lucknow (PNS): Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' session on Sunday, praised people's collective effort to rejuvenate Noon river here in Jalaun district.

"Noon river was on the verge of extinction. The river had virtually turned into a drain, causing an irrigation crisis in the area. It was then that people made the resolution to restore it. A committee was formed in May this year and thousands of villagers and panchayats voluntarily joined the mission to revitalise the river. As a result, the river

stands restored today with 'sabka prayas' (collective effort)," Modi said. "Noon river has been rejuvenated in very little time and at little cost with people's effort. It is a brilliant example of how people's will can do wonders. When we protect nature, it also protects us," he added. Earlier on June 28 last year, Modi had lauded the Uttar Pradesh government for the rejuvenation of Kalyani river in Barabanki.

An official spokesman said here on Sunday that the Yogi Adityanath government has revitalised dozens of rivers since 2018 as part of its vision

to protect the environment. In the financial year 2018-19, the government rejuvenated six rivers, including Aril, Mandakini, Karnavati, Varuna, Morva and Gomti, spanning 94.48 kilometres under MGN-REGA scheme at the cost of Rs

MANN KI BAAT

442.68 lakh, he said.

Similarly, in the financial year 2019-20, 19 rivers spread over 26 districts and spanning 843.84 kilometres were restored at the cost of Rs 3,523.34 lakh. The rivers included Tedhi, Manorama,

Pandu, Varuna, Sasur Khaderi, Sai, Gomti, Aril, Morwa, Madankani, Tamsa, Nad, Karnavati, Ban, Sot, Kali Purvi, Darhi, Ishan, Budhi Ganga, Kunwar, Kayani, Belan, Sirsa, Kivad and Utgan. The restoration work was carried out on a total of 1,410.81 kms, including 919 ponds, 664 drainage networks, while 22.60 lakh saplings were planted. A total of 29.17 lakh man days were also created.

Meanwhile, Yogi thanked the prime minister for his continuous support. "It is because of his support that the double-engine government of UP has been executing public welfare and development schemes so effectively," he said.

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Sewapuri, the country's first model block. Along with this, the PM is expected to interact with farmers on "zero budget" farming and inspect a newly-constructed biogas plant in Shahanshahpur.

In Gorakhpur, the fertiliser plant built by Hindustan Fertilizers and Chemical Ltd will produce 12.7 lakh metric tonnes of neem-coated urea annually. Large-scale production of fertilisers could help reduce the import of fertilisers.

The factory of Fertilizer Corporation of India, established in 1968 at Gorakhpur, was closed after an accident in 1990. After that, no attempt was made by the previous governments to revive the fertiliser plant. After becoming an MP from Gorakhpur in 1998, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath pushed for revival of the fertiliser plant or setting up of a new

plant. After becoming prime minister in 2014, Narendra Modi accorded priority to the demand by Yogi Adityanath and on July 22, 2016, he laid the foundation stone of a new plant.

After Adityanath became the CM in March 2017, the construction work of the new fertiliser factory started. Under this joint venture, about Rs 8,000 crore have been spent. A special rubber dam has also been built in the factory premises at the cost of Rs 30 crore. The installed production capacity of this fertiliser plant is 3,850 MT per day while the annual capacity is 12.7 lakh MT. The fertiliser plant will ensure large-scale supply of neem-coated urea in eastern Uttar Pradesh as well as in adjoining states and even in Nepal. The trial production in the plant will begin on November 30.

Paper leak: Opposition parties corner UP govt

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Opposition parties on Sunday launched a scathing attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Uttar Pradesh government after the Uttar Pradesh Teacher Eligibility Test (UPTET-2021) was cancelled over paper leak.

Making a direct attack on the Yogi government, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra alleged that corruption in recruitment has become the identity of the BJP government.

"Corruption in recruitment and paper leak has become the identity of the BJP government. Today, the hard work of lakhs of youths was ruined due to UPTET paper leak," Priyanka said in a tweet in Hindi.

"Every time a paper is leaked, Yogi Adityanath ji's government saves the big fishes involved in corruption, that is why corruption is at its peak," the Congress general secretary said.

Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav said, "The cancellation of UPTET-2021 over paper leak is an effort to play with the future of 20 lakh unemployed youths. Paper leaks, cancellation of exams and results are common in the BJP government."

"UP is at the peak of educational corruption. There will be revolution for the unemployed and there will be a change in 2022," he said another tweet.

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) president Mayawati, in her tweet said, "The cancellation of today's Uttar Pradesh Teacher Eligibility Test (UPTET) for the recruitment of teachers in UP due to paper leak is a very serious matter in the BJP government regime, just as copying was common in the SP government. It is not appropriate to play with the future of about 20 lakh youths."

"The UP government should take this latest incident very seriously and get a high-level inquiry done at the earliest and ensure strict legal punishment to the culprits and ensure



"CORRUPTION IN RECRUITMENT AND PAPER LEAK HAS BECOME THE IDENTITY OF THE BJP GOVERNMENT. TODAY, THE HARD WORK OF LAKHS OF YOUTHS WAS RUINED DUE TO UPTET PAPER LEAK"

They should also ensure a solid system to conduct this examination as soon as possible as this is the demand of BSP," she added.

State secretary of the Communist Party of India (CPI), Dr Girish expressed concern over the UPTET paper leak and held CM Yogi Adityanath responsible for it.

He said the paper leak was a big blow to the meritorious students. "The BJP claimed to be conducting exams in a transparent manner and also boasted of taking strict measures against those involved in corrupt practices. But the BJP is so engrossed in garnering votes in the coming assembly elections that scams are taking place one after another at present," he said. He added that people were passing through tough times while the UP CM was busy on issuing instructions. He said they demanded stern punishment for the culprits and Rs 50,000 compensation to each UPTET candidate.

Case against firm for supplying poor quality food to school

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Following a stiff protest by students of Rajkiya Ashram Paddhati Girls' School where 18 students had fallen sick after consuming food supplied by a private firm late Saturday night, a case was registered on instructions of District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash on Sunday. The complaint was lodged by principal Vandana Trivedi. The school is located on Mohan road and run by the Social Welfare department. In her complaint, the principal said that the directorate had tasked Krishna Enterprises, Indralok Colony, with providing food to the students. She alleged that the firm provided impure and rotten food due to which 18 girl students fell sick and were hospitalised. "The girls complaints of nausea and pain soon in the stomach after consuming the food," she said. The principal said the college collected a meal

to show that it was of low quality. "The firm was reminded of the supply of low-quality food on several occasions and the social welfare officer had also written warning letters to the firm in February and August in 2019," she recalled. The principal asked the police to send the food samples for a lab test. Meanwhile, the firm in question was removed with immediate effect and arrangements for food supply were ensured on Sunday. The DM directed officials concerned to register a case against the firm. Also, an action was recommended against the staff and officials tasked with checking food quality on a daily basis. A letter to this effect has been sent to the director of the Social Welfare department. The department has sought an explanation from the principal. The guard deployed at the school is also under scanner and the district youth welfare officer has been asked to initiate action in this regard.

RLD 'identifies' 32 seats to contest in alliance with SP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), an ally of the Samajwadi party has identified 32 assembly seats in western Uttar Pradesh for the 2022 Uttar Pradesh elections.

RLD's state unit chief Masood Ahmad said that as of now, 32 seats of western UP have been identified from where its candidates would be contesting. The seats on which RLD wants to field its candidates are spread across Saharanpur, Shamli, Bulandshahr, Hathras, Muzaffarnagar, Aligarh, Moradabad, Meerut, and Mathura, Agra, and Amroha districts.

The RLD leader said that the number of seats on which the party will contest in UP elections 2022 is likely to go up further. Ahmad said that RLD workers want Jayant Singh to contest the UP assembly elections. In an attempt to gain the sympathy of the protesting farmers and the aggrieved families who lost their loved ones during the agitation against the three farm laws, the RLD leader said if kin of the deceased farmers are willing to contest on RLD tickets, the party will take a decision based on the winnability factor. He, however, made it clear that if the RLD-SP alliance wins the UP elections,

Akhilesh Yadav would be the chief minister. Asked whether Jayant Chaudhary will become the deputy chief minister if the SP-RLD alliance wins, Ahmad said, "I don't know whether Jayant Chaudhary will contest or not. Almost three months ago when I asked him if he would contest the 2022 UP assembly elections, he had said 'no'. But in politics, things change fast."

The RLD and the SP are yet to announce a seat-sharing arrangement for the 2022 UP elections. Both the parties are likely to organise a joint rally at Meerut on December 7 to formally announce their alliance.

AAP stages protest against Phaphamau incident

Lucknow (PNS): Workers and leaders of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Sunday staged demonstration across Uttar Pradesh to raise their voice against the incident in which four members of a Dalit family were axed to death in Phaphamau, Prayagraj. One of them, a girl, was also gangraped.

In Lucknow, the demonstration was led by AAP state president (women's wing), Neelam Yadav. Police had a tough time controlling the protesters who tried to breach the security cordons at several places in the city in a bid to march towards Vidhan Bhawan.

Later, the police detained the protesters following a scuffle and took them to Eco Garden Park in Alambagh. The AAP workers raised slogans and alleged that the BJP government promoted casteism and gave a free hand to goons.

Speaking on the occasion, Neelam Yadav said protests were observed across the state, and the workers and leaders vented their anger at the poor law and order situation in UP.

She demanded a speedy probe into the incident and demanded security for the kin of the victims.

Sec 144 imposed in Mathura after Mahasabha threat to install Lord Krishna idol in mosque

Mathura (PTI): The Mathura district administration has imposed prohibitory orders under CrPc section 144 following an announcement by the Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha that it will install a Lord Krishna idol at the deity's "actual birthplace", which it claims is in a mosque close to a prominent temple here.

"Nobody will be allowed to disturb the peace and tranquillity in Mathura," District Magistrate Navneet Singh Chahal said.

The clampdown comes even as another right wing organisation, the Narayani Sena, has said it will take out a march from Vishram Ghat to Sri Krishna Janmasthan, demand-

ing the "removal" of the mosque. Section 144 of the CrPc prohibits the assembly of four or more people in an area.

Police said they have detained Narayani Sena secretary Amit Mishra in Mathura Kotwali, while the outfit claimed its national president Manish Yadav has been detained in Lucknow.

Chahal said he, along with Senior Superintendent of Police Gaurav Grover, reviewed the security around both the religious places, the Katra Keshav Dev temple and the Shahi Idgah.

He said the Mahasabha had requested permission to install the idol at the mosque but it was turned

down. Question of granting permission to any event that may potentially disrupt peace does not arise, Chahal added.

Hindu Mahasabha leader Rajyashri Choudhary had earlier said her organisation will install the idol of Lord Krishna in the Shahi Idgah after a "maha jalabhishek" to "purify" the place on December 6.

The date marks the demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, the site of a temple-mosque dispute, in 1992. The Mahasabha's threat to perform the ritual inside the Shahi Idgah comes at a time when the local courts are hearing a series of petitions seeking the "removal" of the 17th century mosque.

73rd NCC Day celebrated with enthusiasm

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The 73rd NCC Day was celebrated with enthusiasm and fervour on Sunday by Uttar Pradesh NCC Directorate in Lucknow. Various programmes were organised at Kunwar's Global School.

Additional Director General, Uttar Pradesh NCC Directorate, Major General Rakesh Rana was present on the occasion as the chief guest. General manager of Dayal Group of Companies Rajesh Singh was the guest of honour.

The celebrations began with an engaging cultural programme in which the NCC cadets enthralled the audience with their dance and music performances. Earlier, Major General Rakesh Rana was given a guard of honour by the NCC cadets on his

arrival at the ceremony and was welcomed with a bouquet of flowers.

The NCC cadets who performed well in different fields and personnel and officers associated with NCC were honoured with the Chief Minister's gold and silver medals and NCC Director General's citations.

In his address, Major General Rakesh Rana said NCC has been fully committed to shaping the bright future of youths in nation building. "It has been the endeavour of NCC to progressively develop qualities like character building, discipline, leadership spirit etc in the youth of the country," he said. Major General Rana briefed the gathering about various activities and achievements of NCC, including initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic.

He said NCC was started in the year 1948 with the aim of inculcating the spirit of unity and discipline in the youth.

Major General Rana also released the NCC Cadet Journal-2021. Skeet shooting, including models of military weapons and equipment, was showcased during the ceremony.

Brigadier Ravi Kapoor, Commander, Lucknow NCC Group Headquarters, Col Dinesh Kannojia, Commanding Officer of 19 UP NCC Girls Battalion, senior officers of NCC Directorate and commanding officers of other NCC battalions, civilian guests and a large number of NCC cadets were present on the occasion.

The celebrations ended with a rendition of the NCC song.

Youth killed in road mishap

Lucknow (PNS): A youth was killed in a road mishap in Gomtinagar police station area on Sunday morning. The victim was identified as Arvind Rawat (21) of Vishal Khand. As per reports, Arvind was going towards Ambedkar crossing by a bike. When he reached Vipulam crossing, a speeding car hit his bike from behind around 10:50 am on Sunday.

He sustained grievous injuries and was rushed to RML hospital where he was declared brought dead. His mother Sunita said some of the commuters noted down the registration number of the car and gave it to police. A case was registered in this connection.

FOUND HANGING

A man was found hanging at his house in Sarojininagar police station area on Sunday. The deceased was identified as Chandan Sahu (36) of Badali Kheda locality in the area. He was a tempo driver. Reports said that as Chandan did not wake up on Sunday morning, his family members found the door of his room bolted from inside. Later, he was found hanging," Chandan's cousin Jeewat Sahu said. Preliminary probe revealed that Chandan was staying all alone these days after his wife had gone to his in-laws' house in Bihar. It was not clear why he ended his life as no suicide note was recovered from the place.

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Lucknow
Dated: November 29, 2021 Regional Director, Uttar Pradesh

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शैक्षणिक वर्ष 2022 की भारतीय प्रशासनिक सेवा आई.ए.एस. परीक्षाओं हेतु उ0प्र0 उर्दू अकादमी, लखनऊ द्वारा संचालित उर्दू आई.ए.एस. स्टाडी सेंटर के छात्रों के मस के लिये इस नोटिस में निर्धारित आवश्यक मापदण्ड को पूर्ण करने वाली फर्म से उ0प्र0 उर्दू अकादमी द्वारा तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय आफलाइन खुली निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं।

1. धरोहर राशि की (EMD)	₹ 1,00,000/-
2. गैर वापसी निविदा शुल्क	₹ 5,000/- (Non Refundable)
3. निविदा डाउन लोड करने का विवरण:- eTender Procurement Portal (https://etender.up.nic.in) Or U.P. Urdu Akademi Website (www.upurduakademi.in)	27 नवम्बर, 2021
4. निविदा जमा करने की अन्तिम तिथि और समय	07 दिसम्बर, 2021 1:00 P.M.
5. निविदा खुलने की तिथि और समय	07 दिसम्बर, 2021 4:00 P.M.
6. निविदा भेजने का पूर्ण पता :-	सचिव, उ0प्र0 उर्दू अकादमी, विभूति खण्ड गोमती नगर, लखनऊ-226 010. (उ0प्र0)

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POSSESSION NOTICE (for immovable property) APPENDIX-IV (Rule - 8(1))

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised officer of the UCO Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notice dated (details mentioned here in below) calling upon the borrower(s)/guarantor(s) (details mentioned herein below) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being (details mentioned herein below) within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. (The borrower(s)/guarantor(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower(s)/guarantor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act with Rule 8 of the said rules on this (details mentioned here in below) of the year (details mentioned here in below). The borrower(s)/guarantor(s) in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the UCO Bank for an amount of (details mentioned herein below). The borrower's, legal heir's and/or guarantor's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section 8 of section 13 of the act in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Sl. No.	Name & Address of Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) and Name of Related Branch	Description of Property & Possession Date	Balance O/S (Rs.) & Demand Notice Date
1.	Borrower(s): Mr. Prabhshish Chakraborty S/o Late Shri Pramod kumar Chakraborty and Mr. Devashish Chakraborty S/o Late Shri Pramod Kumar Chakraborty, Guarantor: Mrs. Krishna Chakraborty W/o Mr Prabhshish Chakraborty and Mrs. Rakhi Chakraborty W/o Mr. Devashish Chakraborty	All that part and parcel of the property consists of Land & Building measuring 100.33 Sq. Mtr. as per Bahi No. 1, Zild No. 8027, Page No. 211 to 254, Sl. No. 7981 registered on 30.09.2016 at Sub-Registrar-III Sadar Agra situated at R/o Part of Survey No 259,263, Ramji Vihar, Mauja Ukharra Tehsil & District Agra standing in the name of Mr Prabhshish Chakraborty S/o Late Shri Pramod kumar Chakraborty and Mr Devashish Chakraborty S/o Late Shri Pramod Kumar Chakraborty resident of 31/35/7 MP -12, Kedar Nagar Ukharra Road Rajpur Chungi, Agra Details of Boundaries (As per Deed) East: Plot No A-2, West: Plot no A-4, North: 20 feet Road and Exit, South: Other's land Date of Possession: 23.11.2021	Rs. 19,68,142.72 (Rupees Nineteen Lakh Sixty Eight Thousand One Hundred Forty Two and Paise Seventy Two Only) as on 11.07.2021 (inclusive of interest upto 31.08.2020) plus further interest thereon at the contractual rate, costs, charges and expenses etc. till date of payment. Date of Demand Notice: 12.07.2021
2.	Borrower(s): Mr. Murad Ali S/o Late Shri Ramzan Ali and Mrs. Kamrun Nishan W/o Mr Shri Murad Ali	All that part and parcel of the property consists of Land & Building measuring 83.61 Sq. Mtr. as per Bahi No. 1, Zild No. 7297, Page No. 45 to 62, Sl. No. 10868 registered on 29.10.2010 at Sub-Registrar II Agra situated at Plot no 83 Rahul Nagar Colony Mauza Boda , Tehsil & District Agra standing in the name of Mr Murad Ali S/o Late Shri Ramzan Ali resident of 6/20, Khandari, Tehsil & District Agra Details of Boundaries (As per Deed) East: Plot No. 84, West: Plot No. 82, North: Property others, South: 20 Feet Wide Road and exit Date of Possession : 23.11.2021	Rs. 6,50,044.06 (Rupees Six Lakh Fifty thousand four hundred and paise Six Only) as on 11.07.2021 (inclusive of interest upto 31.10.2020) plus further interest thereon at the contractual rate, costs, charges and expenses etc. till date of payment. Date of Demand Notice: 12.07.2021

Date : 29.11.2021 Place : Agra Authorized Officer (UCO Bank)

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Lucknow only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.

Omicron threat: Preventive measures ramped up

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Scaling up preventive measures amidst the surge in Covid due to the new coronavirus variant 'Omicron' detected in countries like Botswana, South Africa and Hong Kong, the Uttar Pradesh government, as per the guidelines of the Centre, has intensified screening and strengthened surveillance at the airports.

To guard against the new variant of SARS CoV2 (B.1.1.529), which has been classified as a 'variant of concern' by the WHO, the state government has taken prompt action by putting the health teams in all the 75 districts on alert. "UP has been maintaining control over the Covid situation fairly well. While there is no situation at present which warrants panic or worry, our citizens should be more mindful about maintaining all universal precautions against Covid — masking up, physical distancing and avoiding crowds," a government official.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has already asked the officials to make special efforts to improve surveillance with a focus on airports to ensure that the situation remains normal, State Surveillance Officer Vikasendu Agarwal said that a meeting has been held with DSOs, CMOs,

Health dept to release guidelines for international travellers shortly

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Health department will be releasing detailed guidelines for the international travellers shortly in view of the Omicron variant of coronavirus. Director General, Medical and Health Services, Ved Vrat Singh said the state government was in consultation with the Centre for the purpose.

He said the guidelines would be released on what would be the premises to enter the state for international travellers. Aspects like vaccination, RT-PCR tests and quarantine period etc will be taken up and the guidelines will be released either on Monday or Tuesday. "Discussions are on with the Central government because the main guidelines have to be issued by them. We will release out guidelines in accordance with them," he

DIOs and health experts of 75 districts of the state. Guidelines have been issued by the state government to ensure thorough screening of travellers who have returned from

said. He added that all the details and addresses of the international travellers would be shared with CMOs and they would be in touch with the visitors.

Singh said they have scaled up testing in view of the Omicron variant. "Our target was 2 lakh tests per day but it was going down, so we gave instructions for the testing to be increased in all the districts. There is a fixed target for each district," he said.

Regarding the threat perception of the new variant, he said nothing could be said as of now. "As we have seen in the first and second waves, nothing is predictable about coronavirus. However, now things have changed and majority of people have taken at least one vaccine jab," he added.

"Nobody knows much about the new variant, how will it spread, what will be its

infectivity and immune response. International organisations and WHO are studying the variant," he pointed out.

Meanwhile, DM Abhishek Prakash called for an urgent meeting at the Lucknow airport. He said the infection through this variant started in South African countries and hence airports have to be the focus areas to prevent the spread of infection.

Nearly nine flights land at the Lucknow airport daily from Dubai, Sharjah, Abu Dhabi, Muscat, Oman, Riyadh, Jeddah, Kuwait and Jordan, bringing 1,800 international travellers.

The DM issued instructions for free-of-cost RT-PCR tests of all these passengers and told the officials to ensure that all the details are noted down. He also said that the 15-day travel history of these people must also be noted.

Lucknow and Kanpur. The officers are constantly in touch with the districts regarding this. Along with this, a list of people who have been fully vaccinated has also been

sought. Former head of KGMU's department of Pulmonary Medicine and chairman of the department of Pulmonary Medicine, ERA's Medical College, Prof Rajendra Prasad said the state government is geared up for the new challenges with special emphasis on improving health infrastructure. In a short span, the government has equipped the state with health facilities by setting up new oxygen plants, new medical colleges, increasing the number of beds, recruiting doctors and strengthening CHCs and PHCs in view of any future challenges.

Meanwhile, of the 1,46,396 samples tested in UP the last 24 hours, only nine tested positive for Covid-19, as a result of which the test positivity rate (TPR) slumped to 0.01 percent in the state. In the same period, nine patients recovered from the infection. The active cases have drastically reduced from a high of 3,10,783 in April to 83 now.

Besides, over 15.90 crore vaccine doses have been administered in the state so far. The pace of vaccination has made UP the top state with the largest population in the country. On the other hand, Maharashtra lags behind with only 11.18 crore doses given so far.

81,000 UPTET candidates in Lko left high and dry

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Over 81,000 candidates, who were scheduled to appear for UPTET-2021 in Lucknow were left disappointed when the exam was cancelled at 10:15 am on Sunday following reports of paper leak. Approximately 21 lakh candidates were scheduled to take the exam across the state.

Basic Education Minister Satish Dwivedi said that the papers of both shifts were cancelled because they had received information regarding paper leak. "The examinations will be held after a month and no additional fee will be taken from the candidates. An FIR has been lodged and the probe is being handed to the STF," he said. When the exam was cancelled, question papers had already been distributed and the candidates had started writing at their respective centres. Teachers Eligibility Test (TET) is held for candidates who are aspiring to teach students of classes 1-8. Clearing this exam is mandatory for all those who want to become primary school teachers.

District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash said new dates would be announced soon



and the candidates were informed about it by the officers present there. The ADM, Administration, said soon after the exam was cancelled, messages were posted on the official WhatsApp groups and the DIOs, his team and static magistrates were informed.

DIO Amar Kant Singh said that the exam was scheduled to be held at 99 centres in Lucknow and 81,000 were slated to appear for it. "We received the information when the first shift was about to begin. As many as 49,000 candidates were slated to appear for the exam in the first shift in Lucknow while the remaining in the second

shift," he said. On whether there was any untoward incident due to the cancellation, he said no such incident was reported from anywhere. However, many students expressed disappointment. The DIOs said that currently there are over 2500 basic education schools in the district. The exams are held twice every year but because of corona, it was going to be held after a gap. UPSRTC officials said that following the tweet by CM Yogi Adityanath, the candidates would be allowed to travel free of cost from their districts to the respective exam centres when fresh dates were announced.

CM to name 4 tiger cubs during zoo's Centenary Day celebrations today



Walkathon organised by American Chambers of Commerce

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Adityanath Yogi will be naming four tiger cubs during the Centenary Day celebrations of Lucknow zoo on Monday. Zoo director RK Singh said these tiger cubs are ten months old and were brought from Pilibhit.

"These cubs had been orphaned when their mother was killed in an accident and were barely 10-15 days old when they were brought to the zoo. When their mother died, the signs of tiger paws were found around the cubs and a search was carried out for them. The cubs were found after nine days but they were still alive after which they were brought to Lucknow zoo," he said, adding that these are three male and one female cubs. Yogi will also unveil the 'Shatabdi Stambh'. A postal stamp will also be released on the occasion and a 'smarika' will also be released. All the former directors and keepers will share their experiences.

A walkathon was organised on Sunday by American Chambers of Commerce, which was inaugurated by Forest Minister Dara Singh Chauhan. The 6-km walkathon, which started from 1090 crossing, witnessed the participation of 550 students holding placards with 'Save animals and adopt them' written on them along with forest officials.

Amongst the major attractions of Lucknow zoo is the recently set up Butterfly Park, which was inaugurated by Dara Singh Chauhan in 2018. The park is on two acres and hosts plants of more than 80 species. "As there are different host plants for different types of butterflies, about 28 types of butterflies are presently seen in this park. Information about butterflies is given through various hoardings inside the park. Butterflies are the most important component of the environment as they play the most important role in pollination after bees, due to which the yield of grains and fruits etc is increased. The flowers are indicative of a healthy environment," officials said.

Another attraction is the Wildlife Hospital which is equipped with modern facilities. "It has four veterinary doctors. Out of these, the senior most wildlife practitioners have been working for more than 25 years. It has an ultrasound, X-ray, pathology, surgery room and 29 ventilated indoor wards to keep rescued animals," they said.



To spread awareness among general public regarding the importance of voting, District Magistrate Abhishek Prakash, who is also the district election officer, flagged off four LED EVM and VVPAT awareness vans from Hazratganj crossing on Sunday.

गौरवशाली 100 वर्ष

1921 2021

नवाब वाजिद अली शाह

प्राणि उद्यान, लखनऊ

शताब्दी समारोह के अवसर पर

शताब्दी स्तम्भ का अनावरण

तथा

डाक टिकट एवं शताब्दी स्मारिका का विमोचन

एवं

वन्यजीव संरक्षण में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान देने वाले महानुभावों का सम्मान व विभिन्न प्रतियोगिताओं में प्रथम स्थान प्राप्त छात्र-छात्राओं को पुरस्कार वितरण

योगी आदित्यनाथ

मुख्यमंत्री, उत्तर प्रदेश द्वारा

गस्मिमयी उपस्थिति

दारा सिंह चौहान

मंत्री, वन एवं पर्यावरण तथा जन्तु उद्यान उत्तर प्रदेश

अनिल शर्मा

राज्य मंत्री, वन एवं पर्यावरण तथा जन्तु उद्यान उत्तर प्रदेश

दिनांक : 29 नवम्बर, 2021 | समय : अपराह्न 4:00 बजे | स्थान : बारादरी लॉन, नवाब वाजिद अली शाह प्राणि उद्यान, लखनऊ

पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

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सूचना एवं जनसम्पर्क विभाग, उत्तर प्रदेश

CISH promotes leafy veggies with demonstration plots

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Leafy vegetables are abundant during winters. Also known as saag, these were once considered a poor man's staple diet, but as public awareness grew, they became more important to everyone and are now consumed on a regular basis for a healthy lifestyle.

Many cold-loving leafy vegetables were introduced and demonstrated by ICAR-CISH in Lucknow. Kashmiri haag, Srinagar bunching onion, cool climate spinach, and more than a dozen lettuce varieties were evaluated.

CISH director Shailendra Rajan said that SR Singh investigated the antioxidant and nutritive value of lettuce varieties.

"Many of these vegetables were grown in hydroponics at the institute. Leafy vegetables were successfully grown for rural farmer demonstrations. Farmers were given the seeds of these vegetables in order to

popularise them in rural areas. Demonstration plots for rural farmers have been established at Rehmankhara. People come to these demonstration plots to learn how to grow these vegetables. Dr SR Singh of the institute is working to make these vegetables more popular in Lucknow," the CISH director said.

He pointed out that leafy vegetables have a lot of variety in winters.

"The market offers a wide range of colours, from dark green to red. They are more appealing because they have a variety of aromas and tastes. Consumption of these foods, which are high in dietary fibre, aids digestion," he added.

However, he pointed out that in summers and rainy season, leafy vegetables are not as safe as they are in winters.

"Because of the low temperature, insect pests are unable to attack in large numbers due to their low population in the field. As a result, these vegeta-

bles are safe until the first week of April. The quality of leafy vegetables is excellent during the winters and one can feel the difference between the taste of spinach available during the rainy season and that during winter months. Spinach is difficult to grow outside of the winter months because the leaves are damaged by insect pests and the produce is not suitable for good markets. Pesticides are not used by farmers to protect their crops from insect pests," he elaborated.

Rajan said that in addition to being pesticide-free, the crop is more nutritious than crops grown in other seasons.

"In winters, the slow growth rate of leafy vegetables gives them an excellent flavour. These vegetables can be stored for longer periods, as evidenced by the fact that cabbage grown in the summer can be stored for longer periods than cabbage grown in winters," he added.

Two former UP ministers, three ex-MLAs join Bhartiya Janta Party

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Two former Uttar Pradesh ministers, three ex-MLAs and several leaders from other parties joined the BJP here on Sunday.

UP BJP chief Swatantra Dev Singh inducted them into the party and said their joining will strengthen the BJP.

Among the former ministers who joined the party was Jainarayan Tiwari from Sultanpur, according to a statement.

A three-time minister, he has been associated with the Congress and the Samajwadi Party in the past.

Tiwari was close to former UP chief minister Sriprati Mishra.

In an apparent reference to the Congress, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had recently alluded to the removal of Mishra from the chief minister's post in the 1980s.

Vijay Mishra, who was an SP MLA from Ghazipur and a former minister, also joined the BJP. The former MLAs who joined the ruling party are Ram Shiromani Shukla (Pratapgarh), Madan Gautam (Auraiya) and Abhimanyu Pratap Singh (Ayodhya).

Fulfil all promises in winter session of Parl: Maya to Centre

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Supremo Mayawati asked the BJP government at the Centre to fulfil all the promises made by them during the winter session of Parliament beginning Monday.

In a series of tweets on Sunday, Mayawati wrote, "The Winter Session of Parliament is starting from tomorrow. During this, the government should not forget its promises made to the public on the 'Constitution Day' three days back."

"They should fulfil their promises properly. What will



be the stand of the government towards all the issues of the farmers is also a concern for all and everyone will also keep an eye on it," she said.

Mayawati said all the BSP MPs have also been directed to raise important issues of the country and public interest in both the Houses of the

Parliament with full preparation under the rules.

"It would be better if the government also does its bit by taking the House in full confidence before taking any decision," she suggested.

She further said, "At the same time, non-assessment of its impact while enacting laws on issues of wider public interest like agricultural laws has become an important question to which the judiciary is repeatedly pointing."

"The Centre must pay attention to this too so that the country can be saved from further unnecessary confrontation over new laws," she further suggested.

The others who joined the BJP are Manoj Divakar, Jagdev Kureel (Kanpur), Ashok Kumar Singh, Dharmendra Pandey (Unnao) and Akhilesh Verma (Lakhimpur Kheri).

Laxmikant Bajpai, the chairman of the party's joining committee, and Deputy Chief Minister Dinesh Sharma were also present.

Meanwhile, three BSP leaders, including a former OSD of ex-Uttar Pradesh CM Mayawati, joined the Congress here on Sunday.

They joined the Congress in the presence of state party chief Ajay Kumar Lallu, a statement said.

The Congress said Ganga Ram, who has been the Officer on Special Duty (OSD) to BSP supreme and former chief min-

ister Mayawati, joined the party. The other two who joined the Congress are Shiv Pura Singh Chauhan from Ghazipur and Rajyavardhan Singh 'Raju' from Hardoi.

Speaking on this occasion, Lallu said the central government for the past seven-and-half years and the UP government for the past four-and-half years have created an environ-

ment of fear and apprehension among people because of their wrong policies.

The announcement of the repeal of three farm laws, reducing the excise duty on the petroleum products and advertisement of jobs are a conspiracy by the BJP to once again divert the attention of the public and gain votes, he alleged.

उत्तर प्रदेश उर्दू अकादमी
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ई-निविदा नम्बर : UA/2021/02
तिथि :

1. अनुमानित लागत (GST रहित)	₹ 45,00,000/-
2. धरोहर राशि की (EMD)	₹ 1,00,000/-
3. गैर वापसी निविदा शुल्क	₹ 5,000/- (Non Refundable)
4. निविदा डाउन लोड करने का विवरण- eTender Procurement Portal (https://etender.up.nic.in Or U.P. Urdu Akademi Website (www.upurduakademii.in))	27 नवम्बर, 2021
5. निविदा जमा करने की अन्तिम तिथि और समय	10 दिसम्बर, 2021 2:00 P.M.
6. निविदा की खुलने की तिथि और समय	10 दिसम्बर, 2021 4:00 P.M.
7. निविदा भेजने का पूर्ण पता :-	सचिव, उ०प्र० उर्दू अकादमी, विमुक्ति खण्ड गोमती नगर, लखनऊ-226 010. (उ०प्र०)

'Mizoram committed to peace'

New Delhi (PNS): The Mizoram Government led by Chief Minister Zoramthanga is committed to maintain peace and tranquillity with all its neighbouring states, a senior official said on Sunday. K Lalsawmvela, adviser (Tech) to the Mizoram chief minister, also made it clear that Zoramthanga had never said about extending fencing along the Mizoram-Assam interstate border as no fencing exists there.

The Mizoram government led by Hon'ble Chief Minister Zoramthanga has always been committed to maintain peace and tranquillity with all our neighbouring states and countries," Lalsawmvela said in a statement. Referring to a report which quoted the chief minister as saying that "we will try to increase our fencing all along..", the adviser to the Chief Minister said.

CITYBRIEFS



'FANTASM-2021' COMES TO A CLOSE

The three-day International Cosplay Competition, 'Fantasm 2021' organised by City Montessori School, Rajendra Nagar Campus I, came to a close on Sunday. The winners of various competitions were announced in a scintillating educational-cultural closing ceremony. Student team of BCM Arya School, Ludhiana, won the Overall Championship while Vidya Bharati Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Jamshedpur, ended up as the runner-up. Students from schools of Australia, USA, Russia, Nepal, UAE and India partici-

pated in various competitions in the three-day event. CMS, Gombi Nagar Campus I, won the first prize in La Imagination (poster making) while BCM Arya School, Ludhiana, and CMS Gombi Nagar Campus I, were declared the joint winners in the Super Actores (role play) competition.

LUCKNOW VETERANS WIN

Lucknow Veterans defeated

ed Unnao Veteran by 54 runs in the opening match of the 23rd UP Veteran's Cricket Championship at GP ground on Sunday. Battin first, Lucknow team piled up 165 runs in allotted 20 overs with Mohd Riaz (81) being the top scorer.

In reply, Unnao were bundled out for 111 runs. Priyesh Bhaskar claimed four scalps and was declared man of the match.



State Bank of India, Lucknow Circle, organised a 'Biketathon' on Sunday to spread health awareness

4 LU students selected in campus placement

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Four students from the Faculty of Engineering, Lucknow University, were selected in Wipro during a campus placement. Lucknow University spokesperson Durgesh Srivastava said Siddhartha Singh, Sumedha Singh, Nikhil Agnihotri and Rishabh Agarwal were recruited as project engineers by Wipro Ltd on November 27.

Earlier on November 21, 20 students were placed in the same company. So far, 24 students have been placed in Wipro. The placement drive was conducted under Dr Himanshu Pandey from the Faculty of Engineering and Vice-Chancellor Prof AK Rai," Srivastava said.

Meanwhile, on the occasion of NCC Day, DGNCC announced the award of DG NCC commendation card for the year 2021. This prestigious award will be given to Capt Kiran Lata Dangwal of 63 UP BN NCC, University of Lucknow, for her excellent and commendable work in NCC.

"She strikes a balance between NCC and university tasks intelligently. She is a mentor and role model for cadets. Due to her commitment and motivation, her cadets have been selected as an officer in the Indian Army, and many cadets have also been conferred prestigious medals," Srivastava said.

He added that she also conducted many seminars/webinars at the university and national level on topics of national interests and the same were attended by NCC officers, academic luminaries and cadets.

कार्यालय मुख्य चिकित्सा अधिकारी, बाराबंकी

पत्रांक: एन०एच०एम०/मा०सं०/पीएमएवीवाई/2021-22/ दिनांक: नवम्बर 2021

प्रेस विज्ञापित

अधिकांश निदेशक,सिफसा/मिशन निदेशक, राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य मिशन के पत्र दिनांक: 21.10.2020 के अनुपालन एवं जिला स्वास्थ्य समिति द्वारा अनुमोदनोपरान्त प्रधानमंत्री मातृ वंदना योजना के अन्तर्गत सविदा जनपदीय कार्यक्रम समन्वयक-01 पद (अनारक्षित) नियत मानदेय रु 35000/- प्रति माह एवं सविदा जनपदीय कार्यक्रम सहायक-01 पद (अनारक्षित) नियत मानदेय रु 20,000/- हेतु दिनांक: 01 दिसम्बर 2021 से दिनांक: 15 दिसम्बर 2021 को सांय 05 बजे तक ई-मेल आई०डी० pmmvbybbk@gmail.com पर आवेदन पत्र प्रस्तुत कर सकते हैं। नियत समय एवं तिथि के उपरान्त प्राप्त किसी भी आवेदन पर विचार नहीं किया जायेगा।

नोट 1. सविदा आवेदन चयन/नियुक्ति की विस्तृत शर्तें एवं आवेदन पत्र का प्रारूप NIC की वेबसाइट barabanki.nic.in पर देखी जा सकती है तथा आवेदन पत्र डाउनलोड कर सकता है।

2. पूर्व में प्रकाशित विज्ञापन संख्या: एन०एच०एम०/मा०सं०/पीएमएवीवाई/2020-21/20648, दिनांक: 21 नवम्बर 2020 को निरस्त किया जाता है। वर्तमान में अभ्यर्थी को नया आवेदन करना होगा पूर्व प्रेषित आवेदन पत्र पर कोई विचार नहीं किया जायेगा।

मुख्य चिकित्सा अधिकारी/सचिव, जिला स्वास्थ्य समिति, बाराबंकी।

अपर मुख्य चिकित्सा अधिकारी, आर०सी०एच०,बाराबंकी।

उ०प्र० 170303 दिनांक 27.11.2021 विज्ञापन वेबसाइट www.upgov.nic.in पर उपलब्ध है।

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

Letter No. : 8266/ Nivida-01/2021 Dated : 27/11/2021
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING (E-Tendering)

E-TENDER NOTICE
The superintending Engineer, 1st Circle, Public Works Department, Almora invites tender through E-Tendering (Two Bid System) on behalf of Honourable Governor of Uttarakhand for following works. All other information will be available from dated 30/11/2021 & onwards on website <http://www.uktenders.gov.in>

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Cost of Tender Form	Earnest Money (Rupee in lakh)	Validity of Tender	Time of Completion	Contractor's Category of Registration for tendering
1	Construction of 18Mt. Span Single Lane Motor bridge at Km. 2 in Basgaon Darman Motor Road from Jyoli Basar - Khunt Motor Road Distt- Almora.	Rs. 5000 + 18% GST	3.22 Lakh	120 Days	15 Months	Category "B" & above (Bridge works)
2	Improvement and Damarikaran work of Shitlakhet- Kakrighat (Matela) Motor Road under Someshwar Constituency in Distt. Almora Under C.M. Ghoshana No. 200/2021. Length 5.00 Km.	Rs. 5000 + 18% GST	5.77 Lakh	60 Days	15 Months	Category "B" & above (Road Works)
3	Construction of Chitaipant Tiraha to Haridatt Pethshali Link Road in District Almora under State Sector (Part-I & II work). Length Km. 1 to 3=3.00 Km.	Rs. 5000 + 18% GST	3.20 Lakh	120 Days	15 Months	Category "B" & above (Road Works)
4	Improvement and Damarikaran work in Chabisa- Bagwalipokhar Motor Road in Constituency Dwarahat Under State Sector in Distt- Almora (Length 6.20 Km.).	Rs. 5000 + 18% GST	6.75 Lakh	60 Days	18 Months	Category "A" & above (Road Works)

Wanted scamster lands in police net

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A team led by Hazratganj Inspector Shyam Babu Shukla claimed to have nabbed a scamster, wanted in a multi-crore scam in Lucknow, and was on police radar for a long time. The accused was identified as Abhay Kushwaha (44) aka Nirmal Kushwaha of Jankipuram. He was named in 36 cases of fraud and was also wanted in a case registered in Hazratganj.

In the Hazratganj case, Naveen Gupta of Indiranagar had accused Kushwaha of duping him of Rs 65 lakh on the pretext of investment in prop-

erties. Gupta said Kushwaha and his aides had taken money from him to invest in a company called Infinity World Infra venture Private Ltd. Naveen alleged that Kushwaha did not give him the plot/shop as promised, and also refused to return the money.

The Hazratganj inspector said he, along with a team, was on patrol when an informer tipped him off about Kushwaha's presence in Rajajipuram. "We worked on the lead and Kushwaha was cornered near the railway underpass in the area. He was later apprehended by the police team," the inspector said.

He said Kushwaha was named in 35 cases of fraud registered at Vibhuti Khand police station. "We arrested him from the railway underpass under Talkatora police station. Kushwaha is bearing a cash prize of Rs 25,000 in his name in view of the number of crime cases registered against him," he said.

Kushwaha said he and his men made 10,000 gullible people invest in 'Hello Ride' and 'Infinity World Infra Venture Private Ltd' companies. He said he pocketed Rs 61 crore from the investors and never returned anything to them. Meanwhile, the Mall police

have failed to work out the murder of father of a sub-inspector even as three months have elapsed. Now, the family of the victim has written to the UP chief minister, pleading that the probe be assigned to CB-CID. The incident had taken place in Atari village of Mall where Tej Narayan aka Teja Maharaj was gunned down in around midnight on August 24. He was a wholesaler of grains. The then SHO had claimed that Tej Narayan was struck by lightning. Later, senior officers had to intervene to mollify the bereaved family. The SHO in question was also shunted.

If there's no law on MSP, expect tractor morcha in Delhi on Jan 26: Tikait to Govt

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Continuing his aggressive posturing over the various demands of the agitating farmers, Bharat Kisan Union (BKU) leader Rakesh Tikait on Sunday warned the Government that if it did not mend ways and bring in a law guaranteeing Minimum Support Price (MSP) to farmers, the farmers' unions would not have any alternative but to organise tractors' morcha in the national Capital on the next Republic Day.

On a day when a Kisan Mahapanchayat called for the defeat of the ruling BJP in the forthcoming State Assembly elections and other local body polls, Tikait said: "Despite having been called traitors, we have raised the farmers' demands... Declare us as traitors and put us behind the bars. Let the Government mend its ways.. Let them know that their intimidating tactics will not work with us. Farmers have suffered a great deal during the last one year. Let

them bring in a law guaranteeing Minimum Support Price (MSP) to farmers. Otherwise, January 26 is not far away, our four lakh tractors and farmers are very much around".

A day after the Samyukta Kisan Morcha deferred its tractor morcha to Parliament on the first day of the winter session after urging Prime Minister Narendra Modi to fulfil their six demands, the farmers and workers attending a Kisan Mahapanchayat organised by the Samyukta Shetkari Kamgar Morcha (SSKM) at Azad Maidan in south Mumbai celebrated its year-long agitation which saw the Government announce its decision to repeal the three controversial laws.

The farmer leaders vowed to continue their agitation till the Government settled their remaining demands. Apart from a law guaranteeing MSP for farmers, with withdrawal of the Electricity Amendment Bill, removal from the Cabinet and arrest of "butcher of Lakhimpur



Kheri) Union Minister Ajay Mishra Teni, repeal of the four Labour Codes, an end to sale of public undertakings through privatisation, halving of the price of diesel, petrol, cooking gas and other essential commodities, doubling the days of work and wages under MNREGA and extending it to the urban areas.

In a call given by the farmers' joint body that may be a major cause of concern for the ruling BJP ahead of the crucial Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Punjab, the Mahapanchayat called for the defeat of the BJP

in the forthcoming State Assembly elections in three states and local body elections in Maharashtra.

Thousands of farmers, workers, agricultural labourers, women, youth and students had turned out at the Kisan Mazdoor Mahapanchayat held at Azad Maidan in south Mumbai on Sunday on the occasion of the death anniversary of renowned social reformer Mahatma Jotirao Phule. Apart from Tikait, SKM leaders Dr Darshan Pal, Hannan Mollah, Yudhvir Singh, Tajinder Singh Virk, Atul Kumar Anjaan, Rajaram Singh, Yogendra Yadav, Jasbir Kaur Nat, Ashish Mittal,

Dr Ashok Dhawale, B Venkat, Medha Patkar, Jayant Patil, Pratibha Shinde, Narasayya Adam, J P Gavit, Dr Ajit Nawale addressed the Kisan Mahapanchayat.

The Shaheed Kalash Yatra of the Lakhimpur Kheri martyrs, which began from Pune on October 27, traversed over 30 districts of Maharashtra in the last one month, visited the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji, the Chaitiya Bhoomi of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, the memorial to Shaheed Babu Genu and the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Mumbai on Saturday. On Sunday morning, the Shaheed Kalash Yatra visited Hutatma Chowk, which commemorates the 106 martyrs of the Samyukta Maharashtra Struggle in the 1950s, immersed the ashes of the martyrs in the Arabian Sea off the Gateway of India in a special programme at 4 pm, before descending Azad Maidan in south Mumbai for the K i s a n Mahapanchayat.

Yogi for grand opening of Kashi Vishwanath Corridor

PNS ■ VARANASI

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, during his two-day visit to Varanasi, reviewed the preparations for month-long 'Bhava Kashi Divya Kashi' programme proposed to be organised from December 13 to January 14 next year during the proposed inauguration of Shri Kashi Vishwanath Corridor, the dream project of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Later, the chief minister made an on-site inspection of Shri Kashi Vishwanath Corridor on Saturday night to see the progress of the ongoing construction works after offering prayers at Kashi Vishwanath temple. He directed the officials to complete the remaining work on a war footing. Earlier, he also offered prayers at Kal Bhairav temple.

During the review meeting at Circuit House, the chief minister directed the officials and public representatives to ensure distribution of special prasad of Baba Vishwanath and coffee-table book highlighting the history of the temple to every house of the city from December 14 to 16 after inauguration of the corridor on December 13.

He also directed the officials to ensure live telecast of the

CM: Complete work at Seer Govardhan on time

Varanasi (PNS): Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath made an on-site inspection of tourism development works at Sant Ravidas temple area located at Seer Govardhan on the second and last day of his visit here on Sunday. The tourism development works costing Rs 151.4 crore are underway in Seer Govardhan as per the announcement of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. After reaching there, the chief minister visited Sant Ravidas temple and offered prayers. Then he inquired about the arrangements.

Later, he reached the project/expansion work site near the temple and inspected the Langar Bhawan constructed by the Rajkiya Nirman Nigam. While giving strict instructions to the officials concerned, Yogi asked them to complete the work within the stipulated time. "There should be no delay of any kind in the work," he warned the officials.

During the inspection, UP



CM Yogi Adityanath visiting Sant Ravidas temple in Varanasi on Sunday.

inauguration of the corridor and offering of prayers by the prime minister at garbhagriha (sanctum sanctorum) at public places.

"Before the inauguration of Shri Kashi Vishwanath Corridor, the people of both urban and rural areas of the dis-

trict should be appealed to light lamps on their homes after launching special cleanliness drive to make a festive atmosphere," the chief minister said, adding that 352 years after the revival of Kashi Vishwanath temple by Ahilyabai Holkar in 1669, Modi had renovated the

dharm (corridor) with a resolve. He instructed the officials to make all the roads of the district pothole-free and to launch a special cleanliness drive prior to the proposed inauguration of the corridor.

Yogi also stressed on the need for special decoration and

lighting of the main buildings along with the Ganga ghats between December 12 and 14 and making a provision for permanent lighting of government buildings.

He directed Varanasi Divisional Commissioner Deepak Agrawal to ensure the

arrangement of digital donation in Shri Kashi Vishwanath temple and also to prepare a digital map of the entire Kashi.

"Kirtan mandalis should be organised in every ward for kirtan-bhajans in the morning and these kirtan mandalis would be honoured by the

Minister of State for Tourism, Religious Affairs and Protocol, Dr Neelkanth Tiwari, apprised the chief minister in detail about the tourism development works being done in Seer Govardhan and assured him of completion of all the works there on time. District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma informed the chief minister that 60 per cent of the land had been acquired, where the park was to be developed.

Along with this, a bronze statue of Sri Guru Ravidas will be installed. Besides, three routes for easy traffic movement of followers and visitors, from Trauma Centre, Langar Bhawan and National Highway to Sant Ravidas Mandir crossing are being strengthened. During the inspection, UP Minister for Backward Classes Welfare and Divyangjan Empowerment Anil Rajbhar, Divisional Commissioner Deepak Agrawal, senior officers and public representatives were also present.

Culture department. Besides, the fine art students should be asked to paint the main crossings of the city and a quiz competition related to the development of Kashi should be organised, the chief minister told the officers, emphasizing on conducting a month-long cultural

programme.

He also laid special emphasis on preparing a team of 200 women and 200 men to reach the people of Kashi to tell them about the history of Kashi Vishwanath Dham.

He instructed the police officials to make arrangements for elaborate security, proper vehicle parking and traffic management during the programmes.

During the meeting, District Magistrate Kaushal Raj Sharma said that an action plan had been prepared and sent to the government for providing basic facilities in 84 villages connected with the municipal corporation. The divisional commissioner made a digital presentation of the outline related to the preparations for the entire programme. The meeting was also attended by UP ministers Anil Rajbhar, Dr Neelkanth Tiwari and Ravindra Jaiswal, District Panchayat Chairperson Poonam Maurya, Mayor Mridula Jaiswal, MLC Ashok Dhawan, MLAs Surendra Narayan Singh and Dr Awadhesh Singh, Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Kumar Awasthi, ADG (Zone) Brij Bhushan, IG (Range) SK Bhagat and Commissioner of Police A Satish Ganesh.

Cadets take out cleanliness rally on NCC Day

PNS ■ VARANASI

To mark the NCC Day, the cadets of National Cadet Corps 97 UP Battalion, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith (MGKVP), on Sunday took out a cleanliness rally to make people aware of cleanliness.

The battalion also organised a blood donation camp in which the cadets donated blood.

The rally started from the main campus of the university and reached Sigra tri-junction and thereafter returned to the starting point. During the rally, the NCC cadets made vegetables sellers and common people aware about cleanliness and appealed to them to make their houses, areas and city clean for a better environment and health as well.

Officer of the NCC Battalion, Ayush Kumar, said cleanliness was a must to remain healthy. He emphasised on the active participation of people, particularly youths, in the cleanliness drive. He



Cadets taking out procession on NCC Day at MGKV in Varanasi on Sunday

appealed to the NCC cadets and others to include cleanliness in their regular habits.

The battalion also organised a blood donation camp in which the cadets donated blood, conveying the message of humanity.

Daya Ram of BCC depart-

ment, PI staff of the battalion and cadets of the unit participated in the rally.

Meanwhile, under the group head office (A) of NCC, the 7 UP Naval NCC, Banaras Hindu University (BHU), also organised a blood donation camp on the university campus

on the occasion of NCC Day which was inaugurated by Command Officer of the unit, Commander Arun Rai, by donating blood.

The NCC Day is observed every year on the last Sunday of November because the first Prime Minister of the country,

Jawaharlal Nehru, had presided over the function of the first NCC unit on the last Sunday of November in 1948.

The National Cadet Corps was formed on July 15, 1948 under NCC Act. Unity and discipline is the mantra of NCC.

A total of 42 units of blood were donated by the cadets. Wife of Commander Arun Rai, Kirti Rai, also attended the programme with the army and naval wing cadets of the NCC.

The day was also observed by the 100th Battalion of NCC in Uday Pratap PG College which was presided over by the administrative officer of the battalion, Lt Col Krishiraj Charan, and attended by Lt Sarnath Singh, Lt Mayank Singh and Subedar Major (Honorary Captain) Himmat Singh Chahar.

Retired NCC officer Major Dr Arvind Kumar Singh, while addressing the cadets, said that positive approach was the base of national development and positive thinking of a person lowered the impact of negative approach.

UBI launches 'MSME Festive Bonanza'

PNS ■ VARANASI

With an objective to facilitate the micro, small and medium entrepreneurs (MSMEs) by providing them loans at attractive rate of interest so that this sector could recover from the losses suffered due to COVID-19 pandemic, the Union Bank of India (UBI) has launched the 'MSME Festive Bonanza' scheme.

The MSME sector suffered a lot during the lockdown because of the COVID-19 pandemic and so to assist the entrepreneurs of this sector, the UBI has launched 'MSME Festive Bonanza' so that they could recover by promoting their business, said Deputy General Manager of the bank, Sunil Kumar, while talking to news persons here.

To facilitate the entrepreneurs, the bank will provide loans above Rs 25 lakh to them under this scheme and the rate of interest on the loan will be the lowest, competitive and attractive, ranging from 6.80 per cent to 7.40 per cent, he



UBI DGM Sunil Kumar addressing a press conference in Varanasi on Sunday

said adding that there was 50 per cent to 75 per cent concession on the applicable processing charge. The bank has opened a central processing cell so that the entrepreneurs could get loans without any complication and delay through an easy process, the DGM said, adding that the process for granting the loan was online so that the entrepreneurs did not face any inconvenience.

Besides, the bank is also providing loan to farmers, traders, entrepreneurs and industrialists under various schemes of the government and to make the loan process

simple, the bank is using technology so that the loan seekers could seek loan conveniently without any middleman and hurdle, Kumar said and added that the bank was giving retail loan, personal loan, etc digitally by using technology.

He said there was also a scheme to make settlement with the farmers on 30 per cent of their dues.

Deputy regional heads of the bank Umesh Kumar Singh and Ashutosh Pandey, Assistant General Manager Randhir Kumar and Chief Manager Rajesh Nagvanshi were also present on the occasion.

HC summons DGP, Muzaffarnagar SSP for repeated confinement of man

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

Taking a serious note of repeated wrongful implication of a man in criminal cases, the Allahabad High Court has sought personal presence of UP director general of police (DGP) and senior superintendent of police, Muzaffarnagar on December 13 in the matter.

The court passed this after the bail plea of a man, who was accused in 49 narcotic drugs cases in the last 23 years but was either acquitted or his name was expunged from the case later on.

Hearing a bail application filed by one Gaurav alias Gaura of Muzaffarnagar, Justice Vivek Kumar Singh observed, "This court fails to understand the working of the police of the concerned police station that how the cases said to have been wrongly imposed on a person that too not once, it happens repeatedly in the present case, it is not expected from the Uttar Pradesh Police. Such callous action cannot be imagined from the officers of the disciplined force."

Expressing concern of the working of the police, the court observed, "For a citizen the term 'police' is a sense of protec-

tion, relief, peace and tranquillity and under its auspices, he walks and sleeps fearlessly. However, if his protection shield finds pores, the belief is devastated. Police is one of the wings of disciplined forces which have been set up for the safety and security of the public at large."

Elaborating on the human rights aspect involved in the matters of wrongful implications, the court said, "The life of every person has similar values. The day passed never gets back and if it is darkened it becomes hard to live life with the basket of allegations. Belief is that deliberate mistake should be repented, however, if the days of life are spotted with stigma of criminal activities and those allegations ultimately are found to be unproved, the question arises whether it can be compensated or the sphere of his life can be rewinded. Though there is no mechanism to forecast involvement or implication, however, finding it proved that someone's life has been spoiled because of ill-intention, it needs to be dealt with strictly."

According to the applicant, the police of the Khatauli police station of Muzaffarnagar is registering false and frivolous cases against the applicant and

in this regard a complaint was made by the applicant to Human Rights Commission (NHRC), New Delhi, whereupon an order was passed on June 5, 2007, directing the additional director general (ADG) of Police, Allahabad to compensate the applicant and compensation to the tune of Rs 10,000 was also awarded to the applicant and his brother Omi.

The court in its order dated November 9, after going through the details of previous cases, related to narcotics drugs, registered against the applicant observed, "Perusal of the aforesaid history chart shows that there is history of 49 cases to the credit of the applicant pertains to one and same police station, i.e., Police Station Khatauli, district Muzaffarnagar, wherein out of 45 cases shown above the applicant has been acquitted in 11 cases; and in 9 cases notices were withdrawn.

Besides, in two cases the name of the applicant has wrongly been mentioned. In addition to it, in one case under National Security Act (NSA), the proceedings were quashed and in twenty one cases, the applicant has been enlarged on bail and in one case anticipatory bail has been granted.

AKY flays govt over UP TET paper leak

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

Allahabad (PNS): Former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh and national president of Samajwadi Party, Akhilesh Yadav flayed the state government over the paper leak of UP TET-2021. Yadav, who came to attend a private programme held in Patt, said those who leaked the paper were supporters of the BJP government and that is why no action is taken against them papers are leaked everyday.

Akhilesh said the BJP government is not able to provide employment, so it conspires by leaking question papers. Handing over the investigation to the SIT is a cover-up, he said. "If the Samajwadi Party government is voted to power, a fair investigation will be conducted in all such cases," Akhilesh said.

The former CM was accorded a grand welcome by the SP office-bearers and workers. He left for the wedding of the niece of SP district vice-president Pappu Yadav in Ramkola village of Patti area by car. Akhilesh, who reached Ramkola village, after inaugurating Sharda Public School, sat in a room and had a meeting with senior party leaders. After that, he blessed the newlyweds.

Strike by junior residents impacts patient care

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

Patient care was badly affected at the SRN Hospital on Sunday as the junior residents were on strike. The junior doctors joined the nationwide strike called to show their displeasure among the doctor fraternity due to non-availability of first year counselling for a year.

A nationwide strike was called by the Junior Doctors Association. Because of the strike patients, especially those coming from far flung areas, faced a lot of trouble. The doctors also announced the suspension of emergency services if their demands are not met. The junior doctors maintain that due to lack of counselling for one year, the load of first year students is falling on second and third year students. Due to this the workload is increasing and although the association had raised the concern, but the government was not listening.

Agitated junior doctors did not allow OPD to run on Saturday. When the senior doctor sat in the OPD, they could manage to attend only a few patients who came with old prescriptions. While there was a huge crowd of patients at the prescription counter. "I have come for treatment from Rewa because of a heart problem. My local doc-

tor had referred me to SRN but because of the strike, I am helpless," said Ram Charit Mishra. Likewise, Vinodhwar Prasad who came from Jaunpur was troubled by a stomach ailment. After standing in the queue since morning, they were not able to get the OPD slip due to the strike.

The protesting residents also took out a candle procession in the evening. The junior doctors gathered at SRN and raised their demand vigorously. The doctors said that this is a symbolic demonstration and if the demands are not accepted, the agitation will be further intensified and even emergency services would be stopped at SRN.

"Our demands are justified as we are here to serve the patients and for this we constantly work peacefully under pressure of work and when there was a nationwide strike today, we joined our association. If the demand is not accepted, then the scope of the movement will be increased," said Dr Suresh Pathak, office bearer of the Prayagraj Unit of the association.

Principal, MLN Medical College, Dr SP Singh, said, "It is true that the services were affected for some time, but later senior doctors attended the OPD and all were treated. OT also functioned normally."

School of Film and Mass Comm hosting shoot with Josh Talks

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

School of Film and Mass Communication, Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture Technology and Sciences (SHUATS), is hosting a shoot with Josh Talks.

In these two days, they are shooting over 40 blazing, intense and gifted stories of people from almost every class, section and realm of the society.

Dean SFMC Dr Ashish Alexander said he is proud to be the venue partner with Josh Talks encountering these

amazing stories being brought alive, which is also a learning experience for the students.

Assistant professors Ram Mani Tripathi, Aneasha Henry and Amit William are coordinating the event along with students of School of Film and Mass Communication, SHUATS, Prayagraj.

Josh Talks is an Indian media platform headquartered in Gurgaon, Haryana which hosts content in nine languages, and is also featured in Forbes magazine 'Asia 30 Under 30' list for 2018.

'Kayastha candidates in a position to win 36 assembly seats in UP'

PNS ■ ALLAHABAD

On Sunday, a huge worker meeting of Jai Chitranth Andolan Kayastha Swabhiman Sangharsh was held in the premises of Seva Samiti in front of Rambagh station, Prayagraj, in conjunction with Govind Khare and conducted by Neeraj Sinha, in which thousands of Kayasthas participated with enthusiasm. At the end of the meeting, some resolutions were passed unanimously. Speakers said they are in a position to win three assembly seats of Prayagraj (city north, city west and city south) and 36 seats across Uttar Pradesh.

The speakers said that there

are about 2.75 crore Kayastha voters in Uttar Pradesh, including about 3.30 lakh in Prayagraj, who can play a decisive role in 100 assemblies besides winning 36 assembly seats. Apart from this, it is important that in almost all the seats of the state, we can reverse the results by voting against any political party.

A resolution passed unanimously that if any political party gives ticket to a Kayastha candidate belonging to the general public of the society, all of them will vote and support that political party in the entire state.

It was also proposed that if tickets are not given by any political party to the leaders of their society who are connected with

the land, then the Kayastha society would be compelled to fight its candidates and make concerted efforts for victory.

The people of Kayastha community present on this occasion also formed a powerful 9-member Kayastha committee to take political and social decisions of the society.

The members include Govind Khare, Prashant Srivastava, Dilip Srivastava, Rajesh Srivastava, Jitendra Verma Alok, Pawan Shankar Srivastava, Ramesh Srivastava, Anita Srivastava and Ratan Srivastava. The Kayastha Committee will have the right to invite other Kayasthas in its meetings as per the need of the subject.

A RESOLUTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY THAT IF ANY POLITICAL PARTY GIVES TICKET TO A KAYASTHA CANDIDATE BELONGING TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC OF THE SOCIETY, ALL OF THEM WILL VOTE AND SUPPORT THAT POLITICAL PARTY IN THE ENTIRE STATE

Welcome party organised

Allahabad (PNS): Staff and students of Ruchi's Institute of Creative Arts organised a welcome party to welcome the newly admitted students of the 2021-22 academic session. A number of dance, singing, mimicry programmes were organised by senior students along with games and quizzes. The winners of the games included Alka Prajapati, Archana Singh and Garima Sharma. In the overall creative personality presentation Alka Prajapati and Pankaj Tripathi were judged as 'Ms and Mr Fresher'. On this occasion, principal Dr Ruchi Mital welcomed the freshers to be part of the ever growing RICA family. She enlightened the students about the Institute activities and said that participating in extracurricular activities is as important as attending academic lectures, as these together bring about an overall development of one's personality. On this occasion Sunil Pandey, Pragna Mishra, Radhey Shyam Gupta, Niraj Kumar and others were present.

KDA frees land worth Rs12.25 crore from unauthorised possession



PNS ■ KANPUR

Kanpur Development Authority (KDA) got its property worth around Rs.12.25 crore freed from unauthorised possession in Dabauli on Saturday. The illegal construction carried out in a park there was also demolished. Unauthorised possession had been made on 3,000 square metre land of the KDA and it had been rented out to different people. On the directives of KDA Vice Chairman Arvind Singh, the enforcement squad reached Dabauli and found unauthorised possession on 3,000 square metre land of a park apart from another 500 square metre land there.

During the Janata Darshan programme, the local residents had informed the KDA vice chairman about the unauthorised possession of the park by some local elements.

According to KDA PRO SB Rai, the appeal filed by Baba Ram Das regarding his unauthorised possession of the park with the Kanpur divisional commissioner's court had already been dismissed. Besides, the squad demolished unauthorised construction on around 500 square metre land in Dabauli Scheme No. 40. During the drive, KDA Zone 3 Executive Engineer Dharendra Bajpai, Tehsildar Arsal Naz, Junior Engineer PK Gupta, KK Gupta and JN Dubey were present.

Income from shares taxable as capital gains: CA

Kanpur (PNS): Noted chartered accountant and tax expert from Lucknow, US Tiwari, addressing a seminar on 'Capital Tax Gains' at Civil Lines on Sunday, said selling and purchasing shares were now taxable.

Addressing a seminar organised by the CA Society, Tiwari said as per the provisions if a seller made long term capital gain of more than Rs 1 lakh on sale of equity shares or equity-oriented units of mutual fund, the gain made would attract a capital gains tax of 10 per cent long-term capital gains tax.

He said since 2020 there had been a rapid rise in share investors, especially among the youth, and the main reason was the massive profits incurred in the share markets.

He said if equity shares listed on a stock exchange were sold within 12 months of the purchase, the seller may make short term capital gain or incur short term capital loss. He said the seller made short term capital gain when shares were sold at a price higher than the purchase price.

He said if the equity shares listed on a stock exchange were sold after 12 months of purchase, the seller may make long term capital gain or incur long term capital loss. He said as per the provisions, if a seller made a long term capital gain of more than Rs 1 lakh on sale of equity shares or equity-oriented units of a mutual fund, the gain made would attract a capital gains tax.

Tiwari said short term capital gains were taxable at 15 per cent but if the tax slab rate was 10 or 20 or 30 per cent then a special rate of tax of 15 per cent was applicable to short term capital gains, irrespective of tax slab. He said if total taxable income, excluding short term gains, was below taxable income, i.e., Rs 2.5 lakh, one could adjust this shortfall against short term gains while remaining short term gains shall be then taxed at 15 + 4 per cent cess on it. He said long term capital gain on equity shares listed on a stock exchange were not taxable up to the limit of Rs 1 lakh.

He said long term capital loss from equity shares was considered to be a dead loss and it could neither be adjusted nor carried forward.

Eye donation a noble deed: Katiyar

PNS ■ KANPUR

Minister of State for Higher Education Neelima Katiyar, while inaugurating a seminar on Eye Protection and Eye Donation organised by Saksham Sanstha at the BNSD Shiksha Niketan, said although all organs of the body were equally significant, eyes were much above and treated as very special.

She said eyes rendered one vision and allowed one to enjoy the aesthetics that the world had to offer. She said due to several kinds of visual impairments, many people lost their vision and the world turned dark to them and thus one could give them the gift of light by a simple step of eye donation.

She said blindness was a major cause of concern around the world today and according to World Health Organisation, after cataract and glaucoma, blindness was mostly caused by corneal impairments. She said most of these impairments were curable, especially through eye donation, which referred to donating one's eyes after death. She said just like any other body organ, the cornea of the eye could also be donated after death which would render vision to the blind.

Katiyar said it was a matter of concern that due to lack of awareness, social or religious reserves, etc., eye donation was yet to get its due importance in India engendering the need to raise awareness among the masses about eye donation. She said the donated eyes were used to restore vision in people suffering from corneal blindness. She said anyone could be a donor irrespective of age, sex, blood group or religion and even those suffering from cataract, long/short sightedness, operated eyes or common illnesses could donate eyes. She said eye donation was truly a noble deed. She said what could be more noble than giving someone the gift of light and let them see the world in colours.

Prominent among those present were Dr Shalini Mohan, Dr Devendra Lalchandani, Dr Om Pal Singh and several others.

NER GM inaugurates cricket tournament

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

Under the aegis of North Eastern Railway Sports Association (NERSA) the Inter-departmental Cricket Tournament organised at Railway Cricket Ground here from November 27 to January 16 next year was inaugurated by General Manager, North Eastern Railway (NER) Vinay Kumar Tripathi. Earlier, Tripathi got introduced to the players. The inaugural match was played between the joint team of Management, Personnel and Railway Protection Force (RPF) and the joint team of Engineering and Construction Organisation. In it the Management department defeated the Engineering department team by eight wickets and entered the next round. Chairperson of North Eastern Railway Women's Welfare Organisation (NER-



WVO) Meena Tripathi presented the Best Fielding Award to Vinay Kumar Tripathi, captain of Management Department and Man of the Match award to Pankaj Kumar Singh. On the occasion Additional General Manager (AGM) Amit Kumar Agrawal, principal heads of department, members of Women's Welfare

Organisation, senior railway officers, sportspersons and cricket lovers were present. Batting first after winning the toss, Engineering department scored 112 runs in the allotted 20 overs for the loss of all wickets. Surendra Negi of Engineering department scored a brilliant 26 and Anand Vardhan played a useful innings 20 runs. The captain of Management department, Vinay Kumar Tripathi while fielding brilliantly gave a big blow to the Engineering department by catching a great catch at short mid on. Chasing the target of 113 runs, the Management department made quick runs and won the match by scoring 113 runs for the loss of two wickets in just 16.2 overs. Management department's Pankaj Kumar Singh and Ramashish contributed 25 runs each, Akhlesh 21 and Atul Kumar Gupta nine runs.

RPF NER wrestlers earn laurels

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

The wrestlers of Railway Protection Force (RPF), North Eastern Railway (NER) while performing brilliantly in the 32nd Inter-Railway Protection Force Wrestling Championship-2021 held at Daya Basti, New Delhi, from November 22 to 25 received one gold medal and four bronze medals. As many as 11 wrestlers



from RPF, NER, participated in it. In the 125 kg weight category Ramchandra Yadav by defeating Vijaypal of Northern Railway (NR) won the gold medal. In the 70 kg weight category Rajeev Kumar Gaur of NER's RPF defeated Pawan Dahiya of Western Railway to get bronze medal. In the 79 kg weight category, Umakant of RPF NER won the bronze medal by defeating Vivek Kumar of NER. In the 86

kg weight category, Nahar Dev Yadav of RPF of NER won the bronze medal by defeating Amit of Railway Protection Special Force (RPSF). In the 92 kg weight category, Rajesh Yadav of NER RPF defeated Sacha Singh of Northern Railway to clinch the bronze medal. Under the supervision of coach Surendra Ram Tripathi, Rajesh Singh Yadav, Jawahar Yadav, Rammath Yadav, Janardan Yadav and Sudhir Kumar Rai also performed brilliantly.

DASHRATH BAGS SILVER IN TT

In the All India Railway Protection Force Badminton, Table Tennis and Lawn Tennis Championship-2021 held at Prayagraj from November 20 to 22, Dashrath Prasad, Inspector, RPF, Crime Intelligence Branch (CIB), Gorakhpur region, representing North Eastern Railway, won a silver medal in men's category above 45 years of age in table tennis (TT).



'Samavesh' at SAJPS on Founder's Day

PNS ■ KANPUR

Inaugurating 'Samavesh', a cultural function, on the 47th Founder's Day at Seth Anandram Jaipuria Public School, its chairman Shishir Jaipuria said the school had carved a niche for itself among the quality English medium schools and on account of its perfect balance between academic and co-curricular activities it had reached the topmost rungs of the success ladder in the field of education.

He said it would be the endeavour of the school to ensure it maintained the quality and its position. He said the alumni of this school were in top-most positions not only in India but across the world.

Addressing the gathering, school's principal Shikha Bannerjee said the achievements of the students of the past and the



present were the motivation of the principled teaching of this institution and the painstaking efforts made by the teachers to instill confidence and positivity to achieve what was best. She said the institution would continue to churn out quality students in the time to come. She said it was the collective efforts of the management, teachers, parents and the students that made this a proud

institution of the country.

Addressing the students, chief guest Padma Bhushan and Grammy Award winner Pt VM Bhat said it was a great honour to be invited to grace the Founder's Day function of this prestigious institution. He said there was always a turning point in the lives of the students and from that very point the students went up the success ladder.

He said it was the duty of parents, teachers and peers to identify the talents of the children and motivate them to achieve in the respective fields. He said it was good to see that there was immense talent in the students of this school, especially toward fine arts and music. He said honing their skills at this tender age would certainly bring accolades to not only the children but the parents, school, city, state and the country as well. The Dr Rajaram Jaipuria Achievers Award was conferred on alumnus Gaurav Taneja.

Later, the children presented a prayer dance, bilingual dance, school orchestra, choir and the grand finale was 'Dasavata'. The vote of thanks was proposed by Manish Sakseria. A virtual art exhibition titled 'Pencil to Pixel' was also organised and it was praised by the visitors.

Present day education requires holistic approach: Prof Pathak

PNS ■ KANPUR

Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University Vice Chancellor Prof Vinay Pathak said the present day education required a holistic approach and it was imperative to have interdisciplinary collaboration.

Addressing the function of Indian Thinkers Society at CSJMU, Prof Pathak said the Society was doing a yeoman's service for society and there was a need also for devoting oneself to the uplift of the society. He said there was a rapid change in the field of technology and thus teachers must be aware of it. He advised teachers to update their knowledge.

He said today the students should know more than the teacher as only then they would acquire something exclusive to their knowledge.

Speaking on the 'Role of university in all-round development of teachers and students', guest of honour, Dr PN Kaul, said education had changed drastically and in the present times more emphasis was laid on

intellectual growth of the child instead of remaining confined to the 3Rs. He said that the intellectual growth of a child, in turn became instrumental in the development of a country. He said the child could develop intellectually provided he or she was exposed to a comprehensive training regimen, as only then would the child's all-round development be ensured.

He said today the aim of the curriculum department was to make the syllabus child-centric which comprised sports and physical activities which were considered integral. He said compared to others who just had academic or pedantic knowledge, students following a child-centric curriculum were exposed to practical knowledge and enjoyed the advantage of hands-on experience. He said with the establishment of such a department, the curriculum was customised in accordance with the needs of the children and not the other way round.

Dr Kaul said the curriculum department was responsible for

the effective planning of the curriculum and the duties of the department included determination of curriculum content, selection of learning resources and classroom procedures and even evaluating progress. He said establishing useful learning experiences, defining appropriate learning objectives and evaluating the curriculum at regular intervals were the principles which drove the department and with a dedicated department, periodic revisions of the curriculum were also possible as and when needed.

Addressing the session, Dr Chitra Singh from SN Sen Degree College said the curriculum content was one of the core concerns of the department and the content was based on the knowledge of international teaching trends and the latest research inputs. She said with the ideal student-teacher ratio of 10:1, the focus was on the learners' needs while tailoring the curriculum. She said the syllabus was designed with the aim of building and deepening the understanding of students.

Dr Kaul said the curriculum department was responsible for

IIT-K incubated company wins Global Innovation Challenge Award

PNS ■ KANPUR

Insilico Private Limited, an Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur incubated company, has won the Global Innovation Challenge Award at the Global Innovation Summit 2021 held in Bengaluru, for its unique AI-state-of-the-art software platform PRinS3 that helps reduce time and cost for drug discovery process by 50 per cent as well as design new materials. The average time of drug development is around 12 years while its development costs on an average around \$2 billion. The award, instituted by Indian Pharmaceutical Alliance (IPA), was announced at the Global Innovation Summit which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Over 56 companies and academic institutes participated in the challenge. The theme of the summit was, 'Discover in India: Accelerating the innovation journey of the Indian life sciences industry'.

Prescience founder Prof Jayant Kumar Singh said, "The award is a big boost to our efforts

and reflects that our product is good at global level. Our technology platform for drug design and development is made in India and can be widely useful to all the global players in this field, starting from university research groups to small biotech companies to large innovator pharmaceutical companies."

Driven by artificial intelligence, cloud-based supercomputing and highly quantitative physics-based methodologies, the platform helps users, particularly pharma companies and academic researchers, in designing a completely new set of molecules and validate their efficacies, which otherwise is not possible.

The platform is fully cloud-enabled, which means one can use cloud computing with graphical processing units (GPU) in high-throughput to reduce the time of the discovery. Additionally, the cloud is available as and when required without any hassle of having or procuring one's own on-premise computing resources.

Gynecologist warns against prolonged use of painkillers during periods

PNS ■ KANPUR

Senior gynecologist Dr Arti Singh, while addressing media persons at Regency Hospital in Kanpur, described the side effects of painkillers during periods.

She said a significant number of females experienced menstrual pain during their lifetime and it varied in intensity from just a mild discomfort to excruciating pain, associated with lower abdominal cramps. Dr Singh said this condition was known as 'dysmenorrhea' and one out of five women complained of experiencing a pain as agonising as a heart attack.

According to the senior gynecologist, severe menstrual cramps are more common in teenagers and young adults.

Often these can lead to impaired work performance and even cause difficulties in carrying out routine activities. Consequently, women tend to take painkillers during periods, without consulting a doctor.

"Mild doses of painkillers combined with anti-spasmodic can help ease menstrual cramps and are safe to consume. Up to two doses of painkillers for the first two days is relatively harmless, and is usually sufficient for providing adequate relief. However, for someone taking a higher or more frequent dosage, a doctor should be consulted. Just like every other medication has a side effect when taken in excess, so do painkillers. Prolonged and injudicious use of aspirin, ibuprofen, paracetamol etc may cause serious long-term side

effects," she said.

Dr Singh said some of the common side effects were gastric problems like heartburn, stomach ache, acidity, diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting and they could eventually progress to more severe problems like gastrointestinal bleeds, stomach ulcers etc. She said allergic reactions could be rare but severe like rashes, hives, itching, red swollen blisters or peeling skin, fever, wheezing, swelling of face, lips or tongue could be found sometimes.

Besides, tightening of chest, trouble in breathing, swallowing or talking; unusual hoarseness of voice, irregular heart-beat, palpitations, dizziness, fatigue, drowsiness, headache, bleeding disorders, liver damage, jaundice, dark coloured urine, decrease in amount of

urine passed, tiredness, stomach upset, light-coloured stools, vomiting, may aggravate depression, Alzheimer's disease, kidney damage and failure were also observed.

She said in the present days and age, overuse of painkillers was one of the commonest causes of kidney failure. She said apart from causing long-term damage to various organ systems of the body, painkillers could also cause addiction problems in certain people, as they get accustomed to the immediate relieving effect, thus making it harder to consume painkillers wisely.

"To sum up, painkillers, like any other medication, are greatly beneficial and effective when taken after a professional's consultation. They provide immediate relief, and make it easier

to go about the day without being impaired by the painful cramps that are a monthly occurrence for most. A minimal dose of painkillers is mostly more than adequate to decrease the pain. However, if an individual requires more intensive dosing of painkillers, especially during periods, it could be an indication of underlying problems of the reproductive tract, and requires a proper consultation," she added. Gynaecological conditions such as endometriosis, fibroids, adenomyosis, ovarian cyst, infections of reproductive organs, even undiagnosed ectopic pregnancies etc. could cause severe abdominal pain, and require further workup, Dr Singh said and added that any menstrual pain/cramps needing higher doses of painkillers, should be investigated.

Safety audit inspection conducted

PNS ■ VARANASI

Keeping the winter and foggy weather in mind the railway administration under the work plan for ensuring safe and fast rail travel Principal Chief Safety Officer (PCSO), North Eastern Railway (NER) AK Mishra and his team on Friday conducted safety audit inspection of Gorakhpur Cantonment - Thawe rail section.

Along with it testing of railway track was also done for increasing the speed of trains on this section. On the occasion Principal Chief Signal and Telecom Engineer (PCSTE) AK Tripathi, Chief Passenger Traffic Manager Alok Singh, Chief Engineer/Work SP Yadav, Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Operations) SPS Yadav, Senior Divisional Operations Manager (General) AK Saxena, Senior Engineer-I JK Singh, Senior Engineer-II MK Singh, Senior Divisional Signal and Telecom Engineer Triyambak Tiwari, Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (Operation) AK Shrivastava, Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (Operation) Pankaj Kesharwani, Assistant Safety Officer (ASO) Ramesh Pandey along with senior supervisors of headquarters and division were present. The safety audit team by push trolley on Gorakhpur Cantonment - Thawe rail section while testing the standard of traction over head line, power feeder, level crossing gates, curvature and bridge culverts, between all block sections conducted a thorough inspection of rail section's line fittings and signals installed there on, turnouts, ballasting and packing, adequate clearance at curvature, points and crossings, railway track line fittings, electrified colour light signal, lock and block token less instrument, block overlap, block and signal overlap, fouling mark and regarding the safety/ security of the



passengers on the platform. During it he ensured locking of boom locks of various level crossing gates located in this section and the installation of height gauges and thoroughly inspected the track fittings on the bridges and culverts falling in this section and gave instructions to the persons concerned. In the sequence of inspection, at Gorakhpur Cantonment, Kaptanganj, Padrauna and Thawe stations for safe traffic management the competency certificate and periodical medical examination of the safety related employees of Engineering, Signal and Operating departments were checked. While doing thorough inspection of berthing tracks installed at station section, point machines, signals, foot overbridge's height and approach, platform length clearance, fire alarm, station working rule, relay room, point crossing and fall safe side system of various equipment etc, reviewed the safety and gave instructions to the persons concerned. During it in this block section for increasing the speed of trains testing of bolt holes of rail joints and joggled fish plates and inspection of lubrication work was inspected and along with the distressing of LWR and CWR, instructions were given to remove all the shortcomings on the railway track. For cold weather patrolling the management was reviewed. Instructions were given to get the temperature of the train checked regularly and to be recorded in the register too. The safety team also ensured availability of adequate quantity of cracker signals, lime marking across the track on signal sighting boards, signal sighting boards, WL boards, fog signal post, yellow markings on lifting barriers at level crossings, arrangement for black luminous strip for clear visibility all required works were found complete, Public Relations Officer (PRO), Ashok Kumar said.

18 dead in Bengal road mishap

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

At least 18 people including six women and a child died and several others were grievously injured in a mid-night mishap that saw a mini truck carrying a dead body and the victims ram into a truck head on in the small hours of Sunday.

The accident happened in Nadia district some 100 km north of Kolkata.

The mangled vehicle was carrying a dead body from Bagda in North 24 Parganas to Nabadwip in Nadia.

The collision occurred near Hanshkhali block. Locals said that the accident might have occurred because of dense fog though the police would not rule out the driver

having dozed off during the drive. According to the police the mini truck was carrying about 35 people while it hit a stationary truck laden with stone chips killing 12 people on the spot. Locals said the accident site was terrifying because the mini truck had turned into a mangled metal trapping most of the victims.

Senior leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, condoled the deaths.

"Extremely pained by the loss of lives due to a road accident in Nadia, West Bengal. My thoughts are with the bereaved families. May the injured recover at the earliest," the Prime Minister said.

the Home Minister said "may God give them (the family members of the victim) the strength to bear this grief. I wish the injured a speedy recovery."

The Chief Minister, promising all necessary assistance to the family members, wrote that "heartbroken to hear about the road accident in Nadia. I offer my deepest condolences to the bereaved families and pray for the speedy recovery of those who were injured. May God give them the strength to get past this difficult time."

Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar on the other hand questioned the safety norms on highways saying he was "deeply pained at reported death of 18 people and 5 others injured in Nadia District."

Nearly all terrorists involved in civilian killings in J&K last month neutralised: Sources

New Delhi: Nearly all the terrorists involved in the killings of civilians in Jammu and Kashmir last month have been neutralised and the armed forces are now focussing on intelligence-based "surgical operations" involving smaller teams to deal with terror activities in the Union Territory, sources in the security establishment said on Sunday.

They said a "refined" approach to deal with terrorism has been put in place under a more nuanced framework of better coordination among the Jammu and Kashmir police, the intelligence agencies and the Army with an aim to minimise collateral damage.

After a spell of relative calm, Jammu and Kashmir witnessed a spate of killings of innocent civilians last month, triggering apprehensions of an intense cycle of violence and turmoil in the region.

The sources said a major focus of the anti-terror drill has been to achieve "zero loss" of innocent lives and all wings of the security forces have been trying to achieve it.

That is why the focus has been on "intelligence-based surgical operations" involving smaller teams, with a focus on drawing support from the local population to such actions, they added. According to intelligence inputs, Pakistan-based terror handlers have instructed their prox-

ies operating in Kashmir to ensure at least 10 civilian deaths whenever the security forces undertake counter-terror operations, the sources said. They said 24 civilians were killed and 49 injured in various counter-terror operations in 2018. Over the past three years, the security forces undertook a series of measures to ensure minimum collateral damage and as a result of such efforts, only two civilians were killed and two received minor injuries in 2021, the sources said. Asked about the encounter in Srinagar's Hyderpora, they said a certain section is focussing on it to occupy "lost space".

Jammu and Kashmir police chief Dilbag Singh on Thursday said the ongoing investigation into the Hyderpora encounter suggests that the terrorists were supported by a network in carrying out terror activities. The sources said the security forces have been getting support, including actionable intelligence, from the locals in several parts of Jammu and Kashmir as they have rejected the "false propaganda" unleashed by Pakistan. "There were instances of terrorists even being allowed to escape when there was a threat of collateral damage or when the lives of innocents were assessed to be at risk," said a source on condition of anonymity.

No permission to Munawar for Faruqui's show

Bengaluru: The Bengaluru police have denied permission to Munawar Faruqui's stand-up comedy show in the city on Sunday amid protest by the Hindu right wing outfits who alleged that the artist had hurt the Hindu sentiments in one of his shows. "Yes, we have denied him permission. He will not perform any public show today," a senior police officer told PTI on condition of anonymity. Faruqui also shared a statement on social media

confirming that his Bengaluru show that had sold '600 plus' tickets was cancelled Sunday in the wake of the "threats to venue vandalism" and said he was "done". "My name is Munawar Faruqui. And that's been my time, you guys were (a) wonderful audience. Good bye, I'm done," he said. The proceeds from the show were supposed to be donated to late Kannada star Puneeth Rajkumar's charitable organisation.

UCO BANK logo and address: Zonal Office : 75/4, Siddhi Sadan, Halsey Road Near Badshahi Naka Police Station, Kanpur - 208001

Table with 4 columns: Sl. No., Name & Address of Borrower(s) and Name of Related Branch, Description of Property & Possession Date, Balance O/S (Rs.) & Demand Notice Date. Contains details for multiple borrowers including Shri Pavan Kumar Rai S/o Shri Balak Das Rai.

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BJP ruined democracy, says TMC post civic polls results

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress which emerged for the first time as the principal Opposition party in Tripura, post civic elections in the north-eastern State on Sunday attacked the ruling BJP for "consigning democracy to fire".

While TMC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee congratulated his party's "Team Tripura" for doing "exceptionally well" party MP Shantanu Sen said the world had seen how democracy was trampled upon by the BJP in that State.

Banerjee said that it was "exceptional for a party beginning with negligible presence to successfully contest municipal elections and emerge as the Principal Opposition in the state with more than 20% vote share."

This was "despite the fact that we commenced our activities barely 3 months ago and the Tripura wing of the BJP left no stone unturned to 'Butcher democracy' in that State. Sen said that the "people of India could see how the BJP

ruined and raped democracy in Tripura and how the hooligans of Biplab Deb Government destroyed democracy in that State ... the BJP has totally ruined and destroyed the democratic structure of this country ... Tripura is a big example."

According to inside sources the Trinamool Congress which polled about 20 percent votes in the Tripura civic polls would "go all out ahead of the Assembly elections next year."

This would start with a pad yatra by Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee who would embark on a political walkathon in that State criss-crossing Tripura on foot, sources said.

TMC leader Rajib Banerjee who before the Bengal Assembly elections had joined the BJP but returned to his original party soon after Trinamool's stunning victory in the State said "the way the BJP Government has destroyed democracy in Tripura would be remembered by the people of this State for ever and they will have the last laugh ... they will give a befitting reply to the BJP in the first opportunity they get."

Anger among Hindus in TN over reports of demolitions of temples

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

There is an all-round resentment and anger among Hindus in Tamil Nadu thanks to the social media that beam views and news stocking religious sentiments. Reports about deliberate demolition of temples across the State since M K Stalin became Chief Minister in May 2021 have reached a peak.

R Ananthanarayanan, an entrepreneur in Chennai specialised in yacht and boat building wears an agitated look when he recounts the haste with which the State administration demolished the Ambal temple in Thiruvallur district on Thursday.

"The proprietor of the temple, who built it from scratch was told at 3 pm that the structure would be demolished since it has been built on Government land. The officials came to the temple in an hour's time and much to the dismay of the devotees the building was razed to the ground," Ananthanarayanan told The Pioneer. He said nearly 20 temples have been demolished in the

State since the month of May. Krishnaswamy, the owner and priest of the temple denied that the place of worship was built illegally on government land. "When we were told by the Revenue Division Officer that the temple was being demolished as per Government order, we pleaded with folded hands to grant us a day to furnish the relevant documents. But by 4 pm, everything was over," said the priest.

Gauthaman Ramakrishnan, director, Vedic Science Study Centre, Chennai, described the government action as unilateral and violative of the law of the land.

"If the authorities felt that the temple has been constructed in poramboke land, the trustees should have been asked to vacate the premises within a stipulated time. Whatever has happened is despicable and unfortunate," said Gauthaman. An intelligence official in Chennai who is privy to the law and order situation in the State said that tension was brewing up in the community.

Piramal Capital & Housing Finance logo and address: Registered Office Address: Unit No.601, 6th Floor Piramal Amit Building, Piramal Agastya Corporate Park, Kamani Junction, Opp Fire Station, LBS Marg, Kurla (West), Mumbai- 400 070. Includes a large table with columns: Name of the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s) and Name of Related Branch, Demand Notice Date and Amount with NPA date, Description of secured asset (immovable property), and Demand Notice Date. The table contains numerous entries for various borrowers across different branches.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Impending crisis?

The new mutation of Coronavirus signals danger and we are not prepared to tackle it, yet again

In India where normalcy has come to by and large mean rejecting COVID-appropriate behaviour and a consensus that the viral pandemic has left Indian shores, the new South African variant gives a serious wake-up call. There are as many people wearing masks as are consciously not wearing them. The fact that the festive season did not lead to any viral surge even though all safety precautions were ignored has led to a false complacency that the worst is past us. Sadly, that is wrong. The WHO has declared the new variant, named Omicron, is a 'variant of concern'. That is to say, do not take any avoidable risk. Here is what the world knows about Omicron, which is not much. Omicron's prevalence is more than noticeable in South Africa. Botswana, Belgium, Hong Kong and Israel have also reported cases. The variant has landed in Europe too, with the UK reporting two cases. Scientists have no idea if it can lead to a surge, but say that it carries a high re-infection risk. Initial research has shown that the variant is associated with mutations that indicate it can be highly transmissible and increasingly infective. Omicron's risk potential is being tested in a laboratory setting to check the efficacy of existing vaccines in containing its infection. The important question awaiting an answer is whether Omicron can evade the immune response.



The answer should better come from a scientific laboratory than from a population infected through ignorance or complacency. What does this

mean for India which has just announced its phase-wise policy of opening up the skies? Not much if the Government strictly follows the screening of passengers coming in from abroad and decrees automatic quarantine for two weeks without exception. The health ministry has listed the countries reporting the new variant in the high-risk category. The Ministry should now revise its order of allowing resumption of flights to these countries irrespective of bilateral air bubble agreements. India has also to ensure that hesitancy, complacency or logistical problems no longer hamper the vaccination process. Scientists are insisting now, more than ever, that vaccination is critical to protect the aged and those with comorbidities as well as healthy individuals who have fully returned to normal activities. Both groups run a high risk of hospitalisation and death if they are not fully vaccinated. Till Friday, over 120 crore doses were administered of which only a third, 42.62 crore, were second doses. This figure has to pick up and fast. Secondly, the latest studies show that one of the vaccines available in India, the home-made Covaxin, is only 50 per cent effective against symptomatic COVID-19 disease. Many surveys have come out in the past giving different efficacy figures. They range from 81 per cent to 77.8 per cent to 65.2 per cent. There would be scientific explanations for each of the figures no doubt, but that does not help the lay person who may be intimidated by them.

PIC TALK



Villagers participate in a rowing competition on the Hooghly river in Nadia

Jinnah could never fight for Pakistan



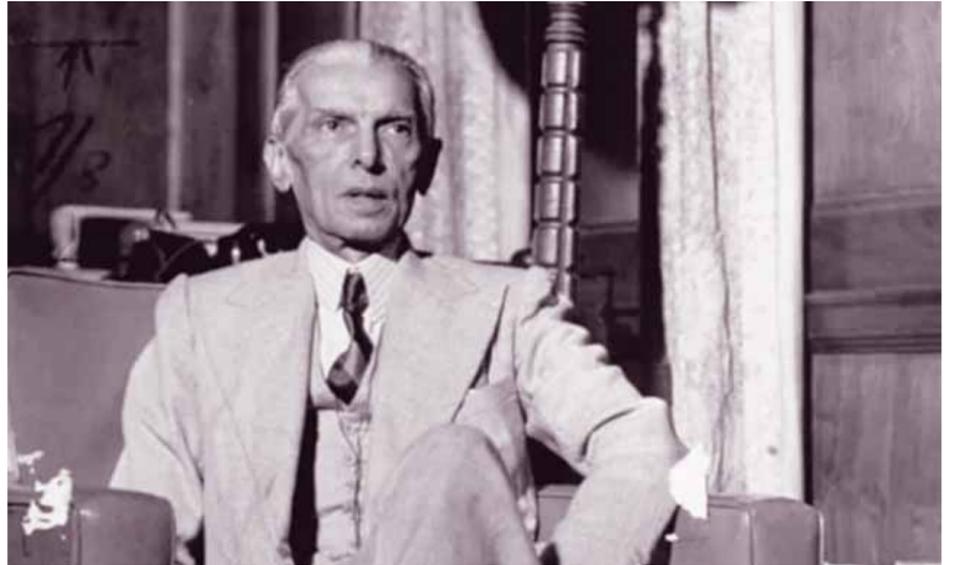
PRAFULL GORADIA

Jinnah would not have enjoyed being the head of Pakistan for long. He delighted himself mixing with the elite, whether Parsee, Hindu or Muslim

What Akhilesh Yadav of the Samajwadi Party and Rajibbar Singh of SBS Party said about Mohammed Ali Jinnah being offered the first prime ministership of India to avoid Partition is incorrect. The offer was made by Gandhiji and was not supported by Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel or anyone else in the Congress. Jinnah did not even care to reply. He wanted a place in history's hall of fame which he could do best by finding a new country. According to his brother Ahmed Ali, Jinnah was obsessed with becoming the *numero uno*, nothing less or lower. Ahmed had said this to his friend and my grandfather Dharamdas Vora in 1946.

Holding a post can be a fleeting phenomenon as with any ministership while finding a nation is forever. In any case, the atmosphere amongst Muslims was so charged that they would have accused Jinnah of selling out himself to the Hindus. And certainly not followed him into remaining in India. Also, remember, Jinnah's health was generally known to be on its last legs; although everyone might not be aware of him suffering from tuberculosis. Compare prime ministership for one or two years with being the founder of a nation for eternity. Which one would an intelligent person prefer? I would go to the extent of saying that Jinnah would not have enjoyed being the head of Pakistan for long. He delighted himself mixing with the elite, whether Parsee, Hindu or Muslim. Rubbing shoulders with the common folk was not for him, who wore mostly Savile Row (London) hand tailored suits and English or Swiss shoes. His fancy for these items of attire was so great that he had himself buried in a suit and such shoes and not in pyjamas and a shawl.

On his return from England to take over the Muslim League as President for life, he got down to building a magnificent bungalow which is still well known as Marble House on Malabar Hill, Bombay. As Claude Batley, his English archi-



tect told Hector Bolitho, Jinnah's first biographer, "He insisted on choosing the colours of the marble for the terrace, and standing by when the pieces of stone were fitted, much to the annoyance of the Italian stone masons doing the work." Besides the Italian stonemasons, Jinnah also hired a Muslim clerk of works, an English builder and a Hindu plumber."

People including the Muslim League members gossiped that when Jinnah moved in 1940, he was no longer Qaid but Qaid-e-Azam. That was how his admirers were impressed by the talk, if not also the sight, of the Marble House. It was rumoured to be worth ₹20 lakhs in 1941. Sri Prakasa, as Governor of Bombay came away impressed, he said, "I do not wonder that Mr Jinnah's heart even as Governor General of Pakistan, was not in his Government House in Karachi, but in his house in Malabar Hill in Bombay."

Such a person could not fight for Pakistan with his heart in it. Remember, until he returned from London in



ACCORDING TO JINNAH'S BROTHER, THEY WERE CULTURALLY PARSEE AND NOT COMMITTED MUSLIMS. THEY DID NOT PRAY AND DID NOT KNOW HOW TO OFFER NAMAZ. THEY ATE AND DRANK WHAT THEY LIKED

1935, there were no politics in his life. And until 1928, he attended the plenary session at Calcutta and felt insulted; he had been a Congressman. So much so that Sarojini Naidu, the poetess politician had described Jinnah as the best ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity. His heart was in his law and its practice. He was reputed to be the highest paid barrister in the British Empire. He had presided over a function in Bombay to welcome Gandhi when he finally returned to India in the year 1915. When Gandhi got up to reply, he began by saying that he was so happy because he was welcomed by a Mahomedan leader. Jinnah publicly showed his irritation, if not also his anger, at reference to his religion for no rhyme or reason.

According to his brother Ahmed, they were culturally Parsee and not committed Musalmans. They did not pray and did not know how to offer namaz. They ate and drank what they liked. Mohammed Ali loved pork sandwiches and ate them openly. They enjoyed whisky

soda in the evening before dinner. His wife, Ruttie, was a Parsee until she died; his only child married a distinguished Parsee called Neville Wadia.

Campaigning for the 1945/46 general elections, he had stopped to make a speech at Jalandhar. Pran Chopra, who later became Editor of The Statesman, was then reporting on the election campaign. In the middle of the speech, reported Chopra, the *azan* (call to prayer) was heard. So the crowd retired for namaz. Jinnah remained on the stage, sat down, reached out to his *achkan* pocket and pulled out his cigar and smoked until the crowd returned and later resumed his speech in eloquent English (Jinnah knew only English and Gujarati). How much the Jalandhar crowd understood, no one knows.

(This is part of an ongoing series on Indian Partition.

The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MALNOURISHMENT IS A SAD REALITY

Sir — The percentage of children who are stunted, wasted, underweight, anemic and obese is on a steady rise in India as per the National Family Health Survey released a few days ago. Over the years, India has become home to the largest number of malnourished children. Despite the States with a high burden of malnutrition having Public Distribution System (PDS) in place to ensure that the poor get food grains at subsidised rates, frequent child deaths are reported due to malnutrition. Scientists say the initial 1,000 days of an individual's lifespan, from the day of conception till he or she turns two, is crucial for physical and cognitive development.

According to the Registrar General of India, under-five mortality in India is 59 per 1,000 live births, which is one of the highest in the world. In 2012, the London based non-profit organisation 'Save the Children' reported that 1.83 million Indian children die every year before the age of five and pinned malnutrition as the prime reason for the deaths. These findings indicate that India is dangerously slipping into a vicious cycle of malnutrition and it is high time that we start investing in child welfare schemes.

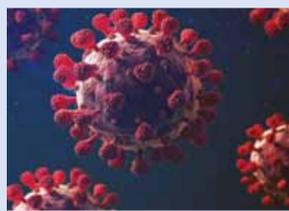
Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

UNFAIR PLAY AGAINST THE CONGRESS

Sir — There lies no doubt that from Indira Gandhi to Rajiv to Sonia to Rahul — all have attained the Post of Prime Minister or Party President smoothly just because they are/were privileged enough to take birth or wedded to the Nehru family. But at the end of the day, the fact also remains that Indira and Rajiv Gandhi had won elections not by brute force; but by winning the hearts or votes of the Indian electorate through the free and fair democratic process. Be it 2004 or 2009, it is the common people who had voted the Sonia Gandhi-led Congress to power in New Delhi.

Still, if the Gandhis are constantly character-assassinated through the hue of "Family rule" or "Dynastic regime", none other than the free will of the

New threat knocks on the door



The WHO has named the newly discovered COVID-19 variant after the 15th letter of the Greek alphabet — Omicron — and designated it 'a variant of concern' (VOC). The worldwide concern over the new variant, initially referred to as B.1.1.529, is explicable in terms of the early indications that it could be more transmissible than the previous variants of the virus including the Delta variant that currently dominates global infections and prove to be resistant to the current vaccines.

The biggest worry is that the multiple mutations in Omicron might blunt the vaccines and reduce immunity. Meanwhile, drug makers have already started to test their vaccines against the new variant to see if they can be tweaked. Now that the new variant has been found in several countries, it could inevitably spread worldwide in the next couple of months despite travel restrictions and border controls imposed after the discovery of the ominous Omicron. A virus has the knack for spreading far and wide. Omicron has shaken the global economy as is evident from global markets tumbling; it has given rise to fears of another slowdown in the global economy. As of now, it is an evolving situation; we need to know more about the composition, characteristics and behaviour of the new variant to know if another surge of the pandemic is imminent for the world to contend with and science to combat.

G David Milton | Maruthancode

Indian electorate gets continuously maligned, mocked and abused as Gandhis did not elect themselves, rather people elected them to power. The BJP should also not forget that it is the people who threw out the saffron regime of "India Shining" to bring in the "Family" in 2004. Do the self-declared guardians of the Constitution mean to say that the electorate are all "bunch of fools" and got "brainwashed" to elect the Congress at the Centre or various States?

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

SUICIDE IS A PREVENTABLE CAUSE OF DEATH

Sir — Suicide is defined as intentionally taking one's own life and comes from the Latin 'suicidium', which literally means "to kill oneself." Now, Suicide is a serious public health problem. Suicide is the third leading cause of death among young adults worldwide. There is a growing recognition that prevention strategies need to be tailored to the region-specific demographics of a country and to be implemented in a cultur-

ally-sensitive manner. This review explores the historical, epidemiological and demographic factors of suicide in India and examines the strategies aimed at the prevention of suicide.

A person suffering from the problem of suicidal thoughts starts getting thoughts of destroying his own life, he also starts feeling depression and behavioral changes during this time. Suicidal thoughts are a common problem and most people feel it when they are going through stress or depression. The reasons for suicide are different in different cultures and sections of the society. But we must keep in mind that suicide is the most preventable cause of death. It is preventable. Suicide attempts are often just a call for help and are increasingly being viewed as a psychological emergency. It's our responsibility as humans and as a part of the same society to prevent suicides.

Nripendra Abhishek Nrip | Saran

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Tight fight

The need of the hour is to call for reining in our raging urge to heedlessly travel

Amid growing global concerns over the new COVID variant, a lot of heat and dust seems to be gathering intensity over India's political horizon, too. While Prime Minister Narendra Modi, stressing the need to be proactive in the wake of this scary development, has already directed the Government officials to review the stated plans for easing of international flight restrictions in the light of "emerging new evidence" against Omicron, labelled by the WHO as a "variant of concern", there are others politicians who are also exploiting this opportunity to add to their political muscle, especially ahead of the Assembly elections in five States early next year. While the Prime Minister's directive to the officials came a day after the Ministry of Civil Aviation announced the resumption of scheduled international flights beginning December 15 (after nearly 20 months of the Coronavirus-induced suspension), the Opposition leaders — like Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party's national convener Arvind Kejriwal — have upped the game by urging Modi to stop the flights coming into India, especially from those countries which are in the grip of the new variant of the Coronavirus infection.



In what can only be termed a political statement, Kejriwal sought to pitch the nation's people against the ruling party at the Centre when he said that India had "recovered" "with immediate effect" from the COVID-19 pandemic "with great difficulty". Of course, it must be underlined that the new variant, feared to have a high potential for another spike in mutations as unseen ever before, was detected in a handful of South African nations. In view of this breakout, a number of countries, including the European Union, have already suspended travel to the affected regions. In this light, there's an understated but expedient and dire need for the nation's people to be more cautious in following COVID-appropriate measures like masking up, maintaining personal hygiene and social distancing, besides ditching vaccine hesitancy and going for the double-dose inoculation. It can't be stressed enough that people, especially the young and frequent travellers, need to understand that this is not the time to be complacent or engage in any false sense of security. We, all of us, must understand that we need to stand united in the face of this looming new threat to the world's health and do everything in our control, and a bit more, to defeat this pernicious virus.

SOUND BITE

If a Congress Government is formed in Uttar Pradesh, the loan of farmers will be waived.



Congress general secretary — Priyanka Gandhi



The new COVID variant has some mutations that are raising concerns with regards to possible evasion of immune response.

NIAID director — Anthony Fauci



Aditya Dhar is one of those rare directors who believes you don't need to shout on your set to make a point.

Actor — Yami Gautam



Obviously it feels great. The victory is a reward for all the hard work I've put in.

Indian squash player — Saurav Ghosal

The TMC did not have any chance to open its account in Tripura, they only made noises.



BJP national vice-president — Dilip Ghosh



FIRST COLUMN INNOVATING BUSINESSES FOR THE CUSTOMER

With external influences such as the pandemic, the digital ecosystem has had more takers



SHAAN RIZVI

In one of his interactions, the Founder of US e-commerce company Amazon, Jeff Bezos, said, "I do get asked, and quite frequently 'What's going to change in the next 10 years?' I rarely get asked... what's not going to change?" He essentially went on to explain how the very fundamentals of the business largely remain unchanged. It is around these fundamentals that stable business empires are built. So, what's essentially not going to change is the consumers demanding better quality of products and services which are more easily accessible and at more affordable rates. The consumer wants to be spoiled for choices. These fundamentals have stood the test of time, remaining constant throughout the evolution of human civilization and its economics. The changing models, technologies, and business practices cater to the same fundamentals. Today, most countries in the world have consumer-driven economies. The growth, development, and prosperity of these countries largely depend on public spending. Being one of the largest consumer markets, India too is driven by consumerism. Around 55 per cent of the country's population form the consuming class, with a spending power of over \$11 per day. As per a McKinsey Global Institute study, it is expect-



ed that consumption in India will grow by \$1.8 trillion in the next decade. Simultaneously, the consumer share in the two highest income tiers (those consumers who spend more than \$30 to \$70 per day) could double by 20 per cent by 2030. At the other end of each business, it is the customers who matter the most. The idea of customer-centricity is principally rooted in the fundamentals of businesses. With external influences such as the ongoing pandemic crisis, the digital ecosystem has had more takers. The digitalised consumer class is growing, and the increasing penetration of data connectivity and technologies is powering the next generation to consume content digitally and shop online. Unlike other species on the planet, human beings have always vied for the ability to maximize the utilization of time. Functioning in a fast-paced world, the 21st-century consumers want to utilize their time for more productivity in their field of interest or profession, outsourcing various tasks to service providers. For instance, online food ordering has significantly replaced the number of home-cooked meals in a month from our dining table. Consumers increasingly want to cut down on travel time or chores and get services, ranging from home cleaning to retail shopping, at their doorstep. A major part of the banking system has transferred to their phones. Increasingly, tech-start-ups have observed the gap between products or service owners and the customers, which has made business owners foray into the service delivery segment.

Thus, disruptive hyper-local solutions have entered the market. Many emerging start-ups have also bridged the gap by making local sellers available to their nearby customers digitally. Home-grown businesses have a greater potential of efficiently leveraging the advantages of a digital platform to make businesses more profitable and capitalise on a wider consumer base. Going hyper-local provides more resiliency and agility to these businesses. The pandemic is a direct testimony of how businesses operating with hyper-local models made a quicker comeback in the market. It is high time now for all the independent home-grown businesses to foray into the digitalisation of their businesses. Hyper-local apps for home-grown businesses can aid local businesses to serve customers locally. The longstanding relationship with the nearby store owner or seller adds to the strength of local businesses, as it acts as a major motivation for promoting customer loyalty. A digital platform gives local businesses a competitive edge to capture a wider consumer base by receiving both in-store and off-store orders and achieve trust within hyper-local customers for a shorter delivery time.

(The writer is founder and CEO of ITES company, Plaxonic. The views expressed are personal.)

Why Gwadar protests against the CPEC?

The Pakistan army is now determining the economic and social conditions of the people in Pakistan, which will hurt the geo-political interests of the region



NISHTHA KAUSHIKI

Recently, sudden protests erupted in Gwadar against the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Project. Slated to be an 'upliftment project' for the people of Pakistan, it has instead become a hallmark of Chinese expansionism resulting in crushing the rights of those very people who have hosted it. Due to Pakistan's fragile governance mechanisms, a weak economy marred with corruption; the situation has turned grave. The protestors were supported by the local political groups and NGOs that had genuine interests against the CPEC Project. The Head of the 'Give rights to Gwadar' rally, Maulana Hidayat ur Rehman, has often been speaking on the rights of the people of Gwadar. Further, the role of the National Party and Baloch Student Organisation also has to be duly recognized in raising their voices against injustice. CPEC goes much beyond the commercial corridor route. It has more penetrative, severe effects on Pakistani society.

First, the CPEC Project has a long belt of 'coastal enjoyment industry', which will supposedly have a vibrant nightlife with luxury hotels, spas, theatres, golf courses. Undoubtedly, the coastal land that would be appropriated for this purpose has nothing to do with Pakistan's small-scale farmers or fishers. Instead, the facilities will ensure 'entertainment' for the Chinese and Pakistani retired Army personnel at the cost of the fishing industry, which has a share of 2 per cent in Islamabad's economy.

The news of the Pakistani government giving licenses to the Chinese fishing trawlers has been around for quite some time now. It is in addition to the Chinese illegal and unregulated fishing in the Arabian Sea even during the critical spawning period. These trawlers possess state of the art technology to fish, process and store fisheries immediately, thereby making the competition with the local fishermen asymmetric in nature. These developments will surely leave behind a trail of unemployment and poverty, resulting in people moving towards drugs and human trafficking.

Second, the CPEC has given immense opportunities to grab huge pieces of fertile agricultural land of the farmers. As the world knows, Pakistan is by and large a praetorian state, i.e., with the Army having the upper hand in most of the government's decisions. CPEC aimed to cover all parts of food production and distribution in the agricultural sector, ranging from seeds and fertilizer manufacturing to storage and transportation. However, the Project is implemented through land acquisitions under the direct supervision of the Army. These acquisitions have been without proper compensations and sometimes even without the consent of their rightful owners. The usurped land is rented out further with 'land rights' to the Chinese enterprises. In other cases, the agricultural projects convert to Chinese private corporations forging joint ventures with



THE CPEC AUTHORITY HAS DECIDED TO CONSTRUCT A FENCED WALL WITH ONLY ONE ENTRY AND EXIT POINT TO ENSURE THAT THE VOICES ARE SUPPRESSED AND GLOBAL MEDIA DOES NOT HIGHLIGHT THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE. THE DEVELOPMENT HAS LED TO SOCIAL ALIENATION OF THE PEOPLE OF BALOCHISTAN AND GWADAR AND CAN LEAD TO A FULL-BLOWN CONFLICT AND DEMANDS FOR SECESSION

(The writer is an Assistant Professor at Central University of Punjab, Bathinda. The views expressed are personal.)



Pakistani companies. Also, when the Pakistan-based private enterprises own the land, the owner turns out to be retired army personnel or someone who holds influence via the armed forces. It is for this reason that the army land grabs has been time and forth been brought to the notice of the international community by the judiciary of Pakistan itself. In April 2021, the Lahore High Court Chief Justice Mohammad Qasim Khan went on record to say that "the Army seems to have become the biggest land grabber in the country and the uniform of the Army is for service and not to rule as a king".

The CPEC Authority has decided to construct a fenced wall with only one entry and exit point to ensure that the voices are suppressed and that international media does not highlight the human rights issue. The city would be guarded fiercely with round-the-clock, AI-enabled CCTV cameras and other high technological types of equipment providing ample surveillance. Sources indicate that this wall is 30 kilometres in length and 10 feet high. Further, Pakistan raised its 34th Light Infantry Division, also known as Special Security Division (SSD), to protect the CPEC. One can hardly come across any other such example where a loan Project of "commercial importance" requires raising a military Division. The development has led to the social alienation of the people of Balochistan, Gwadar in particular and will undoubtedly lead to a full-blown violent conflict and demands for secession.

Agricultural and urban residen-

tial and commercial land appropriation by the Army through concessional purchases in the name of supporting the economy has taken deep inroads into its national character. Various Military subsidies, such as the National Logistics Cell and Fauji Foundation, have at a rapid pace nibbled out the civilian competition in various sectors such as cargo transportation, real estate, fertilizers, oil and gas etc. With each sector dominated by the Military, CPEC only seems to augment a military economy and the lust for land grab. Given the times to come, the farmers would have no legal standing over their land, and in the name of securitizing the Project, it is beyond doubt who will be the actual owner. The Army thus has a nation to itself which is shared with the Chinese Army. On the other hand, in China, the penetrative extent of the Project is that it is often called an 'internal corridor', and hence, it would not be wrong to say that it is a Military Project instead of an economic one.

Last year, Criminal Law [Amendment] Bill 2020 was passed that proscribed ridiculing, bringing into disrepute or defaming Pakistan's armed forces or its members. Of course, given the brewing discontents and recent developments, the role of this Bill is well understood. Usually, the Uniform is accorded much respect, and people worldwide express their gratitude towards their respective forces. The emerging role of the Pakistani Army now seems to encapsulate the idea of defending the Taliban and other extremists apart from the Chinese Project. It is now determining the

economic and social conditions of the people in Pakistan, which will hurt the geopolitical interests of the region.

Further, the military government deepened the Baloch alienation with the murder of Akbar Khan Bugti in 2006, who at the time of his death was 79 years old. The killing of Mufti Hidayatullah in 2018, another Baloch leader, also raised the intent of the Military presence in Balochistan. Early this year, a Pakistani army Major General Ayman Bilal, confessed TO China's role in suppressing the Baloch movement and the Sino-Pak intentions against Iran's activities in Balochistan. The CPEC and housing societies predominantly being given to the Pakistan Army personnel probably intend to replace Balochs with the Pakistani Punjabis to contain the Baloch independence movement.

So closely related to this land plunder is a geopolitical question. Where does more land come from to settle the new batch of military officers who retire every year? The answer to this question lies in the current Afghan conundrum. In case the Afghan corridor is integrated with CPEC, then where do the Afghan people go? It seems that the Afghan refugee crisis would be a problem of Europe and Russia and not a Sino-Pak one. The appointment of new ISI Chief Lt. Gen Nadeem Anjum, who was previously the awardee of 'Mohsin e Balochistan', sets the agenda for Afghan 'land grabs' and increased suppression of the Baloch and the Afghan people. More mess, it seems, awaits the region.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

MANISH TEWARI SHOULD FOCUS ON CHINA INSTEAD OF CRITICISING THE UPA GOVERNMENT OVER ITS HANDLING OF THE 26/11 ATTACK.

—CONGRESS LEADER
ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY



ADHIR DADA, CHINA'S CONTINUED INCURSIONS AND THE RESPONSE OF THE NDA/BJP GOVERNMENT FORM A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF MY BOOK.

—CONGRESS LEADER
MANISH TEWARI

We must be on guard against 'third wave' of radicalisation

Although the ISIS has experienced territorial defeat, it's been able to confuse the enemy with its continual subterfuges, turning weaknesses into strengths

Radicalisation that is being felt in India of the present can be attributed to the growing persuasion of the Hanbali school in the country by way of the revival of groups such as the Popular Front of India (PFI). Although PFI—whose top leadership are primarily from Kerala—deny the allegation that the organisation has any truck with the Hanbali school (another name for Wahabi and/or Salafi), the fact of the matter is that they have been radicalising Indian Muslims towards the conservative strain of Islam whatever be the denominations.



JAIDEEP SAIKIA

The Hifazat-e-Islam Bangladesh (HIB) and Islami Andolan Bangladesh (IOB)—Islamist formations that have re-emerged in current times

(The writer is a conflict analyst and author of Terror Sans Frontiers: Islamist Militancy in North East India. The views expressed are personal.)

and are becoming increasingly active after the Taliban takeover of Bangladesh—are close associates of PFI. The HIB and IOB are working inside Bangladesh as over-ground activists of al-Qaeda and ISIS affiliated organisations such as Jama'at al Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) and Ansarullah Bangla Team (ABT). Bowing to immense pressure from the Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime apparatus of Bangladesh, both JMB and ABT have curtailed their activity for the present, propping up instead its surrogates by way of HIB and IOB. The stratagem is simple. The methodology is to instill a sense of complacency in the establishment that JMB and ABT has disappeared. The



reality is that they have activated "Op Confusion" in Bangladesh as well as rejuvenated Islamism in Bangladesh. Indeed, the timeline of the Islamist threat is quite simple. The author was able to plot a perceptible timeline during the period of his advanced research in the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA. The study unearthed a "progression of wave" in the modus operandi of Islamist action which incidentally would never cease until the end of

time: the "transformative moment in Islam" is going to be never-ending. In fact, the manner in which the United States-led coalition has sought to de-territorialise ISIS from the area that the latter had occupied in order to sustain the neo-caliphate has ascertained that the "war against the infidels" would now not only be a ceaseless one but an accelerated course of action.

The point that is being made is that although ISIS has experienced territorial defeat it has been able to confuse the enemy with its continual subterfuges, turning disadvantages into advantages. A clear-eyed analysis would, therefore, bring to the fore the simplicity with which the Islamists are readying themselves for the next onslaught.

Therefore, whereas there was exhibition of massive violent movement and radicalisation between 1999 and 2005 which the author describes as the "First Wave", the "Second Wave" began with the "oath of allegiance" or Bay'ah by groups such as JMB and ABT to ISIS in the wake of the formation of the neo-caliphate of Abu Bakr-al-Baghdadi. The territorial setbacks witnessed persistent "lone-wolf" attacks throughout the world including places such as Orlando and Nice and observers of Islamist action in Bangladesh would recall the "hostage situation" in Dhaka on July 1, 2016 and the machete killings and suicide bombings of the years following the event. The new "call to arms" was to decimate the infidel wherever found as the

hijrah was no longer an undemanding affair. However, relentless action by the Bangladesh security forces against the Islamists have quietened the radicals momentarily and the "battle" has been temporarily—handed over to the good offices of HIB and IOB who are keeping the movement alive by demanding aspects such as the enactment of "Blasphemy Laws".

However, with the almost total territorial ouster of ISIS from the areas that it had occupied in Iraq and Syria the strategy is about to witness a sea change. Egged on by al-Qaeda and ISIS which is already inside India, its affiliates (including PFI) would throw open the gates of radicalism and don a form that would be hitherto the most menacing. It

would be a combination of a mass recruitment b) protests against acts, laws and ministrations that a combined grouping of radicals considers un-Islamic—bringing thereby into their fold fence-sitters and moderates among the minority community and c) let loose sophisticated forms of violence that most agencies would not be able to even imagine.

Memories of Shakira, wife of Rashidur Rahman Sumon, a hardcore pro-ISIS, Neo-JMB cadre blowing herself up with her infant in her lap on 26 December 26, 2016 should be sufficient proof about the manner in which an "aping-exercise" would be engendered by Indian counterparts in what the author presages as the dawn of the "Third wave" of Radicalisation.

Ayushman Bharat boon for poor: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday lauded the 'Ayushman Bharat' scheme which, he said, is "proving to be a boon for the poor", emphasised on innovation and "can do spirit" and praised the armed forces saying the 50th-anniversary celebrations of India's victory over Pakistan in the 1971 war will take place next month.

Modi also cautioned against being casual about Covid-19 behaviour saying the pandemic has yet not made its exit from the country.

Addressing his 83rd episode of monthly Mann Ki Baat radio programme, Modi said, "The country celebrates Navy Day and Armed Forces Flag Day in December. We all know that on December 16, the country is celebrating the golden jubilee year of the 1971 war."

"On this occasion, I want to remember our armed forces, our soldiers. Especially, the brave mothers who gave birth to these heroes," he said.

He also highlighted the significance of places like Jhansi and Bundelkhand in India's freedom struggle. "Heroes like Rani Laxmibai and Jhalkari Bai



belong from here. These regions have also gifted us Khel Ratna like Major Dhyani Chand," said the Prime Minister.

In his second last radio address of 2021, Modi asked youth to innovate and show determination an "Can Do spirit" to achieve their goals and setting up startups.

"In every country with a large youth population, three aspects matter a lot. Sometimes, it becomes the true identity of the youth. The first aspect is - ideas and innovation. The second is the spirit of taking risks and the third is the 'Can Do' spirit. This is the era of start-ups and it is also true that today India is leading

the way in the world of start-ups", he said.

Modi interacted with people who benefited with the 'Ayushman Bharat' health scheme and heard how they cured themselves of heart and knee ailments without spending any money.

'Ayushman Bharat' scheme is the biggest boon to poor and their well-being', Modi said.

He asked people to connect with nature and cited examples as to how people pioneered, resurrected and preserved it in their respective areas.

"There was a river in Jalaun called Noon river. Gradually, the river came to brink of extinction. This created a cri-

"When we hear about a life having changed due to the efforts of the Government and its schemes, and the experience of that changed life, we too are filled with emotions. It gives satisfaction to the mind and inspiration to take that plan to the people. This is what I seek from life. I don't want to be in power, my goal is to serve the people," the Prime Minister said.

sis for farmers in the area. The people of Jalaun this year formed a committee and revived the river. This is an example of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas', he said.

The PM said "When we conserve nature, it blesses us with sustenance and protection in return."

BJP president J P Nadra who listened the radio talk, described 'Mann ki Baat' as a "unique non-political address" by the Prime Minister and said it inspires everybody. In the BJP National Executive this month, Nadra had asked party workers to institutionalise the 'Mann ki baat' programme at booth levels across the country.

ED summons Amazon India head Over alleged irregularities in deal with Future Group

Senior executives of Future Group also summoned under FEMA

PNS/PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate has summoned Amazon India head Amit Agarwal next week over alleged irregularities in a deal with Future Group. The agency has also summoned the senior executives of the Future Group.

The executives have been summoned along with documents under the provisions of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), sources said.

Amazon India head Agarwal, some other senior officials of the company and those of the Future Group have been called, the sources said.

The investigation is being conducted under various sections of the FEMA after the federal agency received a communication from the Commerce Ministry early this year seeking "necessary action"



against e-commerce players like Amazon and Flipkart pertaining to certain multi-brand retail businesses and an observation made by the Delhi High Court in relation to Amazon. The HC had said that the attempt made by the US-based firm to control Future Retail through a conflation of agreements it has with an unlisted unit of the Indian company will be considered as violative of the FEMA and foreign direct investment (FDI) rules.

The executives have been asked to join so that investigation can be taken forward. The agency has gathered details from the documents submitted by the companies earlier and other sources over the last few

months, agency sources said. An Amazon spokesperson said they were examining the ED summons.

"We are in receipt of summons issued by the ED in connection with the Future Group. As we have just received the summons, we are examining it and will respond within the given time frame," the spokesperson said in a statement. The Kishore Biyani-led Future Group did not respond to the queries over the development.

Amazon and Future Group have been battling it out in courts after the Kishore Biyani-led group in August last year agreed to sell its assets to billionaire Mukesh Ambani's

Reliance Retail on a slump sale basis for Rs 24,500 crore.

Earlier this month, a promoter entity of Future Retail Ltd (FRL) had been asked by the ED to provide documents pertaining to the 2019 deal with Amazon. FRL had noted that it has not received any direction to provide any document.

The independent directors of FRL have approached the Competition Commission of India (CCI), urging it to revoke the approval it had given to the Amazon-FCPL deal in 2019, alleging the e-commerce major of making false statements before it.

Amazon has also written to the independent directors of FRL, alleging "significant financial irregularities", and said this warrants a "thorough and independent examination" of relevant facts and related party transactions between FRL and other Future Group entities.

It has also reached out to CCI, requesting it to "act in aid of the binding injunctions operating against FRL, FCPL and the Biyanis, in terms of the EA (emergency arbitrator) Order and the Order on Vacate Application and recall the Observation Letters forthwith".

India to have new tourism policy with Covid-induced norms



ARCHANA JYOTI ■ KOHIMA

India will soon have a new National Tourism Policy in keeping with the Covid-induced new norms that have changed the way people travel within the country and abroad.

"Just when we were ramping up the tourism policy, Covid-19 crisis came bringing many challenges but it has also brought opportunities. We are now again deliberating on how the policy is framed in keeping with the global standards to be followed in the Covid-era," ADG from the Union Tourism Ministry, Rupinder Brar told *The Pioneer* on the sidelines of the second day of the three-day International Tourism Mart being held here at the picturesque capital of Nagaland.

The Mart aims to showcase the Northeast region as a tourist hotspot as

well boost its tourism potential as a part of the government's 'look east policy'.

She explained that focus is now on product, process and promotion where technology including the digital one will play a key role in keeping with people's needs during the Covid era.

"Tourists are looking for contactless facilities, for instance both to drive bookings and to facilitate safe travel." She also pointed out that Staycations are becoming a way of travel in post-Covid era. Tourists are looking for open spaces and travelling in smaller groups preferably with family or close friends as a safety measure.

During the event, various State Governments from the region made presentations and discussed several aspects of tourism and how they plan to boost the sector which has huge revenue and employment generation potential.

BSF hands over Pak national who entered India by mistake to Pak Rangers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Border Security Force (BSF) has handed over a Pakistani national who inadvertently entered Indian territory in Gurdaspur, Punjab to its Pak counterpart Pakistan Rangers as a goodwill gesture.

"On November 26, 2021, alert Border Security Force troops observed that one Pak National crossed International Boundary, entered inside India and further moved towards Border Security Fencing in the area of responsibility (AOR) of 73 Battalion of BSF, Gurdaspur sector," the BSF said in a statement.

Sensing the threat and to stop the misadventure, troops challenged him. The Pak intruder stopped and subsequently was apprehended by BSF, it said.

During questioning, it came to notice that he had crossed over Indian territory inadvertently. Nothing objectionable was recovered from him, it further said.

The BSF approached Pakistan Rangers and lodged protest on the matter. Thereafter, on request of Pakistan Rangers, the said apprehended Pakistani national was handed over to Pak Rangers at about Saturday.

He was an inadvertent border crosser and on humanitarian grounds, the BSF decided to hand him over to the Pak Rangers.

During this year, 16 Pakistan inadvertent border crossers have been handed over to Pakistan Rangers by Border Security Force.

Punjab Frontier on humanitarian grounds and goodwill gesture, it added.

Ease media restrictions on coverage of Parl sessions, Adhir writes to LS Speaker



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Adhir Ranjan wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Sunday to ease the restrictions imposed on media to ensure free and fair coverage of proceedings of parliament during the Winter Session commencing Monday.

Raising the issue of restrictions on media, the Congress leader said during the past one and a half years, a majority of the media people were denied access to the Press Gallery and interactions with parliamentarians on the pretext of pandemic guidelines.

While malls, restaurants, cinema halls, marketplace and other public places have been opened due to the withdrawal of the Covid-19 curbs, the restrictions imposed during the pan-

dem are still on for the media persons as far as covering the proceedings of the Parliament is concerned, he pointed out.

"It is definitely against the spirit of parliamentary democracy. I am concerned that there is a dangerous trend emerging to isolate parliament and parliamentarians from media scrutiny."

"In view of the above, I appeal to you to ease the restrictions on the media persons in the Parliament complex and they should be allowed access to Press Gallery and all necessary facilities may be provided to them to cover parliament proceedings in a free and fair manner," he said in his letter to the Speaker.

The winter session of Parliament starts from Monday and will continue till December 23.

Haryana becomes 5th State to reduce VAT on aviation fuel

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Haryana has slashed the value added tax on aviation turbine fuel to 1 per cent, making it the fifth State to reduce the levy on the fuel. In a series of tweets, Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on Sunday expressed his gratitude to Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar for the prompt action on reducing the VAT on jet fuel to 1 per cent and said the move will also set an example for other states to follow.

Scindia also noted that the decision will boost air connectivity and economic development in Haryana. "With this, Haryana becomes the 8th State/UT to slash the tax rate after Andaman & Nicobar Islands, J&K, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, MP & Tripura," he said. Scindia has been requesting states to reduce taxes on jet fuel, which accounts for a major chunk of the operational costs of an airline.

On November 18, the minister had said that seven states and Union Territories have slashed their VAT on ATF and that he was expecting more states to follow suit. With the current tax structure on ATF, "you cannot have a robust civil aviation sector. I am very clear on that," he had said.

CONSTITUTION DAY WCD Min, UN Women commemorates constitutional history, contribution of women

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On the occasion of Constitution Day, Ministry of Women and Child Development and UN Women India commemorated India's constitutional history and contributions of the great women visionaries, with a commitment to uphold the fundamentals of equal and just republic that is enshrined in the country's foundational charter.

In her keynote address Union Minister, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Smriti Irani, said, "We've had the opportunity to honour the excellence and determination of so many women of India, especially those women of history who took part in writing the Indian Constitution. This constitution was not given to us. We gave it to ourselves. Let us remind ourselves on Constitution Day the things the Indian Constitution stands for - justice to all, appeasement to none."

Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Indevard Pandey, Anita Bhatia, Assistant Secretary-General & Deputy Executive Director, UN Coordination, Partnerships, Resources and Sustainability, UN Women, Susan Jane Ferguson, UN Women India Country Representative were present on the occasion.

Low pressure area forming over south Andaman Sea

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A low pressure system is likely to develop over south Andaman Sea around November 29-30, which might intensify into the current cyclone season's first cyclone over the Bay of Bengal (BoB) in the 2021 post-monsoon season. In its latest weather bulletin, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that a low pressure area is likely to form over the south Andaman Sea around November 30 and this system is likely to become more marked and move west-northwestwards during subsequent 48 hours. This has the potential to intensify into a cyclonic storm in due course.

"Under its influence, isolated heavy rainfall has been predicted for Andaman and Nicobar Islands on November 30. Rainfall is likely to increase over North Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Odisha from the night of December 3," the IMD said.

October to December is among the favourable months for the development of cyclones in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. This year, no cyclonic storm formed over the Bay of Bengal in October and November.



The last such storm over the bay was cyclone Gulab in late September when the south-west monsoon was still active over the region. Cyclone Gulab made landfall over north Andhra Pradesh on September 26. Later, the remnants of the storm entered the Arabian Sea and intensified into a severe cyclone, Shaheen.

About 80 cyclones are formed around the world annually, out of which five are formed in the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea, together known as the North Indian Ocean. India's east and west coasts are prone to cyclones with the maximum associated hazards—rain, heavy winds and storm surge—faced by coastal districts of West Bengal, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh. Cyclones in the North Indian Ocean are bi-modal in nature,

that is, they occur during two seasons—April to June (pre-monsoon) and October to December (post-monsoon). Of these, May and November remain the most conducive for the development of cyclones," IMD said.

The IMD has also issued an orange alert for coastal districts in south Andhra Pradesh and north Tamil Nadu as the rain continued in the two southern states with the activity expected to reduce over Tamil Nadu by the end of this month. An orange alert usually indicates heavy rain accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning. The Puducherry government declared holiday for all schools and colleges in Puducherry and Karaikal regions on November 29 and 30 in view of the incessant rains.

Unruly passenger offloaded from plane in Guwahati

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A passenger from SpiceJet flight SG 8169 (Guwahati-Delhi) was offloaded on Sunday (November 28) after he repeatedly got up from his seat and caused a ruckus. Other passengers told the crew that they refuse to fly with the man on board. The passenger was identified as one Ajay Gaur who was flying from Guwahati to Delhi on flight SG 8169.

Reportedly, after the plane took off, Gaur began screaming that this would probably be his "last journey" and that he would die on the flight. The passenger also claimed that his "assassin" was also on the flight and pleaded with the other passengers to "save him".

After creating ruckus and allegedly hitting crew members of the plane, the co-passengers stood up and complained that they were not prepared to fly with Gaur. The passenger was then deplaned from the plane and handed over to the CISF ORT team at Borjhar's Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International

Airport.

According to a SpiceJet spokesperson, "After repeated attempts to pacify him failed and co-passengers told the crew that they were not ready to fly with the said passenger on board. The aircraft was brought back to the bay where airport security officials along with SpiceJet staff deplaned the passenger and handed him over to the CISF (Central Industrial Security Force)."

Earlier in July this year, Air India offloaded a man on board its flight bound to Hyderabad from Muscat at Vijayawada International Airport for allegedly misbehaving with a woman passenger. Identified as K. Lakshman, 45, the person hails from Kamareddy in Telangana state. He boarded the Air India flight in Muscat to reach Hyderabad via Vijayawada. However, as he allegedly started misbehaving with a woman passenger sitting in front of his seat, Lakshman was made to disembark at Vijayawada. Authorities at the airport handed him over to Gannavaram police.

India, Lanka, Maldives carry out maritime exercise in Indian Ocean



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Given the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean region, the navies of India, Sri Lanka and Maldives are engaged in an intense multi-lateral maritime exercise named 'Colombo Security Conclave Focused Operation'. It is the maiden two-day exercise of this nature between the lead Maritime Security Agencies of India, Maldives and Sri Lanka ending on Sunday, navy officials said here on Sunday.

Giving details of the exercise, they said ships and aircraft of Indian Navy, Maldives National Defence Force and Sri Lankan Navy are participating and operating over a vast area in

the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) of the three countries in the Southern Arabian Sea.

A trilateral Table Top Exercise between the three navies was conducted on July 14 and 15 July this year. The three countries had participated in the 5th Deputy National Security Advisors (NSA) - level meeting of Colombo Security Conclave on August four wherein ways of enhancing maritime security cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region were deliberated upon.

The 'CSC Focused Operation' is being conducted with an aim of keeping this vital part of the Indian Ocean Region safe and secure for commercial shipping, interna-

tional trade and conduct of legitimate maritime activities.

The exercise will help build understanding and interoperability between the lead maritime security agencies, and facilitate institution of measures to prevent and suppress transnational crimes in the region. It will further enhance the operational synergy by exchange of information and conduct of coordinated operations to handle maritime incidents and accidents.

The conduct of 'CSC Focused Operation' exemplifies the deep trilateral engagement between India, Maldives and Sri Lanka, and emphasises their commitment to promote peace, and security in the region, officials said.

RBI to aid of depositors

CUSTOMERS OF 16 STRESSED COOP BANKS TO GET INSURANCE COVER

New Delhi: The customers of 16 stressed cooperative banks will get up to ₹ 5 lakh deposit insurance cover on Monday from the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) subsidiary DICGC as part of its mandate under a new law.

The Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) had earlier prepared a list of 21 banks but five, including Punjab & Maharashtra Co-Operative Bank (PMC Bank), are out of the list as they are either in merger process or out of the moratorium.

The Parliament in August passed the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (Amendment) Bill, 2021 ensuring that account holders get up to ₹ 5 lakh within 90 days of the RBI imposing a moratorium on the banks. Following the enactment, the Government has notified September 1, 2021 as the date on which the provisions of the Act would come into force.

The mandated 90 days from the notified date comes to an end on November 29, 2021.

The depositors of these banks, who have not yet submitted their claims, are advised to contact the respective banks, a public notice from DICGC said.

"The claims should be supported by officially valid documents of identity and written consent to receive the amount lying in credit of their deposit account (willingness declaration) subject to a maximum of ₹ 5 lakh along with alternate bank account details into which the said amount may be credited," it said.

Depositors submitting valid documents, as mentioned above, will be paid by credit to the alternate bank account specified by depositors or on their consent, to their Aadhaar linked bank account, it said.

For the second phase, the last date for submission of documents is December 10, 2021 while date of payment is December 31, 2021, it added. Besides PMC Bank, depositors of Hindu Co-Op Bank Ltd, Pathankot of Punjab, Rupee Co-Operative Bank Ltd and Needs Of Life

Co-Operative Bank Ltd from Maharashtra and Bidar Mahila Urban Co-Op Bank Ltd of Karnataka are out of this. It is to be noted that the RBI had in June given in-principle approval to a consortium of Centrum Financial Services and fintech startup BharatPe to acquire the stressed PMC Bank.

Clearing decks for the takeover, the RBI in October gave licence for small finance bank to the consortium. Recently, the DICGC said there may be a need to invoke the provisions of Section 18 A (7) (a) of the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (Amendment) Act, 2021.

As per the Section 18 A (7) (a) of the Act, if a stressed bank is under the resolution process, the period for disbursement of ₹ 5 lakh can be further extended by 90 days.

Last year, the Government increased the insurance cover on deposits by five times to ₹ 5 lakh. The enhanced deposit insurance cover of ₹ 5 lakh came into effect from February 4, 2020. (PTI)

COAI asks Govt to reduce 5G spectrum base price by more than half

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Telecom industry body COAI is learnt to have asked the government to cut the base price of spectrum by more than half, for the proposed auction especially for 5G services, according to industry sources.

In the first auction of radio airwaves in five years in March 2021, the government offered 2,308.80 MHz of spectrum in seven bands, at a reserve price of nearly ₹ 4 lakh crore.

However, airwaves in the premium 700 MHz and 2,500 MHz bands went unsold mainly due to high base price.

The Government could not put 3.3-3.6 Ghz frequency range for auction as it could not get it vacated in time and the base price of the radio waves in the spectrum band was termed to be very expensive for 5G services.

"COAI has asked the Government for a drastic cut in spectrum price for the proliferation of digital connectivity and specially for ushering 5G



services. It has requested the government to reduce the base price by more than half in the proposed spectrum auction," a telecom operator representative told PTI.

The proposed spectrum auction is likely to be held in the April-June quarter of 2022.

The Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) declined to comment on the matter.

Representatives of two separate telecom operators quoted different figures on the scale of reduction demanded by the industry body, but concurred on the view that the COAI has sought to slash spectrum price by more than half.

One representative said it is to the tune of 50-60 per cent and the other senior official of another telecom operator mentioned 60-70 per cent.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) had recommended a base price fixed at ₹ 492 crore per megahertz for spectrum in 3.3-3.6 Ghz.

Telecom operators interested in buying radio waves for 5G will have to shell out a minimum of ₹ 9,840 crore on pan-India basis to buy spectrum in 3,300-3,600 Mhz band as Trai has suggested that it "should be put to auction in the block size of 20 MHz".

In May, the Government allocated spectrum to the telecom companies for trials across various locations for six months in the 700 Mhz band, 3.3-3.6 Gigahertz (Ghz) band and 24.25-28.5 Ghz band.

At present 5G trials are going on in the country. The Department of Telecom has extended the trial period to May 2022, or till the time spectrum auction results are out, whichever is earlier.

Petrol, diesel price to fall only on sustained drop in international oil prices

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Petrol and diesel prices will be reduced only if the current drop in international oil prices is sustained for a few more days, as domestic retail prices are fixed on a 15-day rolling average, official sources said.

Global benchmark Brent crude oil prices remained largely range bound at around USD 80 to 82 per barrel, levels during November (till November 25). On Friday, November 26, prices fell by around USD 4 per barrel till Asian timestamp.

However, subsequently after the opening of the US market, with the drastic sell off in Brent Futures, prices fell further by around USD 6 to close at USD 72.91 a barrel at ICE London. Sources said, this seems like a knee jerk reaction from fears that the new Covid-19 variant discovered in Southern Africa might dampen economic growth and trigger another demand slump.

State-owned fuel retailers Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) revise petrol and diesel prices on a daily basis.

But this revision is based on the average benchmark international fuel rate in the previous fortnight. So, the price on Sunday is decided by the average in the previous 15-days.

"Natural expectation from the drop in rates on Friday is that retail pump rates will also go down. But that is not how retail rates move. Since the international oil prices have been range bound in most of November, the drop on Friday when averaged out with the previous fortnight does not translate into any significant change."

"Only when the fall in rates is sustained for a few more days will we see a reduction in retail petrol and diesel prices," a source said.

438 infra projects show cost overrun of ₹4.34 lakh crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 438 infrastructure projects, each worth ₹ 150 crore or more, have been hit by cost overruns totalling more than ₹ 4.34 lakh crore, according to a report.

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation monitors infrastructure projects worth ₹ 150 crore and above. Of the 1,680 such projects, 438 reported cost overruns and 539 were delayed.

"Total original cost of implementation of the 1,680 projects was ₹ 21,74,182.86 crore and their anticipated completion cost is likely to be ₹ 26,08,330.02 crore, which reflects overall cost overruns of ₹ 4,34,147.16 crore (19.97 per cent of original cost)," the ministry's latest report for October 2021 said.

According to the report, the expenditure incurred on these projects till October 2021 is ₹ 12,64,545.31 crore, which is 48.48 per cent of the anticipated cost of the projects. However, the report said that the number of delayed projects decreases to 377 if delay is calculated on the basis of the latest schedule of completion.

Further, for 837 projects neither the year of commissioning nor the tentative gestation period has been reported.

Out of the 539 delayed projects, 98 have overall delay in the range of 1-12 months, 109 have been delayed for 13-24 months, 211 for 25-60 months and 121 projects have delays of 61 months and above.

The average time overrun in these 539 delayed projects is 47.16 months.

PNB puts up National Steel & Agro Industries for sale to recover ₹200 cr dues

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) has put up a Madhya Pradesh-based steel and agriculture company for sale to recover its outstanding of nearly ₹ 200 crore.

The National Steel and Agro Industries Ltd has a balance outstanding of ₹ 199.90 crore to the bank.

"We intend to place the account for sale to ARCs/NBFCs/other banks/FIs, on the terms and conditions stipulated in the bank's policy, in line with the regulatory guidelines," PNB said in an auction notification.

The lender has set the reserve price (on cash basis) at ₹ 95 crore for the sale process.

For the prospective bidder to expedite the process of due diligence exercise and for verification purposes of the



buyer, the bank said it will make all possible efforts to bring copies of documents at one place.

However, the bank at its sole discretion may withdraw the account offered for sale, without assigning any reasons, it PNB has set December 8 as the last date for completion of due diligence exercise. The last date of submission of binding bids is December 9, while the date for opening of bids is fixed as December 10, 2021.

FPIs net buyers in Nov; invest ₹5,319 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

New Delhi: Foreign portfolio investors (FPI) have pumped in a net sum of ₹ 5,319 crore in Indian capital markets despite a massive correction seen in equities over the last fortnight. In October, they were net sellers to the tune of ₹ 12,437 crore. As per depositories data, overseas investors put in a net ₹ 1,400 crore into equities and ₹ 3,919 crore into the debt segment between November 1-26. This translated into total net investment of ₹ 5,319 crore. "Since FPIs have been holding large quantity of banking stocks, they have been major sellers in this segment. Sustained selling has made banking stocks attractive from the valuation perspective," said VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services. He further noted that sharp correction in the market on 26th November has been mainly triggered by concerns arising out of the new strain of the virus spotted in South Africa, Botswana and Hong Kong.

IT Ministry to celebrate 'Azadi Ka Digital Mahotsav' event from today

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The IT ministry will celebrate 'Azadi Ka Digital Mahotsav' from November 29 to December 5, marking a week-long series of events and activities to showcase India's achievements in the digital space and outline road map for future, an official release said on Sunday.

The event would highlight how digital technologies are transforming all sectors of the economy, impacting the socio-cultural, political and economic landscape, and

underline the spirit of self-reliance in the digital sector.

The event will be attended by Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister for Electronics and IT, Railways and Communications, and Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Minister of State for Electronics and IT and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

It will also be attended by senior officials from the Central Ministries and Departments, States and UTs and industry representatives.

"MEITY to celebrate 'Azadi Ka Digital Mahotsav'

from 29 November to 5 December, 2021," the statement said.

The key themes of events scheduled during the week are Digital India, making India Aatmanirbhar in Electronics System Design and Manufacturing, empowering common service centres, making India Aatmanirbhar in Swadeshi Compute Designs, citizen engagement by MyGov and Digital Payments Utsav.

The events during week-long conference will include plenary sessions, panel discussions, and exhibitions.

RBI's recent norms may spike NPAs for NBFCs: ICRA

IANS ■ NEW DELHI

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) recent notification on income recognition, asset classification, and provisioning norms for banks, non-banking financial institutions (NBFCs) and all-India financial institutions may lead to a sharp spike in the non-performing

assets (NPAs) for non-banking finance companies, ICRA said on Sunday.

On November 12, the central bank had said that classification of special mention accounts and non-performing accounts should be done on a day-end position basis and upgraded from an NPA to standard category only after clearance of all outstanding overdues.

FROM PAGE 1

COVID-19 COULD AGAIN GROUND GLOBAL FLIGHTS

concern 'Omicron'.

The Centre has asked all States and UTs to focus on intensive containment, active surveillance, enhanced testing, monitoring of hotspots and increased coverage of vaccination and augmentation of health infrastructure. In a letter to Modi, the Delhi Chief Minister urged him to stop international flights from countries affected by the new Corona variant. "Our country has fought a tough fight against Corona for the last one-and-a-half years. We should do everything possible to prevent the new variant of concern, recently recognised by the WHO, from entering India. A number of countries, including the European Union (EU), have suspended travel to the affected regions. I urge you to stop flights from these regions with immediate effect. Any delay in this regard may prove harmful if any affected person enters India," Kejriwal said in the letter. The Karnataka government has requested the Centre to impose a travel ban on passengers coming from South Africa, Hong Kong and Botswana in view of the detection of Omicron, Chief Minister Bommai said.

The BMC has also imposed new restrictions on international passengers travelling from or transiting through South Africa, Hong Kong and Botswana. All air passengers will have to undergo mandatory RT-PCR tests at the Mumbai Airport. If a traveller tests positive for Covid-19, they will be sent to institutional quarantine and the samples will be sent for genome sequencing. Until recently, a passenger testing positive was sent to home quarantine. All passengers arriving at the Mumbai airport will have to get their passport scrutinised at the immigration counter for travel history of the last two weeks.

Earlier this week, the Ministry of Civil Aviation issued an order allowing scheduled international flights to and from all countries considered "not at risk" with effect from December 15. The Ministry said that passengers from countries in "at risk" category would require to follow additional measures following their arrival in India, including testing for coronavirus disease. The countries kept in 'at risk' category are - the UK, South Africa, Brazil, Bangladesh, Botswana, China, Mauritius, New Zealand, Zimbabwe, Singapore, Hong Kong and Israel.

NEW RULES FOR...

in revised travel guidelines for international passengers in view of 'Omicron'.

Passengers will have to submit a self-declaration form on the online Air Suvidha portal and include travel history for the past two weeks. They will also be required to upload a negative Covid-19 RT-PCR test report, which should have been conducted within 72 hours of the journey. A declaration with respect to the authenticity of the Covid test report will also be required, manipulated reports will make the passenger liable for criminal prosecution.

The new guidelines will come into effect from December 1, 2021.

Travellers from 12 at-risk countries will be subjected to testing and extra surveillance. They will need to take the Covid test post-arrival and wait for results at the airport before leaving or taking any connecting flights. If the test is negative, they'll follow home quarantine for 7 days, re-test on the 8th day and if negative again, further self-monitor for the next 7 days.

'OMICRON SPIKE MUTATIONS MAY HIT JOB EFFICACY'

new, and potentially more contagious variant, was first reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) from South Africa on November 24. It has since been identified in Botswana, Belgium, Hong Kong and Israel among other countries.

On Friday, it was designated a Variant of Concern by the WHO, which named it Omicron. A 'Variant of Concern' is the WHO's top category of worrying Covid-19 strain.

OPP MIFFED AS PM SKIPS MEET

Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and Anand Sharma from the Congress, TR Baalu and Tiruchi Siva from the DMK, Sharad Pawar from the NCP, Vinayak Raut from the Shiv Sena, Ramgopal Yadav from the Samajwadi Party, Satish Mishra from the BSP, Prasanna Acharya from the BJD and National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah.

"We were expecting the Prime Minister to attend the meeting and share something with us. We wanted to ask more about the farm laws as there are some apprehensions that these three farm laws may come back in some other form,"

said Kharge after the meet.

The Congress demanded that compensation be paid to the families of farmers who passed away during the protest. The fuel price rise and tensions with China at the Line of Actual Control were also raised by the Congress. Several parties also renewed their demands for the early passage of the Women's Reservation Bill. With many floor leaders pointing out that Bills are not being discussed at the standing committee, Rajnath Singh said that the Government is ready to refer the Bills to the parliamentary committees for detailed discussion.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi denied that the Prime Minister violated a tradition by skipping the all-party meet. Left parties had raised the issue of the Prime Minister absenting himself from the important meeting.

"There was no tradition of the Prime Minister attending the all-party meeting. It was started by Modiji. He couldn't attend the today's meeting," said Joshi, adding 31 parties attended the meeting. AAP leader Sanjay Singh walked out of the all-party meeting alleging he was not allowed to speak and alleged "muzzling of the Opposition". Singh wanted to raise the farmers' demand for law on MSP. "They (Government) don't let any member speak during the all-party meeting. I raised the issue of bringing the law on MSP guarantee in this session of the Parliament and other issues including extension of BSF's jurisdiction etc. They don't let us speak in all-party meet and Parliament," said Singh.

The YSR Congress Party demanded that the Government form a Joint Parliamentary Committee for bringing statutory resolution for the MSP. YSR Congress leader in Rajya Sabha Vijaysai Reddy said the party also demands that marine and poultry products be brought under the MSP regime. Trinamool Congress and YSR Cong also asked the Government not to divest the profit-making public sector companies.

Almost all Opposition parties sought the sacking of Minister of State for Home Ajay Kumar Mishra, whose son is accused of running over farmers in Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh.

The Bill to repeal the three farm laws will be introduced by the Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar. The ruling BJP and main Opposition party Congress have issued whips to their MPs to be present on the day.

TMC TO SKIP OPP MEET IN PARL CALLED BY CONG TODAY

The reaction from the grand old party came even as the TMC attended the all-party meeting convened by the Union Government earlier in the day.

The Congress, in its Parliamentary party meeting chaired by party president Sonia Gandhi had expressed anger over the way the TMC has been poaching Congress leaders, including Sushmita Dev, Kirti Azad Ashok Tanwar, Mukul Sangam and others in the last few months.

"We invite every party in the Opposition for an exchange of views before the start of the Parliament session. But it is up to them (TMC) whether to attend or not," the leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said. Kharge has called for a meeting of the Opposition parties to discuss the issues to be raised in Parliament during the forthcoming session.

When asked about the TMC's decision to not attend the meeting Kharge said, "We will try to convince everyone to join the Opposition meeting," Kharge said.

Talking to the media, Kharge said parties that attended the all-party meet convened by the Government ahead of the Winter Session of Parliament demanded immediate action on a law on minimum support price for farm produce.

He said demands were also raised to extend compensation to those farmers who died during the protest against the three farm laws. After the meeting, Kharge mentioned that there were some other big issues that were raised by the parties such as the rising prices of petrol and diesel and the tensions at LAC with China.

BJP SWEEPS TRIPURA CIVIC POLLS

secured all the wards in the 15-member Khowai Municipal Council, 17-seat Belonia Municipal Council, 15-member Kumarghat Municipal Council and nine-member Sabroom Nagar Panchayat, State Election Commission officials said.

The party made a clean sweep in the 25-ward Dharmanagar Municipal Council, 15-seat Teliamura Municipal Council and 13-member Amarpur Nagar Panchayat, they said. Sonamura Nagar Panchayat and Melaghar Nagar Panchayat will be without Opposition with the BJP having won all the 13 seats each. It also bagged the

11-member Jirania Nagar Panchayat. The party secured 12 seats of Ambassa Municipal Council, while the TMC and the CPI-M won one seat each and another went to an independent candidate. The BJP also won 16 seats of Kailashahar Municipal Council and the CPI(M) got one. In Panisagar Nagar Panchayat, the BJP emerged victorious in 12 seats and the CPI (M) bagged one. The BJP had won seven wards of Khowai Municipal Council, one of Dharmanagar Municipality, two of Melaghar Municipal Council and 10 of Jirania uncontested. It had also won without a contest the civic bodies of Ranirbaraz, Bishal Ganj, Mohanpur, Kamalpur, Udaipur and Shantirbaraz, which together account for 92 wards.

With the resounding victory, BJP has in its kitty 329 of the State's 324 wards of urban civic bodies, the CPI(M), which ruled Tripura with an iron fist for decades, three, Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress and Independent (one each).

Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb, in the line of Opposition fire over communal violence in the State, dubbed the victory as "historic" and said people of Tripura gave a "sothik jawab" (the right answer) to those opposed to the BJP. "Those who tried to malign Tripura should see... People from majority and minority communities have together voted in favour of development under Narendra Modi ji," Deb said, smiling broadly as BJP supporters gathered on the streets of Agartala, distributing sweets and dancing to drum beats.

There was jubilation in the BJP camp in neighbouring West Bengal where the TMC had bested it in the Assembly elections a few months ago. "Heartiest congratulations to @BJP4Tripura & Hon'ble CM @BjBiplab for registering landslide victory in Agartala Corporation & all other Nagar Panchayats and Municipalities. We are grateful to the people of Tripura for wiping out the corrupt & fascist Tolamool party of Bengal," said Suwendu Adhikari, the leader of the Opposition in West Bengal on Twitter. BJP's IT cell chief Amit Malviya tweeted: "BJP has swept Tripura local body polls. Spare a thought for the entire opposition, new kids on the block and sponsored media, which finally figured Tripura's existence after BJP came to power in the State. All conspiracies, fake narrative about religious tension etc bites dust."

The TMC brass, however, put up a brave face despite the crushing defeat. Talking to Twitter, TMC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee said the performance was "exceptional" for his party, which had negligible presence in Tripura.

Obesity is rising among children, adults in India

New Delh (PTI): There has been a rise in obesity among children under five years of age with 33 states and union territories registering a spike in the number of overweight children, according to the latest National Family Health Survey (NFHS).

Experts attributed the increase in obesity to lack of physical activity and unhealthy food habits.

The number of overweight children increased from 2.1 per cent in NFHS-4 to 3.4 per cent in NFHS-5. Not just children, obesity among women and men also increased. The per centage of overweight women rose from 20.6 per cent to 24 per cent while in men the number increased from 18.9 per cent to 22.9 per cent, according to the NFHS-5.

According to the NFHS-5, several states and union territories, including Maharashtra, Gujarat, Mizoram, Tripura, Lakshadweep, Jammu and Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, and Ladakh, have registered increase in the percentage of obesity among children below five years of age in comparison to NFHS-4 conducted between 2015 and 2016. Only Goa, Tamil Nadu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Daman and Diu registered a drop in the number of overweight children under five years of age, the data showed.

According to the survey data, 30 states and union territories registered a rise in obesity among women while 33 states and UTs recorded an increase in obesity among men. Men and women were counted as obese whose body mass index was found to be over or equal to 25.0 kg/m2 while children's obesity was counted in terms of weight-for-height.

Healthcare experts have attributed the rise in obesity to unhealthy food choices and lack of physical activity among children and even adults.

Poanam Mutreja, Executive Director at the Population Foundation of India, said behind the trend of increasing obesity among Indian women, men and children over the past 15 years, confirmed by NFHS-5, are rising incomes, poor dietary habits, and unhealthy life choices.

"Sustained economic growth over the past 15 years has led to a marked increase in people's incomes. We know that obesity among Indians goes up as they become wealthier."

Omicron spreads to more countries; world on alert

AP ■ LONDON

The new potentially more contagious omicron variant of the coronavirus popped up in more European countries on Saturday, just days after being identified in South Africa, leaving governments around the world scrambling to stop the spread.

The UK on Saturday tightened its rules on mask-wearing and on testing of international arrivals after finding two cases. New cases were confirmed Saturday in Germany and Italy, with Belgium, Israel and Hong Kong also reporting that the variant has been found in travelers.

In the US, Dr. Anthony Fauci, the government's top infectious diseases expert, said he would not be surprised if the omicron variant was already in the United States, too.

"We have not detected it yet, but when you have a virus that is showing this degree of transmissibility ... it almost invariably is ultimately going to go essentially all over," Fauci said on NBC television.

Because of fears that the new variant has the potential to be more resistant to the protection offered by vaccines, there are growing concerns around the world that the pandemic and associated lockdown restrictions will persist for far longer than hoped.

Nearly two years since the start of the pandemic that has claimed more than 5 million lives around the world, countries are on high alert. Many have already imposed travel restrictions on flights from southern Africa as they seek to buy time to assess whether the omicron variant is more transmissible than the current dominant delta variant.

In Britain, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said it was necessary to take "targeted and precautionary measures" after two people tested positive for the new variant in England.

"Right now this is the responsible course of action to slow down the seeding and the spread of this new variant and to maximize our defenses," he told a news conference.

Among the measures



People queue to get on the Air France flight to Paris at OR Tambo's airport in Johannesburg, South Africa on Saturday AP

announced, Johnson said anyone arriving in England must take a PCR test for COVID-19 on the second day after their arrival and self-isolate until they provide a negative test. And if someone tests positive for the omicron variant, then he said their close contacts will have to self-isolate for 10 days

regardless of their vaccination status — currently close contacts are exempt from quarantine rules if they are fully vaccinated.

He also said mask-wearing in shops and on public transport will be required and said the independent group of scientists that advises the British

government on the rollout of coronavirus vaccines has been asked to accelerate the vaccination program.

This could involve widening the booster program to younger age groups, reducing the time period between a second dose and a booster and allowing older children to get

New Covid variant casts pall, shocks experts in South Africa

Pretoria: The overcast, drizzly skies match the somber mood at the Tshwane University of Technology, a hot spot in South Africa's latest surge of Covid-19 cases, apparently driven by the new Omicron variant that is leading countries around the world to impose new restrictions. After several students tested positive, the university postponed some exams, and officials in the larger metropolitan area of Tshwane, which includes the capital of Pretoria, are pushing vaccinations, especially

among younger adults who have been slow to get the shots.

At TUT, as the university is known, few students wanted to speak about the new variant that has cast a pall. Many were not vaccinated — only 22% of 18- to 34-year-olds in South Africa are — and some seemed to be rethinking that, though notably the university's vaccination center was closed for the weekend.

Manqoba Zitha, a student who has gotten the shot, said he will be pushing fellow classmates to do the same.

"I'm trying to encourage them so that they can vaccinate, so they can stay away from coronavirus because it's there, it's killing people, and now numbers are rising," said Zitha. "Now when we are watching TV we can see that people are getting coronavirus. So they must vaccinate!"

Nearly two years into the pandemic, the world is racing to contain the latest variant, first identified in southern Africa but popping up around the globe. AP

Study warns China of 'colossal outbreak' of Covid-19 if it opens up like US, France

PTI ■ BEIJING

China is expected to continue its much-criticized Zero Covid policy, shutting the country to most of the world as a new study has warned of a "colossal outbreak" with over 6.30 lakh patients per day if it opens up.

According to a report by the Peking University mathematicians, China could face more than 6,30,000 coronavirus infections a day if it dropped its zero-tolerance approach and followed other countries by lifting travel bans.

"The estimates revealed the real possibility of a colossal outbreak which would almost certainly put an unbearable burden on the medical system," the report said.

China on Saturday reported 23 new COVID-19 cases, including 20 imported ones as the country appears to have contained a recent spike of infections in Beijing and other cities.

China, where the coronavirus first surfaced in Wuhan in late 2019 before it turned into a pandemic, has so far reported 98,631 cases and 4,636 deaths, the National Health



A woman and a child, both wearing face masks to protect themselves from Covid-19 in Beijing on Sunday AP

Commission said on Sunday. This included 785 patients still receiving treatment.

On Saturday, Chinese top respiratory expert Zhong Nanshan warned that the new and more contagious coronavirus variant Omicron, reported in South Africa causing global alarm, may cause more challenges to the work of pre-

venting and controlling the pandemic as the World Health Organization (WHO) said it carries a large number of mutations. He said that about 76.8 per cent of China's population have been vaccinated, laying a good basis for the country to reach the target of 80 per cent vaccination to build herd immuni-

ty by year end.

One of China's major vaccine producers, Sinovac Biotech, told state-run Global Times that the company is paying close attention to Omicron and has tapped into a global partner network to collect and obtain information and samples specific to the mutant virus.

Netherlands, Oz find variant as curbs spread

Israel bans foreign travellers

AP ■ THE HAGUE

The Netherlands confirmed 13 cases of the new omicron variant of the coronavirus on Sunday and Australia found two as the countries half a world apart became the latest to detect it in travelers arriving from southern Africa.

A raft of curbs being imposed by nations around the world as they scramble to slow the variant's spread also grew, with Israel deciding Sunday to bar entry to foreign nationals in the toughest move so far.

Confirmed or suspected cases of the new variant have already emerged in several European countries, in Israel and in Hong Kong, just days after it was identified by researchers in South Africa. The "act first, ask questions later" approach reflected growing alarm about the emergence of a potentially more contagious variant nearly two years into a pandemic that has killed more

than 5 million people, upended lives and disrupted economies across the globe.

While much remains to be learned about the new variant, researchers are concerned that it may be more resistant to the protection provided by vaccines and could mean that the pandemic lasts for longer than anticipated.

The Dutch public health authority confirmed that 13 people who arrived from South Africa Friday have so far tested positive for omicron. They were among 61 people who tested positive for the virus after arriving on the last two flights to Amsterdam's Schiphol airport before a flight ban was implemented. They were immediately put into isolation, most at a nearby hotel, while sequencing was carried out.

Authorities in Australia said two overseas travelers who arrived in Sydney from Africa became the first in the country to test positive for the omicron variant.

SA slams 18 countries imposing travel bans on fears of Omicron

PTI ■ JOHANNESBURG

South Africa's top health federation on Sunday slammed the 18 nations which have imposed travel bans on the country on fears of the new potentially highly-transmissible variant of Covid-19, Omicron, saying the world must avoid such "knee-jerk reaction" if it wants "transparency" in the sharing of critical medical data.

The new Covid-19 variant B.1.1.529, first detected in South Africa, was on Friday designated as a "Variant of Concern" by the World Health Organisation (WHO), which named it "Omicron".

The decision by 18 countries to ban flights to and from South Africa was premature, as there is still not enough information on how dangerous the variant might be, Angelique Coetzee, Chairman of South African Medical Association (SAMA) said. Coetzee also defended the decision to announce the findings, pointing out that South Africa should be lauded and not vilified for this.

"My suspicion is that because our scientists are very alert and doing a lot of sequenc-

World must avoid such knee-jerk reactions if it wants 'transparency' in the sharing of critical medical data: South Africa

ing in the background, maybe those European countries missed it because of the symptoms," Coetzee told the TV news channel *Newzroom Afrika*.

The UK announced Thursday that all flights to and from South Africa and five neighbouring countries would be banned from Friday following an announcement that the new Omicron variant of Covid-19 had been detected in South Africa. Many other European countries followed suit, most of them indicating that only their own citizens would be allowed back, subject to a quarantine period. Many other countries have now started to severely regulate or ban flights completely from the African nation.

ISIS roadside bomb in Iraq leaves 5 peshmerga dead

AP ■ BAGHDAD

A roadside bomb attack by Islamic State group fighters in northern Iraq killed five Kurdish forces and wounded four others, Kurdish state news agency Rudaw reported Sunday.

The peshmerga fighters were killed in the Garmian district in Iraq's Kurdish-run north late Saturday. IS militants then attacked a peshmerga post, wounding four, according to the report.

Attacks targeting Iraqi security forces, including Kurdish peshmerga fighters, are common and have been on the rise since IS was defeated on the battlefield in 2017.

The peshmerga fighters were killed in the Garmian district in Iraq's Kurdish-run north late Saturday. Militants then attacked a peshmerga post

Militants remain active through sleeper cells in many areas, especially across a band of territory in the north under dispute between federal Iraq and the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government.

Militants from IS, a Sunni Muslim extremist group, still conduct operations, often targeting security forces, power stations and other infrastructure.

Kurdistan Region President Nechirvan Barzani offered condolences to the families of the dead Sunday.

"The increase in the (IS) attacks sends a dangerous and serious message and brings forth a serious threat in the region. Therefore, further cooperation between the Peshmerga forces and the Iraqi security forces with support from the global coalition is an urgent need," he said in a statement.

The U.S.-led coalition to defeat IS announced the end of its combat mission and said troops will withdraw from Iraq by the end of December. Advisers will remain to continue to train Iraqi forces.

8 dead in gunbattles in central Mexico

AP ■ MEXICO CITY

A pair of gunbattles in the central Mexico state of Zacatecas has left eight men dead. State prosecutors said Saturday that vehicles and guns were found at the scene of the shootouts near the town of Valparaiso, which is located near the border with Jalisco state. The gunmen may have been killed in turf battles between the Jalisco and Sinaloa cartels.

National Guard and army troops responded to the shootings, but the dead have not yet been identified.

The shootings late Friday came three days after police discovered three more bodies hung from a highway overpass in Zacatecas, where 10 other bodies were found the previous

week, nine of them hanging from an overpass.

On Wednesday, the Mexican army announced that it will send three helicopter gunships to Zacatecas, a weapon that President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has expressly said he no longer wants to use or accept from the United States. The Sinaloa and Jalisco New Generation cartels have been battling for control in the state, which is a key transit point for drugs, especially the powerful synthetic pain killer fentanyl, moving north to the U.S. border.

In the first nine months of the year, Mexico had more than 25,000 murders, a number 3.4% less than the same period a year earlier, according to federal data.

Taiwan sends jets after 27 Chinese planes enter buffer zone

AP ■ TAIPEI

Taiwan said 27 Chinese aircraft entered its air defense buffer zone on Sunday, the latest in a long series of incursions as part of Beijing's pressure on the self-ruled island.

The Defense Ministry said Taiwan scrambled combat aircraft to "warn" the Chinese planes to leave. It also deployed missile systems to monitor them.

Sunday's incursion included 18 fighter jets and five H-6 bombers, as well as a Y-20 aerial refueling aircraft, according to Taiwan's Defense Ministry.

The Chinese aircraft flew into Taiwan's air defense iden-

tification zone near the southern part of the island and out into the Pacific Ocean before returning to China, according to a map by Taiwan authorities.

Over the past year, the frequency of Chinese incursions has increased, with about 150 aircraft over a period of four days.

China's air force mission toward Taiwan came as Chinese President Xi Jinping met with officers at a military conference, where he called for military talent cultivation to support and strengthen the armed forces, according to state-owned news agency Xinhua.

Cambodian prince Ranariddh dies at 77

AP ■ PHNOM PENH

Cambodia's Prince Norodom Ranariddh, former prime minister and the son of the late King Norodom Sihanouk, died Sunday in France, Information Minister Khieu Kanharith announced on his Facebook page. He was 77.

Khieu Kanharith, who said he learned of the death from Um Daravuth, a minor member of Cambodia's royal family, did not give the cause of death.

Ranariddh had been in ill-health since an auto accident in Cambodia in 2018.

Magnitude 7.5 quake strikes northern Peru

AP ■ LIMA, PERU

An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 7.5 struck northern Peru early Sunday, damaging some buildings and blocking several roads with rubble. While the quake was extremely strong, it was relatively deep — measured at 112 kilometers (70 miles) — which usually reduces the possibility of damage and casualties.

The quake occurred at 5:52 am (10:52 GMT) and its epicenter was in the Amazon region, 42 kilometers (26 miles) north northwest of the city of Barranca. It had a magnitude of

7.5, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. Part of a 16th century church in La Jalca district in the Amazon region collapsed and three people were lightly injured, Mayor Walter Culqui told Peru's RPP radio.

Falling stones blocked several highways in the Amazonas and Cajamarca regions in Peru, and the tremor was felt nearly 800 kilometers (500 miles) away in the capital of Lima, where some people rushed out of their homes in alarm.

A church in the Loja municipality in neighboring Ecuador was also partly damaged.

Researchers try producing potato resistant to climate change

AP ■ BANGOR

University of Maine researchers are trying to produce potatoes that can better withstand warming temperatures as the climate changes.

Warming temperatures and an extended growing season can lead to quality problems and disease, Gregory Porter, a professor of crop ecology and management, told the Bangor Daily News.

"The predictions for climate change are heavier rainfall events, and potatoes don't



tolerate flooding or wet conditions for long without having other quality problems," Porter said. "If we want potatoes to be continued to be produced successfully in Maine, we need to be able to produce varieties that can be resistant to change."

Around the world, research aimed at mitigating crop damage is underway. A NASA study published this month suggests climate change may affect the production of corn and wheat, reducing yields of both, as soon as 2030.

Cramped in Calais, migrants renew resolve to try for England

AP ■ CALAIS, FRANCE

At the makeshift camps in France near Calais and Dunkirk, migrants are digging in, waiting for their chance to make a dash across the English Channel despite the deaths of at least 27 people this week when their boat sank a few miles (kilometers) from the French coast.

Police have stepped up patrols in recent days and the weather has worsened, making this a bad time to attempt a crossing. But most migrants say the tragedy won't prevent them from



climbing into a flimsy inflatable boat packed with up to 50 people in hopes of reaching Britain. "I don't afraid of anything," a 22-year-old from Iran who identified himself only as Kawa

said in halting English. "Water? If we die ... sorry to say this but we already died. Nobody accepts us anywhere. We're useful. Useless, sorry," he said, correcting himself. "Just look at these people!"

Kawa and his father spent the past six years in the Denmark, where they say they never felt free because they constantly had to report to police and other authorities. Now they want to reach England, and eventually Canada, because "they are good to Iranians."



Bollywood
 'Aishwarya Rai is the best. She is very sweet and grounded, and loves our Indian values.'
 —Abhishek Bachchan

WISDOM TO SURVIVE IN A HOPELESS WORLD

The absence of empathy is a far more dangerous thing than Covid-19 virus, author and mythologist DEVDUTT PATTANAİK tells KHUSHBU KIRTI

And just when you begin to lose all hope, shines on you that feeble and fading light ray. It seems like it is trying to show you something while it directs its very meager light, blinking on and off, on an unknown path. You squint your eyes to concentrate on what you are seeing. You are surprised because when you were in complete darkness, you thought all that there could be around you was emptiness, loneliness, and hopelessness and suddenly this thin, meek ray has, as if, resurrected you. A strange feeling is rising inside you like a little plant that grows above the ground through its invisible, yet strongly embedded roots. This feeling gives you power that you had lost a long time back. The light becomes stronger while you take more steps forward and you start feeling safer and more sure of yourself.

That's how hope works. It changes the way you see the world and instills into you a new kind of enthusiasm to not only survive but succeed. And when, recently, I received the opportunity to converse with one of the most renowned modern writers, Devdutt Pattanaik, about his new book, *Hope: Wisdom to Survive in a Hopeless World*, I was beyond excited. While mythology is extremely engrossing, Pattanaik has time and again shown to the world that it could be even more lucid and much more interesting. He has, often, made it a medium to render modern solutions.

He writes, Do you want to run away? Are you anxious about money, your family, and your future? In this book, the author helps you to unravel your emotions and find a way to move from darkness into light.

Read on for excerpts from an exclusive interview with one of the leading mythologists in India:

◆ Many congratulations on your recent release, *Hope: Wisdom to Survive in a Hopeless World*.

Tell us everything about it. How did the book come into existence?

So the book, *Hope*, came into existence in the latter part of the Covid lockdown. I think we all had gone through a lot, and had seen our lives change dramatically. The lockdown had put a lot of stress on many people. Many people lost jobs, lost family. We, ourselves, went



through trauma. Social media was full of nasty news and trolls, too. Even in these horrible times, people were misbehaving on Whatsapp groups. We felt a sense of doom and despair.

The publisher, Chiki Sarkar, of Juggernaut Books, spoke to me. We are friends and she asked me if I would consider writing a book on hope. She basically began with conversations about hope. I told her stories from mythology and she felt that, maybe, we should put it together and get it published. That's how *Hope* came into existence.

◆ Was *Hope* inspired by real incidents/events?

Well, yes, it is an outcome of all the things that we went through — the migrant crisis, the large number of deaths, people losing jobs. I heard sta-

tics there were more people who died of suicide than who died of Covid-19.

All these things created a sense of despair and hopelessness. Besides, the news coming on the political and economic front was all very, very sad and depressing. And people, instead of working together with each other in bad times, seemed to be snarling at each other. And that was all causing a lot of sense of hopelessness. I felt the book *Hope* was the need of the hour.

◆ While almost all ancient religions and faiths agree on hopelessness being tackled by the self or getting resolved from outside, what do you have to say about the thought process of the absurdists?

◆ Existentialism, as a philosophy, accepts that life is meaningless and we

have to suffer from angst and despair as its consequences.

Care to weigh in?

But, what is hope? Hope is about trusting that there are opportunities for you out there in this world. And you feel hopeless when those opportunities are just going away from you. Now, I feel you create a world full of hope when you yourself give hope to people around you. Western philosophy, with words, is very self absorbed, it doesn't talk about the other so much. It talks about self-realisation, self actualisation, but never talks about our relationship with others.

Only when we create an ecosystem of hope, give others hope, will others reciprocate and give hope to us. I think that is missing in today's conversation. We are so self absorbed. We expect life to give meaning to us and we expect others to take care of us. We don't realise that life is a give and take relationship — that every self exists in an ecosystem of others. We cannot exist without each other.

◆ You mentioned that Covid-19 is not our enemy, and I second you. However, whenever a catastrophe occurs, do you think hope is what gets us, as a collective entity, out of it?

You know, Covid is not the problem. It is how humans react to Covid, which is the problem.

You know, in the *Bible*, we talked about the great flood and how all the animals huddled together on a boat, which is managed by Noah. And I think that the catastrophe is when we are on that boat and we, rather than supporting each other through this crisis, keep fighting with each other. That was the crisis, where politicians are not willing to admit that they had to take tough decisions. Where politicians were playing politics at a time of need, instead of making tools available. We created shutdowns without realising the consequences to the poor. You know, the rich have resources to survive, but the poor don't have those.

I think, empathy was missing. Those are far more dangerous things than the virus itself — the absence of empathy, the absence of support to people — and the absence of support not just of the state, but humans with each other. And, I think, that is the great catastrophe. There's humungous burden on doctors and nurses, and no one seems

to realise that they are human beings, too, and need our support. So, I think those are questions that we should ask ourselves.

◆ If *aham brahmasmi* or *shivo hum hold true*, does *Sunahshepa* save himself?

Well, everybody asked me what happens to *Sunahshepa*. And yes, we would like to believe the gods came down and helped him, or he managed to help himself. But the problem of the story is about being abandoned, where he realises that the people who are supposed to protect him — his parents, the king, that is the state, — have abandoned him. And the God, instead of helping him, wants him as a sacrifice. In a world where everybody sees you, seeks to consume you and uses you for their benefit, you feel used and lost.

Instead of being taken care of, *Sunahshepa* realises he's being abandoned. I believe his story is to remind that there are people in this world who feel abandoned by us. Hence, it is not that we are *Sunahshepa*. Maybe, we are his father, mother, teacher, or, maybe, we are the God who's asking his sacrifice. So, we have to always be careful. Do we see ourselves as the victim in the story, the hero in the story or the villain in the story? And, not all stories have happy endings.

◆ As a mythologist, what part of Indian culture do you feel needs utmost intervention on saving and preserving it?

As a mythologist, I don't believe cultures need preservation. Cultures evolve and transform over time. Everybody believes that the world is coming to an end, that culture is going to collapse. But, as I speak in my book, these are the good times and bad times we go through. We pass through heaven and hell constantly. Heaven is created when we help each other and hell is created when we hurt each other. And, therefore, what we need to focus on is our humanity. It is that which needs to be remembered, because that is the most precious thing about culture.

'We try to establish *Swarga*, full of opportunities, but ignore *Naraka*, full of threats that the children may have to deal with again and again in future.'

WEBBED



BOB BISWAS

The Indian crime thriller, directed by Diya Annapurna Ghosh, stars Abhishek Bachchan and Chitrangada Singh. It is a spin-off of the 2012 thriller *Kahaani*. The protagonist is inspired by the character of the private contract killer, Biswas, in *Kahaani*. *Bob Biswas* will focus on his life as a paid contractor. It will premiere on December 3 on ZEE5.



DIARY OF A WIMPY KID

The American computer-animated comedy film is directed by Swinton Scott, on a script by Jeff Kinney and based on the 2007 book of the same name. Serving as a reboot and the fifth installment in the *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* series, the film marks the first animated entry. It starts premiering on December 3 on Disney+Hotstar.



INSIDE EDGE 3

Bigger and more ambitious than the first two seasons, the third season sets the stakes higher, with more mind games, money laundering and an overview into the vicious circle of betting that'll have a huge impact on the ongoing plot. It starts premiering on Amazon Prime Video from December 3.

Starting his career as a child actor with the film *Mr India*, he has appeared in other films like *Awwal Number*, *Shahenshah* and *ChaalBaaz*. After making his debut in Bollywood as a lead actor with *Mast*, Aftab was mostly seen in comedy films like *Awara Paagal Deewana* and *Hungama*, to name a few.

However, with a character like Aditya Singh Rathore in *Poision 2* last year and now his portrayal of Vijay Kumar in the espionage thriller *Special Ops 1.5: The Himmat Story*, the audience has got a chance to see a new side of Aftab.

Asked about if he made any strategy on choosing certain kinds of projects henceforth, he shared, "I would say that I am still the same actor who is trying to be the better version of himself with each passing day, it is all about the opportunity. I have always looked for an opportunity and made the most out of it. I have been working for the last 22 years and most of my life, I am being stereotyped until these two web series happened to me. I think it is just that I had to wait longer to get these chances."

He added, "Having said that, I am a big believer of destiny and timing. For all these years, if I did not get a chance to act a character like Vijay Kumar that I did in *Special Ops 1.5*, it was meant to happen that way. I have no problem with the past and I made my peace with it. Now, I know how I am preparing myself for greater opportunities. And that has nothing to do with genres, tomorrow again if I am offered a good comedy, I will show my interest as much as that for action or thriller."

In the show, the actor played Himmat Singh's best friend, who is also an intelligent agent.

As he was working with the cast and crew for the first time Aftab shares how

A new avatar

While *Special Ops 1.5: The Himmat Story* has given actor AFTAB SHIVDASANI a chance to showcase his skill as an actor, he says that for the longest time he did not get a chance to do so as he was typecast



his friendship with Kay Kay reflected on their on-screen equation.

"I met Kay Kay first time when we were heading for the shoot. You know, we shot post the first unlock process started. So, after we reached Ukraine, for 15 days, we had to stay in quarantine in our hotel. Every day, all of us including Neeraj (creator of the show) will do calls from the landline and endlessly chat about everything...cinema, things happening around the world, or life in gen-

eral. We bond over a lot of things and that somewhere reflected in the on-screen friendship between Vijay and Himmat."

The show *Special Ops 1.5: The Himmat Story* is a prequel to the main espionage thriller that was released last year. The show, also features Gautami Kapoor, Parmeet Sethi, Kali Prasad Mukherjee, Vijay Vikram Singh, Aadil Khan and it streams on Disney+ Hotstar. —IANS

I aspire to be like MADHURI DIXIT, says SHARVARI. By TEAM VIVA

Debutant Sharvari has won praise for her acting skills in her big-screen debut *Bunty Aur Babli 2*. A rank outsider to Bollywood, Sharvari has her eyes set on the prize to become a star who is known for her performances. Being a Marathi, she naturally aspires to follow the footsteps of the Maharashtrian icon, Madhuri Dixit, who became a pan Indian sensation and was considered as big, if not bigger, than her male counterparts during her prime.

Sharvari says, "Being a Maharashtrian, I have grown up idolising Madhuri Dixit. My family and everyone I know, is a huge fan of her. Hailing from our state, she became a pan-Indian superstar who ruled the hearts of innumerable people. Artists, like me, who are from Maharashtra aspire to be like Madhuri Dixit and achieve fame and have the brilliance of craft that she possessed. She is an inspiration to us all. I have danced on her songs, performed on her scenes since childhood."

She adds, "Even before my debut, she has been a huge reference point for me as I have tried to take notes from her performances. I hope to make her proud one day and the people of

Idolising a fellow Maharashtrian



my state and my country. I know I need their love and support to get the projects that

I aspire to be in. My journey has just started and I know I have a really long way to go."

About being praised for her acting performance in *Bunty Aur Babli 2*, she says, "I'm truly humbled by the way people have appreciated my performance. For someone who doesn't belong to the industry, I have had my share of struggle and heartbreaks before I got this film as my debut and I cherish every bit of it. I know that I have poured my heart and soul into the film and I'm happy with the way people have appreciated me. It truly means a lot."

Sharvari is happy to have been able to showcase her skills well in her debut because she feels as an outsider one has to deliver with their first film to get attention.

She says, "I think for artistes who are outsiders, we have to prove our mettle with our first film and I liked that pressure on me because it only made me strive to deliver the best performance that I could have and I'm thrilled with the response towards my craft."

Sharvari adds, "I have miles to go and I am determined to work really hard to better myself every day and constantly prove myself with every film. I can't wait for people to see my second film and every film that I do from here on. I'm looking to do challenging work and I'm grateful to the start that I have had in the industry so far."

TRENDBLAZER



JOURNEY TOWARDS INCLUSIVITY

Actor BHUMI PEDNEKAR came out in support of the move of the Brit Awards management to do away with gender-specific awards, saying that it is time human beings started celebrating artistes, irrespective of the gender they belong to.

She added a note of caution, "We should also keep in mind that while we try to be more inclusive, it should not lead to less representation or less inclusion of genders in a world that is governed by the binary lens. That would be counterproductive to equality."

fairtalk



'After shooting, I am calmer and relaxed. Many actors claim that when they play negative roles, they carry it even after the shoot. I don't understand that; it's the opposite for me. My motive is to make things tricky and unpleasant for other characters. From industry to industry, my connection and brand image as a villain are still strong and *Your Honor 2* feels like the right show to enter the OTT sector as the bad man.'

dailytalk



'We have a basic idea for the story, but I can understand because of the rage created by *Sooryavanshi*, so everyone is talking about *Singham*. However, there's a lot of time for it. If you see, there's at least one year left for *Singham (3)* to begin. It won't start before a year from now. As far as other rumours are concerned, *Golmaal* is something that can never end.'

EILISH ASKS PEOPLE NOT TO EAT TURKEY

Bad Guy hitmaker BILLIE EILISH has urged people not to eat turkey this Thanksgiving, as she would rather people try out a vegetarian alternative. She wrote on Instagram, "Turkeys are some of the most gentle creatures in the world. And 46 million of them are killed every Thanksgiving. I know it's hard to change traditions but just keep it in mind." Eilish had also joined celebrities like Joaquin Phoenix, Ricky Gervais, Dave Bautista, and Margaret Cho in signing a petition requesting President Joe Biden allow this years turkey to stay at Farm Sanctuary.



IYER, SAHA SET UP INTRIGUING FINAL DAY

PTI ■ KANPUR

Debutant Shreyas Iyer showed his ice-cool temperament under pressure to stand tall with a fine half-century which placed India in a commanding position as they set up a stiff victory target of 284 for New Zealand on the fourth day of the opening Test here on Sunday.

India declared at 234 for 7 for an overall lead of 283 and gave the Black Caps four tricky overs to face under fading light during which they managed four runs and lost opener Will Young to Ravichandran Ashwin.

With that scalp, Ashwin became the joint third highest wicket-taker in Indian cricket with Harbhajan Singh (417 wickets).

The highest ever fourth innings chase by a visiting team in India is 276 by Viv Richards' West Indies against the Dilip Vengsarkar-led India in 1987 at the Feroz Shah Kotla, which placed statistics on the home team's side.

The honours for India on the day were shared by Iyer (65 off 125 balls), who became the first Indian to score a hundred and fifty on debut and the plucky Wriddhiman Saha

(61 not out, 126 balls), who battled stiff neck to make an invaluable contribution which will certainly count a lot in the final context of the match.

Axar Patel (28 not out) then conjured another 67-run eighth-wicket stand with Saha to slowly take the match out of the Black Caps' grasp.

If New Zealand are still in the match, credit must go to their tireless seam bowling duo of Tim Southee (22-2-75-3) and Kyle Jamieson (17-6-40-3), who showed an exhibition of top class bowling on an unresponsive track.

However, it will now depend on how much time it takes for India's spin troika to roll over New Zealand, whose openers showed a lot of gumption on the second afternoon and third morning.

Also if skipper Williamson can do something mind-blowing with the willow, there might just be a great contest on the cards.

If the morning belonged to New Zealand's bowlers, who decided to prolong Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane's bad patch, the afternoon was Iyer's time under the sun while Saha did his bit, reaching his sixth half-century in the final ses-



sion of the day.

This is certainly an innings which will give Saha's Test career a new lease of life.

This was after stand-in captain Rahane and his temporary deputy Pujara's saga of failures continued leaving India tottering at 51 for 5 in the first 75 minutes of the morning session.

But credit to Iyer, who once again displayed steely temperament on the way to his second 50-plus score in the match, hitting eight fours and a huge six over long off against Will Somerville.

His best shot, however, was an inside out lofted drive off left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel. It was a difficult shot that was perfectly executed.

It was followed by a square cut in the same over as Williamson erred by bowling his spinners for way too long.

That was proved when Southee removed Iyer at the stroke of tea when he tried to pull one that was drifting down leg side.

Credit should also be given to Saha as he batted with an open-chested stance compared to his usual side-on which reduces the pronounced neck movement.

He played his customary game of dabs and flicks and also produced an occasional slog pull for six as his innings had four fours and a six.

However, on the fourth morning, Southee, a practitioner of conventional swing bowling, took a master-class on how to bowl on an unresponsive Indian track, classically setting up the batters.

But before Southee got into the act, Kyle Jamieson (13-6-26-3) targeted Pujara's (22 off 33 balls) ribcage, getting one to rear up on this dead track and it brushed the India No. 3's gloves into the hands of keeper Tom Blundell.

Rahane (4 off 15 balls) is out of form and the world knows about that. However, Ajaz Patel (17-3-60-1), who has looked way below Test class, then produced his best delivery of the match.

An arm ball that was fired in with the angle caught Rahane plumb in-front while he tried to play a forward defensive prod.

Mayank Agarwal (17) did all the hardwork in the first hour but Southee (15.2-3-48-3) set him up with deliveries that came into him from good length spot as he played with a closed bat-face.

Batting coach Rathour 'understands' Pujara-Rahane lean patch

PTI ■ KANPUR

Batting coach Vikram Rathour "understands" fully that Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane are now India players living on borrowed time.

But the former opener on Sunday couldn't give a definitive answer as to who would sit out in order to accommodate skipper Virat Kohli's comeback in the next Test against New Zealand.

With Shreyas Iyer scoring 105 and 65 on debut, it would be almost criminal to drop the stylish Mumbaier, and understandably, Rathour had to fend questions on Pujara and Rahane's form going into the Mumbai Test, starting on December 3.

"Of course, you want the top-order to contribute but cricketers (Pujara and Rahane) you mentioned



They have played 80 (79 for Rahane) and 90 Tests (91 Test for Pujara). "Of course, to play that many games, they must have done well for us," Rathour tried his

best to defend the 2021 Test average of below 20 by the stand-in captain (19.57) and 30.42 by his deputy.

"We understand that both of them are going through a lean phase but we understand that they have both played very, very important knocks for us in the past. We are pretty sure that they are going to come back and play important knocks for us," Rathour's statement lacked conviction.

But what's the kind of long rope that one gives a senior player, who has been a past performer? Is it 15 or 20 Tests? The former Punjab opener, who played six Tests during the 1996-97 season, felt that it can't be quantified. "I don't think you can put a number to that. It really depends on situation the team is in and what the team is required to do," he sidestepped the question.

Bangladesh leads Pakistan by 83 runs after day 3 of 1st test

AP ■ CHATTOGRAM

Pakistan's fast bowlers reduced Bangladesh to 39-4 in its second innings at the end of day three on Sunday to leave the first cricket test evenly poised.

Bangladesh had secured a 44-run lead after bowling out Pakistan for 286, thanks largely to left-arm spinner Taijul Islam, who returned figures of 7-116.

Instead, the home side ended the day by extending its lead to 83 runs but has just six wickets remaining. Mushfiqur Rahim, who made 91 in the first innings, was batting on 12 and Yasir Ali on 8 after surviving several close calls.

Despite the first-innings deficit, Pakistan fought back through its fast bowlers — Shaheen Shah Afridi and Hasan Ali — who used the short ball to precision, leaving Bangladesh



in a potentially precarious position.

Afridi cracked the game open, striking twice in his third over.

He trapped Shadman leg-before for 1 with a ball that swung sharply and then two balls later had Najmul Hossain caught at first slip for a duck with a short ball.

His short ball again worked for him when opener Saif Hasan gave the return catch and was dismissed for 14.

Ali also got into the act, dis-

missing captain Mominul Haque for a duck with a leading edge, leaving Bangladesh on 25-4.

Earlier, Taijul pegged back the Pakistan innings after the visitors began the day on 145 for no loss.

Opener Abid Ali top-scored with 133 off 282, hitting 12 fours and two sixes.

Taijul struck in the first over of the day, dismissing Abdullah Shafique and Azhar Ali via review with consecutive deliveries.

Shafique couldn't add any runs to his overnight total of 52. Abid, who started the day on 93, flicked Taijul past square leg for a couple to reach his fourth century off 209 balls.

Skipper Babar Azam appeared to be in control before offspinner Mehidy Hasan's (1-68) quicker delivery rattled his stump for 10.

Unfortunate but 'ideal' team man Saha's role is to do 'tough job' when Pant is not available: Rathour

PTI ■ KANPUR

Wriddhiman Saha is an "ideal team man" who can always be relied to do the "tough job" but unfortunately he will have to play the second fiddle when India's number one keeper-batter Rishabh Pant gets back from break, batting coach Vikra Rathour said on Sunday.

Saha, the oldest member of the current Indian set-up at 37, is playing his 39th Test in 11 years since his debut.

His first five years after debut went as legendary Mahendra Singh Dhoni's understudy and even if it sounds crude, he is now a back-up for 24-year-old Pant. On Sunday, with his Test career on line, Saha battled hard with a stiff-neck for his gutsy 61 not out after Shreyas Iyer laid the platform with an attractive 65.

"He had a really, really stiff neck and know-

ing Saha who is an ideal team man, he is going to do whatever is required," batting coach Rathour waxed eloquent about the veteran keeper, who shared two fifty-plus stands with Iyer and Axar Patel.

"He would do the tough things for the team and he played an extremely important knock at the stage the team was at that point," Saha is a quiet

person, someone who is not known to be too expressive but the teams knows that the 'plod and grind effort' will come from the gritty man, who hails from North Bengal city of Siliguri.

"That is what we always expect from Wriddhi. He has always been that kind of a person, whom we can count on and today he showed why," Rathour said.

However, he made it clear that even at this juncture of his career, the Bengal stumper is nothing more than a stop-gap option for Team India as Pant has pushed him far back during away series in Australia where the senior man was given a first go.

"As far as Wriddhi is concerned, unfortunately for him, we have an extremely special player Rishabh, who is number one keeper for us and has done extremely well in past few years."



Kedar Devdhar to captain Baroda in Hazare Trophy

PTI ■ VADODARA

Experienced batter Kedar Devdhar will lead Baroda in the upcoming Vijay Hazare Trophy while Bhargav Bhatt will be his deputy, a top official said on Sunday.

The development was confirmed to PTI by Baroda Cricket Association (BCA) secretary Ajit Lele. He said the decision was taken the selection committee.

The 31-year-old Devdhar, a right-handed batter, has so far played 73 List A games from which he has scored 2,402 runs with 148 as his highest score.

The development comes a day after Mumbai Indians and India all-rounder Krunal Pandya stepped down as Baroda captain, following the team's underwhelming campaign in the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy.

PTI had on Saturday reported that Kedar Devdhar is



among the frontrunners to succeed Krunal, starting with the Vijay Hazare Trophy national ODI championships next month.

Baroda finished with the least points -- 4 -- from Group B, alongside Services, with one win and four losses in the Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy.

The 31-year-old Bhargav Bhatt is a left-arm orthodox spinner and a left-handed batter, and has taken 50 wickets from 42 list A matches.

For the Hazare Trophy, which begins on December 8, Baroda are placed in Elite Group B, along with Tamil Nadu, Mumbai, Bengal, Karnataka and Pondicherry.

Chelsea hosts slumping Man U, Madrid vs Sevilla



AP ■ WASHINGTON

For what could be his final game in temporary charge of Manchester United, Michael Carrick takes his team to Premier League leader Chelsea in the headline match of the 13th round.

Carrick's only match as interim manager was a 2-0 win at Villarreal in the Champions League. He could soon be replaced by German coach Ralf Rangnick, who has been in talks with United.

Manchester City came into the weekend three points behind Chelsea and plays before the leader, at home to West Ham. Having criticized the standard of the Tottenham squad he has inherited following an embarrassing loss in the Europa Conference League, Antonio Conte takes his team north for an away match at Burnley. Also, Watford manager Claudio Ranieri returns to Leicester, the team he surprisingly led to the title in 2016, and Brentford hosts Everton.

SEVILLA
Sevilla's visit to leader Real Madrid is the high-light match on a day when the league's top four teams are all in action. Sevilla enters the match at Santiago Bernabéu Stadium in third place at two points back.

Carlo Ancelotti will once again entrust Madrid's attack to Karim Benzema and Vinicius Júnior with Eden Hazard still out recovering from a stomach virus and Gareth Bale still injured. Sevilla will likely also be without several injured players, including midfielder Suso and striker Youssef En-Nesyri.

Second-place Real Sociedad is just a point behind Madrid and will play earlier at Espanyol hoping to move to the top of the table. Atlético Madrid is in fourth before it visits Cádiz looking to bounce back from its home loss to AC Milan in the Champions League this week.

Sixth-place Real Betis has won two straight by a combined score of 5-0 — it hosts last-place Levante, the only winless side.

ITALY
After enduring their first league losses last weekend, Napoli and AC Milan will endeavor to get back on track in Serie A. The teams share the lead, one point ahead of third-placed Inter Milan.

Napoli hosts Lazio, shortly after Milan welcomes Sassuolo. Roma will be looking to close the gap on the top four with a win over Torino. At the other end of the table Udinese hosts fellow struggler Genoa, while Spezia welcomes Bologna.

GERMANY
Leipzig hosts Bayer Leverkusen in the Bundesliga's first game without fans for months due to spiraling coronavirus infections in the state of Saxony. The home team will be without a host of players due to infections, too. The club says it had six more positive test results for COVID-19, adding to the three previous cases it reported in midweek. Coach Jesse Marsch is among those infected, though it didn't stop the team routing Belgian club Brugge 5-0 in the Champions League on Wednesday.



Parmjeet Kumar wins bronze in World Para-Powerlifting C'ships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Parmjeet Kumar on Sunday became the first Indian para-powerlifter to win a medal in World Championships as he claimed a bronze at the ongoing edition in Tbilisi, Georgia.

Kumar, who trains at Sports Authority of India Centre in Gandhinagar, won the bronze in men's 49kg category with an effort of 158kg. "History created for India in Para @Powerlifting by Parmjit Kumar of Punjab as he wins #bronze at the on-going World Para Powerlifting Championship in Tbilisi, Georgia," Paralympics Committee of India President Deepa Malik tweeted.

"Parmjit's 158KG Lift has created history!" SAI congratulated Kumar for the historic feat.

"Many Congratulations to our NCOE athlete, Shri Parmjeet Kumar (M-49kg) for winning the BRONZE medal IN WORLD PARA POWERLIFTING SR CHAMPIONSHIP 2021 — TBILISI," SAI said in a tweet.

Manika Batra fails to create history for India in World TT

PTI ■ HOUSTON

Star India paddler Manika Batra failed to bag a medal at the World Table Tennis Championships after crashing out in the quarterfinals of the mixed and women's doubles events here.

Just one win away from a historic medal, Batra and G Sathiyam lost to Japan's Tomakazu Harimoto and Hina Hayata 1-3 (5-11 2-11 11-7 9-11) in the last eight round of the mixed doubles competition.

Batra had another opportunity to create history but she faltered yet

again, losing the women's doubles quarterfinals with her partner Archana Kamath in straight games.

Batra and Kamath were no match for Luxembourg duo of Sarah De Nutte and Ni Xia Lian, losing 0-3 (1-11 6-11 8-11) in a lop-sided contest.

Germany beats Djokovic's Serbia at Davis Cup



AP ■ WASHINGTON

Not even Novak Djokovic playing back-to-back could help Serbia avoid losing to Germany in the Davis Cup finals group phase.

After Djokovic helped Serbia pull even at 1-1 by beating Jan-Lennard Struff, the world's top-ranked male player immediately joined Nikola Cicic in doubles.

But German pair Tim Puetz and Kevin Krawietz showed more mettle in a tight 7-6, 3-6, 7-6 victory to take the decider and the tie victory 2-1.

"It's a great performance to beat the team who have the world No. 1," Germany captain Michael Kohlmann said. "Before the tie, we all thought that we had a good chance. We really believed it and it paid off!" Serbia could still go through to the quarterfinals,

which will include two runners-up to go with the six group winners. But Germany can seal its spot as the Group F winner with a victory over Austria, which Serbia has already beaten.

Playing without a public in Innsbruck due to virus restrictions by Austrian authorities, Germany took the lead when Dominik Koepfer downed Filip Krajinovic 7-6, 6-4.

Djokovic defeated Struff 6-2, 6-4 in the Serb's 50th Davis Cup match.

After a short break, he was back out there for the doubles that lasted more than two hours.

"We will have to wait until tomorrow and see (if we advance)," Serbia captain Viktor Troicki said.

"Filip had a tough one, and in doubles, what can I say after this match? A 7-6 loss in the third (set), and we had a lot of chances."

I am still proud of my team. It wasn't our day in the end. I hope we still have a chance."

Italy became the first team to book its spot in the final eight after it beat Colombia to take two points from Group E, which it also shares with the United States.

Lorenzo Sonego beat Nicolas Mejia 6-7, 6-4, 6-2, and Jannik Sinner followed with a 7-5, 6-0 win over Daniel Elahi Galan, in the matches in Turin. Second-ranked Daniil Medvedev helped Russia beat Ecuador, setting up a clash with Spain to decide which will go through as group winner. Medvedev eased past Emilio Gómez 6-0, 6-2 after breaking his serve five times to give Russia an insurmountable 2-0 lead.