

OPINION 6
FEAR IS THE KEY TO
RULE MINDS, OR IS IT?

WORLD 8
RISHI SUNAK: BRITISH PRIME
MINISTER IN WAITING?

SPORT 12
SINDHU, SEN ENTER
SEMIFINALS OF INDIA OPEN

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Maurya, Saini embrace SP

6 other rebels too,
join Akhilesh; end
of BJP is nigh, says
Swami Prasad

VIRENDRA NATH BHATT ■
LUCKNOW

Days after resigning from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) former Ministers and powerful Other Backward Class (OBC) leaders Swami Prasad Maurya, Dharam Singh Saini as well as six other rebel BJP MLAs officially joined the Samajwadi Party (SP) on Friday on the occasion of Makar Sankranti.

The defection from the party is a setback for the ruling BJP, which enjoyed the support of the OBCs in the 2017 Uttar Pradesh (UP) Assembly elections and 2019 general elections. The SP chief Akhilesh Yadav welcomed Maurya and the others.

Addressing the meeting at the SP headquarters, Maurya said Makar Sankranti will mark the beginning of the end of the BJP. "The big leaders of the BJP who never paid any heed to our demands are having sleepless nights now. The BJP has duped the OBCs, Dalits, minorities and youth of the country. They formed the Government by encashing on the name of Keshav Prasad Maurya and Swami Prasad Maurya. There were talks about making either



Former UP Minister Swami Prasad Maurya and others join the Samajwadi Party in presence of party president Akhilesh Yadav at SP office in Lucknow, Friday. Five BJP MLAs and Apna Dal (Sonelal) legislator Amar Singh Chaudhary also joined the SP

PTI

of us the CM, but they brought someone from Gorakhpur and duped Dalits and Backwards", alleged Maurya.

He alleged that under the Yogi Adityanath regime, upper caste people were enjoying their life, while backward castes and Dalits were struggling. "They say the elections are 80 per cent vs 20 per cent, but I say now it's 85 per cent vs 15 per cent, 85 per cent hamara hai and 15 per cent me bhi bantwara hai (85 per cent is ours and there is division in 15 per cent too).

BJP leaders say they will win on the Hindu card, then why did they try to play with the reservation given to Dalits

and Backwards. Appointment letters were given to 19,000 general category people, when 69,000 appointments were Okayed. I want to know if Backwards and Dalits are not Hindu? If yes, then why did you give their reservation to others," asked Maurya.

Further attacking the BJP, Swami Prasad Maurya said, "When I was in the Cabinet, there was a proposal that the posts should be filled with general category applicants without advertisement as there were no applicants from Dalit and Backwards communities. I strongly objected and the CM noted down my objection, but still he didn't stop the propos-

al."

"Now they are disinvesting and privatising the Central PSUs only to scrap reservation for the SCs and OBCs. When things will go to private hands there will be no reservation. Yogi ji, I want to say that you are doing a sin while sitting on the CM's chair. Are only upper caste people Hindus in your eyes? If only those 10 per cent are Hindus in your view then your pack-up is definite. Now, all the Backwards, Dalits and everyone is against you. There will be further division in those eight to ten per cent with you as there are many Samajwadis and Ambedkarwadis in that per-

centage."

"I thought after spending 14 years in exile, the BJP would have learnt its lessons, but it seems that once again they will return to what they were before 2017.

I want to tell BJP leaders that after today, there will be a tsunami in the State which will devastate the BJP. I joined hands with Akhilesh Yadav as he is young, educated and able, I will make crores of people stand behind him and will destroy the BJP. I also challenge that whomever I leave, they stand nowhere. Behen Ji (Mayawati) is a living example, till the time I was with her, she was the CM. I left her, today she is nowhere," said Maurya.

Another former BJP Minister who joined the SP, Dharm Singh Saini said, "Today's programme is being held in the party office because of the Model Code of Conduct, otherwise if there was no ban, there would have been more than ten lakh people. We take oath on Makar Sankranti to save the Constitution, and to save the oppressed Dalits from atrocities. We take a pledge that we will form a Samajwadi Government on March 10. The humanity and respect that I got from Akhilesh ji was not found anywhere else because I have been both in the BSP and BJP. Will get you (Akhilesh Yadav) sworn in as Chief Minister in March and will get you sworn in as Prime Minister in 2024."

India's BrahMos missile to arm Philippine Navy

Make in India gets a boost with \$375 mn export deal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India is all set to ink the first-ever export deal with the Philippines for the indigenously-designed and manufactured BrahMos supersonic missile. The Government-to-Government deal is worth over \$375 million.

This is the first major export of sophisticated weapon systems by India to any country. India is aggressively pursuing the target of exporting weapon systems worth over \$5 billion by 2025 and turn the country into an attractive manufacturing hub for Defence systems. The BrahMos Aerospace, the first joint venture between India and Russia to manufacture high-end missile system, recently submitted its price list to the Philippines which has accepted it, sources said here on Friday.

The two sides will shortly ink the deal totalling \$375 million, they said adding that the contract is for the shore-based anti-ship missile system for the Philippine Navy. India had recently offered a \$100-million line of credit to the Philippines for Defence purchases.



The Philippines Government recently allocated 2.8 billion pesos (\$55.5 million) for initial funding for the BrahMos cruise missile.

The Philippines selected the Indian missile system after tough negotiations and extensive trials, officials said adding a team from the Philippine Navy visited the production unit of BrahMos Aerospace in Hyderabad some months back as part of the acquisition process. The BrahMos Integration Complex in Hyderabad undertakes integration of mechanical systems and assembling electronic systems. Various sub-systems fabricated in other centres in India and Russia are integrated and checked at this complex.

The Philippines armed forces are implementing a

revised modernisation programme. India and the Philippines signed an implementing arrangement in March last year for the Government-to-Government deals regarding military equipment including the BrahMos missile.

The Philippines will acquire the BrahaMos missile which can cover a target range of 290 kms with a capability to carry a 200 kg warhead. India has other variants of this missile also having a range of more than 400 kms.

This deal came about in the backdrop of India engaging with several Southeast Asian countries including Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam for the sale of the missile system, they added. India's ties with the Philippines were stepped up in the past few years.

South India, UP see Covid surge, +ve cases in Delhi, Mumbai dip

India records 2.64 lakh cases in 24 hours

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi, Mumbai, and West Bengal, three Covid-19 hotspots in the latest wave of Covid infection saw marginal dips in new cases on Friday.

However, Southern India saw a huge spike in Covid-19 cases with Karnataka leading the way, followed by Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

Overall, fresh Covid-19 cases in India rose by 7 per cent to nearly 2.64 lakh in the last 24 hours, a day after a record rise of more than 50,000 had pushed the day's tally to 2.47 lakh. Deaths from the virus remained relatively low but were rising.

Among the poll-bound States, Uttar Pradesh is seeing big jump in the number of fresh cases by the day.

Karnataka on Friday



Relatives and health workers wearing PPE carry the body of a Covid-19 victim for cremation, at Shastri Nagar cremation ground in Jammu on Friday

PTI

reported 28,723 new Covid-19 cases and 14 deaths. Capital Bengaluru alone accounted for 20,121 new cases and seven deaths. The positivity rate is now at 12.98 per cent in the State. On Thursday the State had recorded 25,005 new cases of Covid-19 and 8 fatalities.

State Health Minister K Sudhakar said the number of hospitalisations in the third wave so far is less than that recorded during the second

wave last year.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai has sought Central assistance to raise the number of oxygenated beds and oxygen plants in the State. The total number of active cases across the State is now 1,15,733.

Doctors in the two States described the status of pandemics in the two southern States as black Pongal for Tamil Nadu and a black Friday for Kerala. While the number of

people diagnosed with Covid-19 shot up to 23,459 in Tamil Nadu during the last 24 hours (out of 1.5 lakh samples tested), Kerala registered 16,338 cases on Friday. The death toll in Kerala reached 50, 568 while Tamil Nadu's Department of Health Directorate said the number of victims succumbed to the pandemic to date reached 36,956.

The Tamil Nadu Government, shocked over the spurt in the number of Covid-19 cases, has tightened the rules and declared a partial shutdown with many restrictions. Schools and colleges have been asked to stick to online classes till further notice taking into account the warning issued by the Tamil Nadu Government Doctors Association.

The Kerala Government in a review meeting held on Friday decided to shut down all schools and asked the Government and private establishments to opt for online mode in districts where Test Positivity Rate is more than 20 per cent. The State's TPR on Friday stood at 23.68 per cent.

3-kg IED found in bag at flower market in Delhi; defused by NSG

SHEKHAR SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Days before the Republic Day celebrations, an improvised explosive device (IED) was found in the national Capital's Ghazipur area on Friday morning, sending police and securities agencies into a tizzy. The IED weighing around three kilogram, aimed at causing maximum damage, was kept in an iron box inside a black backpack at Ghazipur's busy flower market main gate. The police suspect it was a terror attempt ahead of the January 26 Republic Day celebrations.

An FIR have been registered at Delhi Police Special Cell under explosive act and police team will also be receiving a detail report by the NSG on the IED samples collected.

According to National Security Guard (NSG), which disposed the bomb, the initial examination suggested that the explosive is a nitrate and RDX mix while the triggering device could be a clock or a mobile phone.

"The fire department received information regarding



National Security Guard and police personnel cordon off the area after an Improvised Explosive Device was found inside a bag, at Ghazipur flower market in New Delhi on Friday

Pioneer

the suspicious unattended bag at 10.19 AM following which fire tenders were rushed to the spot," said a senior Delhi Fire Service (DFS) official.

Soon, the officials from the Special Cell of Delhi Police and fire department also reached the spot. A bomb suit wearing NSG personnel was also seen at the site apart from officials from the special cell and regular Delhi Police units.

Entry into clouds led to CDS chopper crash: CoI

New Delhi: The Court of Inquiry (CoI) looking into the December 8 helicopter crash that killed all 14 passengers, including the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat, has ruled out sabotage, mechanical failure or negligence as the cause of the mishap. This was officially made public on Friday.

The Pioneer dated January 6 had reported that the most plausible cause of the accident was bad weather. Technically, it is known as Controlled Flight Into Terrain (CIFT) wherein an aircraft unintentionally collides with terrain be it the ground, a mountain, cliff or a tree-top.

The Tri-Services probe team headed by Air Marshal Manvendra Singh, himself an accomplished helicopter pilot and currently Chief of Training Command and IAF chief VR Chaudhari had apprised

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh here on January 5 about the findings of the investigations. However, no official announcement was then made.

On Friday, the Government said: "The Tri-Services Court of Inquiry into the Mi-17 V5 accident on 08 Dec 21 has submitted its preliminary findings. The inquiry team analysed the Flight Data Recorder and Cockpit Voice Recorder besides questioning all available witnesses to determine the most

probable cause of the accident."

"The Court of Inquiry has ruled out mechanical failure, sabotage or negligence as a cause of the accident. The accident was a result of entry into clouds due to unexpected change in weather conditions in the valley. This led to spatial disorientation of the pilot resulting in Controlled Flight Into Terrain. Based on its findings, the Court of Inquiry has made certain recommendations which are being reviewed," the official statement by the IAF said.

CAPSULE

META FACES \$3.1 BN LAWSUIT IN UK

London: Meta (formerly Facebook) is facing a \$3.1 billion class-action lawsuit in the UK over allegedly abusing its market dominance and if the lawsuit succeeds nearly 44 million British Facebook users could receive a \$68 payout each. Competition law expert Dr Liza Lovdahl Gormsen has brought the class-action lawsuit against Facebook's parent firm Meta at the UK's Competition Appeal Tribunal, Daily Mail reported on Thursday.

5-KG IED RECOVERED NEAR PAK BORDER

Chandigarh: Just a month ahead of the Assembly polls in Punjab, a special task force (STF) of Punjab Police on Friday recovered a 5-kg improvised explosive device (IED) and ₹1 lakh in cash near the India-Pakistan border. The seizure from the outskirts of Dhanoa village in Ajnala subdivision close to the Attari border was made on a tip-off about the smuggling of arms and ammunition from across the border.

POOR NATIONS GIVEN NEAR EXPIRY SHOTS

London: Third world nations were offered about 100 million Covid-19 vaccines that were near expiry, which the countries were forced to dump, according to the UN's children's fund Unicef. According to Unicef's head of supply Etleva Kadilli, more than 100 million vaccines were, in December alone, rejected by countries as they were unable to distribute them, BBC reported.

Budget Session of Parl to begin on Jan 31

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



The Budget Session of Parliament will commence on January 31 with the address of the President to both the Houses and conclude on April 8, sources said on Friday citing the recommendation of the Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs.

The Union Budget will be presented on February 1. The Economic Survey is likely to be tabled on January 31 after the president's address. The first part of the session would conclude on February 11.

After a month-long recess, part two of the session would begin from March 14 and conclude on April 8, the sources said. The recess allows depart-

ment-related Parliamentary Committees to examine budgetary allocations made to their respective Ministries. During part one of the session, campaigning for phase one of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections would be in full swing for which votes will be cast on February 10. When the two Houses meet after recess on March 14, the results of Assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa, Punjab and Manipur would be out as the counting is on March 10 for all the five States.

Batting has let us down, rues Kohli after SA series loss

Cape Town: A South African team going through one of its toughest transition phases embarrassed a star-studded Indian team with a seven-wicket victory in the third Test to clinch a memorable 2-1 series triumph here on Friday even as India Test captain Virat Kohli rued batting failures. The target of 212 wasn't a tough ask and starting the day at 101 for two, Keegan Petersen (82, 113 balls) along with Rassie van Der Dussen (41 not out) added 54 runs for the third wicket to seal the match before Temba Bavuma (32 not out) helped in putting the final touches.

Bishop Mulakkal acquitted of all charges in Kerala nun rape case

PNS ■ KOCHI

A trial court in Kerala's Kottayam district on Friday acquitted Bishop Franco Mulakkal of Jalandhar Diocese of all rape charges levelled by a nun of the Missionaries of Jesus Convent.

The nun's case was that the Bishop had raped her 13 times during 2014 to 2016 and the Catholic Order to which she was associated had rejected her pleas. She had told the police that though she had approached all authorities in the Catholic Congregation, including the office of the Pope, her pleas fell on deaf ears and she was forced to file a complaint.



Additional sessions judge

G Gopakumar of additional district and sessions court, Kottayam, who heard the case from November 2019 to January 2022, ruled on Friday that the prosecution had failed to produce corroborative evidences to substantiate the allegations made by the victim.

The judge said that the evidences do not match with the charges made by the nun and hence the Bishop was being acquitted of all rape charges.

S Harishankar, former superintendent of police, Kottayam, who was the investigating officer, expressed dismay and disappointment over the verdict. "We, the investigation team and the public prosecutor, were confident of the authenticity of our findings and were expecting the court to convict the accused. But this is a shocking verdict," said Harishankar while interacting with the media after the pronouncement of the judgment.

Haryana mulls 10-yr vision document for sports

To develop sports talents in State

NISHU MAHAJAN ■ CHANDIGARH

In a bid to nurture sports talent in the state, the Manohar Lal Khattar Government in Haryana will chalk out a 10-year vision document with the assistance of experts. For this, the Department of Sports & Youth Affairs, Haryana has proposed to set up a Project Management Unit (PMU) which will have experienced and professionals in the field of sports, to help the Department in planning and executing the vision document. The PMU will prepare the 10-year vision document

including budget provisions, infrastructure standards of all greenfield and brownfield projects, proposals for greenfield projects wherever needed in the state. A gap analysis for sports infrastructure and a demand-supply analysis with special emphasis on Olympic sports will also be conducted in the state for preparing the vision document. The State Government is looking to strengthen the grass-root sports ecosystem in Haryana and develop a mechanism amongst the identified levels of sports like sports nurseries, sports academies and centre of excellence following the stellar performance of state's sportspersons at the Tokyo Olympics last year. The Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar had also recently announced to conduct mapping in each district to ensure that necessary sports

infrastructure is being accordingly developed in the state. "A separate Project Management Unit will be established in the Department of Sports and Youth Affairs to prepare a 10-year vision document for sports development in Haryana. The proposed unit will comprise qualified and professional sports persons who will assist the Department in mapping all existing, on-going projects and upcoming sports infrastructure (projects) in the state including of private and public sector," said a senior official of the State Government while talking to The Pioneer. The official said that apart from mapping of sports infrastructure, analysis of issues related to developing the external infrastructure such as approach road, power, water supply etc in such facilities will also be done. The Department

will also explore a sustainable public-private partnership (PPP) model for development of sports facilities in the state, the official said. The State Government aims to transform Haryana into a leading power hub in sports in the country by setting up cutting-edge training facilities comparable to world-class standards, the official added. Notably, the country had last year racked up its best-ever Olympic (Tokyo) medal haul of seven, out of which three individual medal winners and two players in India's men hockey team belonged to Haryana state, known as a traditional powerhouse in sports like kabaddi, boxing and wrestling. Javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra from Haryana's Panipat district had created history in his Olympic debut becoming India's first track and field medalist, and only the

second individual gold medalist after Abhinav Bindra's shooting gold for India in the 2008 Olympic Games. Despite having only two percent of the country's population, 30 sportspersons (about 25 percent) from Haryana were part of the biggest ever Indian contingent of 127 at Olympics last year. Similarly at the Paralympics held last year at Tokyo, the country had won the maximum number of 19 medals in various sports and six medals were won by five players from Haryana, which included two gold, two silver and two bronze medals. Under Haryana's sports policy, the medalists at international sporting events are given high monetary rewards, a job and a plot at concessionable rates, in a bid to encourage youth to take up sports in the state.

Special girdawari for crop damaged due to rainfall, says Haryana CM

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Friday said that farmers would be compensated by conducting special girdawari in places where extensive damage of crops has occurred due to excessive rainfall. The Chief Minister while talking to the mediapersons on the sidelines of a programme in Yamunanagar said that it had rained all over the state in the past few days. The rainfall has been actually good for the crops and the loss has been less, but still, if there has been damage due to excessive rain, compensation will be given by getting girdawari done there. The loss to the farmers will be compensated, he said. Earlier, the Chief Minister addressed a gathering at the foundation stone laying cere-

mony of Samrat Mihir Bhoj Gurukul Vidyapeeth at Jagadhri in Yamunanagar. He announced a matching grant of Rs 1 crore, government assistance of Rs 51 lakh and Rs 2 lakh from his voluntary fund to Gurukul Educational Institute. Khattar said that Gurukul is an ancient system, where students give Dakshina to the Guru after receiving their education and the spirit of reverence prevails in Gurukuls even today. The entire society and the world is associated with Gurukul education, which makes us civilized. The Chief Minister exhorted the people to maintain brotherhood to eliminate social evils and protect the country and society. He said that King Mihir Bhoj did great things to protect the traditions of the country. It is an important task to open educational institutions with values

in his name. Such institutions help inculcate cultural values in the youth, he added. Taking important steps, Haryana Government has taken up the work of including moral education, education of scriptures and Gita shloka in the educational curriculum, he said. Khattar further said that great men do not belong to a particular section of the society and they are an inspiration to everyone hence students of all religions, castes and classes will study in this Gurukul. In this institution, education from classes VI to XII will be imparted to boys. Apart from the ancient education system, students studying here will be able to study on the lines of the CBSE pattern, he said. On the occasion, Education Minister Kanwar Pal and MP Rattan Lal Kataria also announced Rs 31 lakh and Rs 11 lakh respectively for the Gurukul.

Haryana to honour freedom fighters at their homes on Republic Day this year

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Due to surge in COVID-19 cases in the state, Haryana Government has decided that freedom fighters will be honoured by the district officers at their residences on the occasion of Republic Day. The office of the Chief Secretary has issued guidelines to all the Divisional Commissioners, District Deputy Commissioners and Sub-Divisional Officers (Civil) regarding celebration of Republic Day 2022 and asked them to honour freedom fighters at their homes. The guidelines stated, "In view of the spread of COVID-19, it is necessary to follow preventive measures while organizing various programmes or activities for Republic Day on January 26 such as maintaining social distancing, wearing masks, proper sanitization, proper sanitation, avoiding large gatherings, protecting vulnerable persons and follow all the guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) related to COVID-19 issued by

the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Health." They have been directed that all the programmes should be organised in such a way that people can be saved from large gatherings and this national festival should be celebrated by using technology appropriately. "Organised events can be largely web-cast to reach out to those who are not able to participate. Apart from this, there will be no P.T. show. Vulnerable persons, children below 10 years of age should be kept away from these activities along with this all the guidelines and protocols related to Covid-19 issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs and Haryana Government should be strictly followed in the March Past," it stated. It has also been clarified in the directions that the guidelines issued by the MHA regarding the hoisting of the national flag on the occasion of Republic Day on January 26, 2022, should be followed in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Dependents of Brigadier Liddar to get financial assistance of ₹50 lakh: Khattar

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Friday said that approval has been accorded for giving financial assistance of Rs 50 lakh to the family members of Late Brigadier Lakhwinder Singh Liddar, a Haryana resident, who lost his life in the Tamil Nadu helicopter crash. "Besides this, one dependent from the Brigadier's family will also be given a government job. The untimely demise of Brigadier Lakhwinder is an irreparable loss to his family and the state," Khattar said. The Chief Minister said that under the ex-gratia policy of Sainik and Ardh Sainik Bal, there is a provision to provide financial assistance as well as government jobs to the dependents of martyr families. Under this policy, considering the death of Brigadier Lakhwinder Singh, who lost his life in a helicopter crash accident, as a 'Provisional Battle Causality', special financial assistance and job have been announced, he said.

Congress SC leader Joginder Mann quits party

PUNJAB POLLS

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Ahead of the February 14 Assembly polls, ruling Congress got a jolt as senior party leader and former Punjab Minister Joginder Singh Mann on Friday quit, snapping his 50-year-old ties with the party. The leader from the Scheduled Caste community was miffed over "no action" against perpetrators of the alleged multi-crore post-matric SC scholarship scam and non-grant of district status to Phagwara. He resigned from the party as Chairman of the Punjab Agro Industries Corporation. Sources said that Mann is likely to join the Aam Aadmi Party. In a letter to AICC chief Sonia Gandhi, the three-time ex-MLA from Phagwara, who remained a minister in Cabinets including those of Beant Singh, Rajinder Kaur Bhattal and Amarinder Singh, said that he had a dream that he would die as a

Congressman. "But with Congress patronising guilty of the post matric scholarship scheme, my conscience doesn't allow me to stay here," he said. "The maharajas, landlords, money bags and opportunist leaders like Capt Amarinder Singh, Navjot Singh Sidhu and others came in the party for sake of vested political interests due to which the party had drifted from its core values and focus shifted merely to contest the polls and grab power," he alleged. "It is not the same party whose leader late Indira Gandhi rode atop an elephant, as no other vehicle was available in bad weather, to mourn death of members of SC community who were killed in Belchi (Bihar) but today leaders of Congress leaders are drenched with blood of SC students whose career have been ruined due to post matric scholarship scam" he added. The SC scholarship scam had surfaced in 2020 following a report by the then additional chief secretary, discovering alleged misappropriation of Rs 55.71 crore. The report had also questioned the role of the

then Social Justice Minister Sadhu Singh Dharamsot in allegedly shielding those involved in the scam. Citing another reason for quitting the party, Mann said residents of Phagwara have to travel around 40 km to Kapurthala for their administrative works done at the district headquarters. He said he had been repeatedly flagging the issue of giving district status to Phagwara from day one before the then CM Amarinder Singh and now before Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi. "But instead of paying any heed towards it they have blatantly ignored this long pending demand of Phagwara residents thereby humiliating their sentiments and aspirations," he alleged. Mann also charged that in the last few years "the party has been giving step motherly treatment to Valmiki/Mazhabi Sikh community and the party has always used the community merely as a vote bank without even bothering to ensure its well being and give due representation to it".

SAD urges ECI to reconsider ban on election rallies and corner meetings

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The Shiromani Akali Dal on Friday urged Election Commission of India (ECI) to reconsider its ban on election rallies and corner meetings in Punjab and said that it should allow small meetings as they are a must for candidates to approach all sections of society. In a letter written to ECI, SAD Spokesman Daljit Singh Cheema said that ECI has imposed a ban on all election rallies, pad yatras, corner meetings etc. up to January 15 which was causing great hardship to the contesting candidates of all parties. He said that it is not possible to cover all the voters of the assembly constituency in digital mode as there are many backward areas in the state where internet networks are not working properly. He further said that old people, which constitute a major part of the population, rarely use digital methods and people from poor sections of the society also have very little access to digital technology. The SAD leader said that due to these reasons a major part of the society will remain uncovered if only digital campaigning is allowed. This will deny equal opportunities to all

the voters. This will also affect the percentage of polling. He said that we agree that big rallies may be banned but small meetings are a must. Cheema also brought to notice of ECI that many parties which are contesting elections in Punjab have their governments in Punjab/Delhi State/Union Govt. They are misusing government funds to promote their political interests. For example AAP has a government in Delhi. They are daily showing multiple development stories in the form of paid news on various TV Channels of Punjab. He said that these paid news advertisements are aimed at influencing the voters of Punjab. Since there is no code of conduct in Delhi, the AAP is exploiting this loophole to the maximum and spending crores on paid news advertisements at the expense of the Delhi state exchequer. This puts other parties at disadvantage. The SAD leader said that the party requests ECI to reconsider the decision on total ban on corner meetings. He said that all political parties may be allowed to hold small gatherings with Covid cautions so that candidates are able to do justice with their voters.

AAP continues to target Punjab CM's constituency

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

AAP national convener and Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal and party's Punjab unit chief Bhagwant Mann met some farmers in Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi's constituency Chamkaur Sahib. In a short video of the meeting released by the party on Friday, Kejriwal and Mann are seen sitting on a cot placed in the mustard fields and interacting with some farmers. In the video, Mann asks the farmers if they have got payment for the cane crop and the peasants reply that it has not yet been cleared. "Did you not get paid for your products for two years?" Kejriwal then asks the farmers. Another farmer tells the AAP

leaders that several youths in the area are unemployed. "So, this time are you going to bring a change (bringing AAP to power)?" quips Kejriwal during the conversation with peasants. "We are with you..." an elderly farmer tells Kejriwal, and the Delhi chief minister tells him that they only need their support. Punjab goes to polls on February 14 and the AAP is eyeing to wrest power from the ruling Congress. Kejriwal was on a two-day visit to the northern state which concluded on Thursday during which he also campaigned door-to-door, ruled himself out of the race as the party's CM face, as the AAP launched its "Janta Chunegit Apna CM" drive a day earlier and said the name of the candidate for the

top post will be announced after getting the feedback of people. Kejriwal, however, had said his own preference for the post is Bhagwant Mann. During the conversation with peasants in a village in Chamkaur Sahib, in the video, another farmer tells Kejriwal that they got all support and help from the AAP dispensation, including making arrangements of water, ration and providing other essentials which were made when the peasants were agitating against farm laws at Delhi borders. "Did you come to know about our schools and hospitals in Delhi," Kejriwal asks, to which the farmers reply they are aware of it. The Delhi chief minister then asks the peasants whether there is a government school in

their area. The elderly farmer replies that only five teachers are there where 12 teachers are needed. "What will the children do?" he asks. Kejriwal tells them if AAP comes to power, it will improve the condition of government schools like his government did in Delhi and also provide employment to youth. "The way we brought about a change in Delhi, we will bring a change in Punjab too," he said. The Channi-government has been under attack especially from the Aam Aadmi Party over the issues of schools. AAP leader and Delhi education minister Manish Sisodia had last month visited two government primary schools located in Chamkaur Sahib, alleging their pathetic condition. Sisodia had then alleged

that the toilet there was stinking and classrooms were infested with spider webs and in one of the schools, there was only one teacher, who was getting just Rs 6,000 per month. Sisodia, Kejriwal, and Mann are not the only AAP leaders who have targeted Channi's constituency. Last month, senior AAP leader and Punjab affairs co-in charge Raghav Chadha had paid a surprise visit to Jindapur village in Chamkaur Sahib and alleged that illegal sand mining was being carried out in Channi's constituency. However, the Punjab chief minister had trashed his claims and had given a strict warning to AAP leaders from Delhi that no "outsider" would be allowed to raise an "unfounded alarm" in the state.

Dam will be constructed in Adi Badri area: Khattar

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Friday said that the State Government is making every possible effort to provide water to the farmers of Haryana and a dam will be constructed in Adi Badri area for this purpose. The Chief Minister while talking to the mediapersons in Yamunanagar said that Adi Badri is the source of many small rivers. A dam will be constructed by inter-linking these rivers, he said. An MoU will be signed with the Himachal Pradesh government for this dam. The Central Government will also help in this project. This will lead to the flow of water in the Saraswati river and ensure provision of water for irrigation to the surrounding areas, he said. The Chief Minister also held detailed discussions with the officials concerned regarding the project.



Khattar along with the officers concerned also visited the places of origin of Saraswati, Rampur Gairda and Som river. The Chief Minister said that the State Government is dedicatedly working to preserve the ancient heritage of the Adibadri region. This project will play a pivotal role in the field of water conservation, irrigation, drinking water and for the promotion of tourism as well, he said.

Punjab Poll Buzz

MORE THAN 8 LAKH PEOPLE RESPOND TO NUMBER ISSUED BY 'AAP' TO CHOOSE CHIEF MINISTER'S FACE IN 24 HOURS
Chandigarh: In 24 hours, more than eight lakh people have responded to the number released by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) for choosing the party's chief ministerial face in Punjab. Addressing the media on Friday, senior AAP leader and Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Harpal Singh Cheema said that during the last 24 hours, more than three lakh WhatsApp messages, more than four lakh phone calls, more than 50,000 text messages and more than one lakh voice messages have been received on the number. He said that AAP shall announce its CM candidate after collecting and compiling the entire data. Cheema said that the people of Punjab have made up their mind to wipe out traditional parties indulging in dirty politics and form their own government by voting in favour of AAP with a clear majority. He said that the overwhelming support being received by the Aam Aadmi Party has proved that the people of Punjab are fed up with the misrule and promotion of corruption and mafia by Akalis, Congress, BJP and Captain. It is a clear indication that people of Punjab now want change.

SAD (SANYUKT) ALLOTTED 'TELEPHONE' SYMBOL
Chandigarh: The Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa-led Shiromani Akali Dal (Sanyukt) said the party will be represented by the 'telephone' symbol in the upcoming Punjab Assembly polls. The SAD (Sanyukt) had recently entered into an alliance with the BJP and the former chief minister Amarinder Singh-led Punjab Lok Congress for the elections. SAD (Sanyukt) spokesperson Maninderpal Singh Brar said the Election Commission of India has allotted 'telephone' as the election symbol to the party. Voting for Punjab's 117-member assembly will be held on February 14. The counting of votes will take place on March 10.

PUNJAB MINISTER VERKA CASTIGATES ROLE OF BADAL FAMILY AND CENTRAL AGENCIES IN MAJITHIA DRUGS CASE
Chandigarh: Addressing a virtual press conference hosted by the Media department of the Punjab Congress, Punjab minister Raj Kumar Verka on Friday said that in this infamous drug case the investigation was done by agencies when the NDA govt was in power. Not only that, the sister of the main accused was a minister in the union cabinet and his brother in law the home minister in the Punjab state government. Verka said that the statement of Jagdish Bhola, who was being investigated at the time when this case was caught, clearly has become an embarrassment for the Badal family and points fingers at Bikram Majithia. The minister categorically stated that the misinformation campaign of various opposition parties on the scholarship scam was misplaced and misconceived. He assured that no one from the Dalit community will suffer nor any accused in this matter will be spared. He said that Congress will fight and win the election under a collective leadership while the opposition has no face nor any concrete political alignment to go before the electorate.

Haryana reports 8841 Covid cases

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Continuing to witness an upward trend, Haryana on Friday reported 8841 fresh COVID-19 cases and six deaths, taking the total case tally to 828948 and death toll to 10091. In the worst affected NCR, district Gurugram reported 3897 fresh infections, Faridabad reported 1106 cases and Sonapat saw 512 new infections, as per the state's health bulletin. The daily positivity rate in Haryana stood at 17.31 percent while the active cases have jumped to 41420. Around 72 percent of patients in the state are in home isolation. With the virus spreading at a fast pace, the State Government on Friday decided to appoint two nodal officers in each district. A day before, the State Government had extended various restrictions across 22 districts. According to the state's health bulletin, two deaths were reported in Gurugram and one death each was reported in Sirsa, Yamunanagar, Jind and Fatehabad. 3394 recovered

from the virus in the last 24 hours and the COVID recovery rate stood at 93.78 percent. The fatality rate was reported at 1.22 percent in the state, the bulletin added. Health Minister Anil Vij on Friday said that two nodal officers would be deployed in each district of the state. One nodal officer would monitor the arrangements at the government hospital and submit a report while the second nodal officer will monitor the private hospitals of the district concerned and provide information about the arrangements available there to the State Government. **1975 FRESH CASES IN HIMACHAL PRADESH** Himachal reported 1975 new infections taking the total number of infections to 240330 on Friday. The highest number of 584 cases were reported in Shimla followed by 387 cases in Solan, 220 cases in Kangra, 210 in Una and 169 in Sirmaur district, the state's bulletin said. The number of active cases in the state reached 9529 including the highest

1982 cases in Kangra. There were 1464 active cases in Solan, 1400 such cases in Shimla, 921 in Hamirpur among others, the bulletin stated. 558 patients recovered from the virus in the last 24 hours. The death toll stood at 3872 in the state. The cumulative case tally stood at 240330 in Himachal. **HIGHEST SINGLE DAY SPIKE OF 1834 CASES IN CHANDIGARH** The union territory of Chandigarh on Friday reported 1834 new positive cases, the highest single-day rise since the pandemic broke out in March 2020, taking the total number of infections to 74,475. According to the UT medical bulletin, the city's active Covid-19 cases stands at 7257, a 548 percent rise since last Friday. The union territory has added 7,262 cases since last Saturday, and 59 percent of that number was added in the last three days alone. The city reported two more fatalities on Friday. Chandigarh's total fatality count stood at 1,086 while the positivity rate was recorded at 25.21 per cent.

Haryana appoints IPS officer Navdeep Singh Virk as principal secretary transport

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Government on Friday appointed IPS officer Navdeep Singh Virk as Principal Secretary, Transport Department relieving another IPS officer Kala Ramachandran of the charge. Virk, a 1994 batch IPS officer, was earlier posted as ADGP, Law and Order in the state. An order issued by the Chief Secretary Sanjeev Kaushal stated, "Navdeep Singh Virk, ADGP (Law and Order) has been posted as Principal Secretary, Transport Department relieving Kala Ramachandran of the said charge." IAS PK Das, Additional Chief Secretary, Financial Commissioner, Revenue and Disaster Management and Consolidation Department has been given additional charge of

Additional Chief Secretary, Power Department and Additional Chief Secretary, New and Renewable Energy Department," the order added. Ramachandran was appointed as Principal Secretary (PS), Transport Department on September 5, 2021 triggering a controversy over Haryana Government's move to appoint an IPS officer on a cadre post meant for IAS officers. Home Minister Anil Vij had refused to relieve the IPS officer Kala Ramachandran insisting that the government has to seek prior approval of the DoPT before appointing an IPS officer to an IAS cadre post but the Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar had overruled his cabinet colleague to appoint the IPS officer as PS Transport Department.

WHO recommends two new Covid treatments

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Amid rise in hospital admissions augmented by the transmissible Omicron variant across the countries, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has recommended two new Covid19 treatments — Baricitinib, an oral drug, used in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis and Sotrovimab, an alternative to casirivimab-imdevimab, which is monoclonal antibody cocktail.

WHO experts said arthritis drug baricitinib used with corticosteroids to treat severe or critical Covid patients led to better survival rates and reduced need for ventilators. The guidelines by the UN agency's panel of international experts have been published in the British Medical Journal on Friday.

Experts also recommended an experimental monoclonal antibody treatment, Sotrovimab for people with non-serious Covid at highest risk of hospitalisation, such as the elderly, people with immunodeficiencies or chronic diseases such as diabetes. Monoclonal antibodies are lab-created compounds that mimic the body's natural defence mechanism.

Sotrovimab's benefits for people not at risk of hospitalisation were deemed insignificant and the WHO said its effectiveness against new variants like Omicron was "still uncertain".

Only three other treatments for Covid-19 have received WHO approval, starting with corticosteroids for severely ill patients in September 2020. Corticosteroids are inexpensive and widely available and fight inflammation that com-

WHO has recommended two new Covid19 treatments — Baricitinib, an oral drug used in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, and Sotrovimab, an alternative to casirivimab-imdevimab, which is monoclonal antibody cocktail

monly accompanies severe cases.

Arthritis drugs tocilizumab and sarilumab, which the WHO endorsed in July, are IL-6 inhibitors that suppress a dangerous overreaction of the immune system to the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Baricitinib is in a different class of drugs known as Janus kinase inhibitors, but it falls under the same guidelines as the IL-6 inhibitors. Baricitinib is produced by United States pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly, and while generic versions are available in India and Bangladesh, patents are in force in many other countries including Brazil and Indonesia.

"When both are available, choose one based on issues including cost and clinician experience," the guidelines say.

Synthetic antibody treatment Regeneron was approved by the WHO in September and the guidelines say Sotrovimab can be used for the same type of patients. The WHO's Covid treatment recommendations are updated regularly based on new data from clinical trials.

Pranayama effective in preventing Covid: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A specially designed Pranayama module comprising of a string of breathing exercises, every day for 28 days can be highly effective in preventing Covid-19 infection in exposed healthcare professionals (HCPs), finds a study conducted by doctors from Lady Hardinge Medical College and Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) under the Union Ayush Ministry.

The experts said that the study which was conducted during the first wave in 2020 is still relevant as Pranayama remains the first line of defense for the frontline health care workers amid the third wave that now looms large over the country.

The researchers included Dr Rakesh Sarwal from (NITI) Aayog, Dr Rajinder K. Dhamija, Professor and Head of Neurology, Lady Hardinge Medical College, Delhi and Khushbu Jain and Dr Ishwar V. Basavaraddi, both from MDNIY, Delhi

Dr Basavaraddi said a few studies have shown the practice of Pranayama, a component of Yoga, to be effective in improving immune function and reducing infection.

However, no clinical trial on the efficacy of Pranayama in preventing Covid-19 has been conducted till date.

"We conducted a pilot project in five hospitals in the national capital during September-November, 2020. 280 HCPs assigned duties with Covid-19 patients who were found negative in antibody tests in pre-intervention assessment were recruited and ran-

domly assigned to intervention and control groups.

The intervention group practiced specially designed Pranayama modules twice a day (morning and evening) for 28 days, while those in the control group were advised general fitness practices (like walking, jogging, running).

The morning protocol comprised activities like Dhyana that helped to clean the nasal passages and maintain the sinuses and helps to get rid of pathogens while Kapalabhati is a process of forceful exhalation and normal inhalation which helps to improve pulmonary functions and secretions, also cleanse the frontal sinuses and ease movement of diaphragm.

"Since body's immunity plays an important role in Covid-19 infection, non-pharmacological interventions which have an immune-modulatory effect, could serve as a preventive as well as a therapeutic measure for patients with infection," Dr Basavareddi said.

"Our study reveals that twice daily practice of specially designed Pranayama Modules administered by trained Yoga instructors in HCPs exposed to active cases lead to a significant protective effect in preventing Covid-19 infection.

"This is the first of its kind study to assess the effect of the specially designed Pranayama protocol in preventing Covid-19 infection," said Dr Dhamija.

Co-author Sarwal said that Pranayama modules may be promoted and adopted to improve immunity in all sections of the population. Considering the implications of

Over 75 lakh perform Surya Namaskar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

More than 75 lakh people from across the globe performed Surya Namaskar on Friday as part of the 'Surya Namaskar for Vitality' programme organised by the Ministry of AYUSH under the Centre's Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav initiative. The programme was launched virtually by Union AYUSH minister Sarbananda Sonowal and Union Minister of State Munjapara Mahendrabhai.

Sonowal said, "Sun worship is done through Surya Namaskar to improve the physical and mental well-being of people. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, yoga and Surya Namaskar are being promoted for the wellness and health of mankind"

Surya namaskar is a combination of eight asanas performed in 12 steps. The AYUSH ministry has not only engaged other ministries and state governments but has involved all major stakeholders in the global yoga fraternity in this mass demonstration programme.

The study for health care professionals and the general public living in fear of COVID-19, larger studies across different geographical, ethnic and cultural backgrounds are needed to extend and verify the generalization of the present results.

1 in 10 may have Covid after quarantine period

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In some settings, such as people returning to care homes after illness, people continuing to be infectious after ten days could pose a serious public health risk.

For, a study has said that one in 10 people may have clinically relevant levels of potentially infectious SARS-CoV-2 past the 10 day quarantine period. The research is published in the international Journal of Infectious Diseases.

Led by the researchers from University of Exeter, the study used a newly adapted test which can detect whether the virus was potentially still active. It was applied to samples from

176 people in Exeter who had tested positive on standard PCR tests.

The study found that 13 per cent of people still exhibited clinically-relevant levels of virus after 10 days, meaning they could potentially still be infectious. Some people retained these levels for up to 68 days. The authors believe this new test should be applied in settings where people are vulnerable, to stop the spread of Covid-19.

The paper is entitled 'Persistence of clinically-relevant levels of SARS-CoV2 envelope gene subgenomic RNAs in non-immunocompromised individuals'.

Professor Lorna Harries, of the University of Exeter Medical School, who oversaw

the study said: "While this is a relatively small study, our results suggest that potentially active virus may sometimes persist beyond a 10 day period, and could pose a potential risk of onward transmission. Furthermore, there was nothing clinically remarkable about these people, which means we wouldn't be able to predict who they are".

Conventional PCR tests work by testing for the presence of viral fragments. While they can tell if someone has recently had the virus, they cannot detect whether it is still active, and the person is infectious. The test used in the latest study however gives a positive result only when the virus is active and potentially capable of onward transmission.

Covid jumps 4-fold in paramilitary forces

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

The number of Covid-19 cases in the paramilitary forces jumped nearly four-fold in a week from 1,668 cases on January 7 to 6,595 cases on January 13, including one death due to the deadly viral disease in CRPF and 1,254 infections within the last 24 hours.

Till now, as many as 95,980 paramilitary personnel have been infected with Covid-19 of which 89,036 patients have recovered. The forces have suffered 349 deaths till so far and 6,595 patients continue to be active.

As on Thursday, out of a total of 6,595 cases, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) tops the list with 2,237 active cases followed by 1,824 in Central Reserve Police Force

(CRPF), 1,048 cases in Border Security Force (BSF), 892 in Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), 365 in Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), 181 in National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and 48 cases in National Security Guard (NSG), according to official data.

However, genome sequencing has not been undertaken and there is no clarity if there are any cases of the Omicron variant of the coronavirus in their ranks, officials said.

During the last 24 hours, as many as 1,254 personnel were detected with the infection, including a maximum 423 in CISF, 362 in CRPF, 187 in SSB, 182 in BSF, 60 in ITBP, 21 in NSG and 19 in NDRF. This is nearly three times the number

of paramilitary personnel contracting the disease in a single day as on January 7 with a tally of 441 cases.

In a single day, the tally of Covid cases had jumped up by 441 cases from 1,227 cases on Thursday to 1,668 cases on January 7.

Out of the total casualties of 349, the CRPF has taken the maximum toll at 133 deaths followed by 90 in BSF, 83 in CISF, 23 in SSB and 17 in ITBP. Likewise, the NDRF lost two personnel and the NSG suffered a casualty of one personnel due to Covid-19.

Earlier, the number of active Covid-19 cases in the paramilitary forces has jumped over 11 times in just 11 days from a meagre 148 cases as on December 28 to 1,668 cases on January 7.

EC asks poll observers to be accesible, neutral

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With an aim to conduct free, safe and fair elections, the Election Commission (EC) on Friday asked observers, who will be deployed for assembly polls in five states, to be visible, accessible, neutral and ethical while functioning as the eyes and ears of the poll body. The poll body will meet on Saturday to decide whether to continue with its ban on physical election rallies, road shows and pad yatras as the COVID-19 cases on Thursday crossed over 2.66 lakh cases in a day. During the briefings, observers are given comprehensive inputs about various aspects of election management by senior officials of the EC. Over 1,400 officials attended the briefing, with 140 officials attending it in person and the rest connecting virtually. In his address on Friday, Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra also told expenditure observers to sharpen their skills and be innovative in countering newer methods being used to induce voters. Chandra made these remarks while addressing general, police and expenditure observers to be deployed in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa, Punjab and Manipur during the elections. Chandra asked the observers to work in coordination with enforcement

agencies. This is the first briefing of the commission to the senior officers, who have been deployed in the forthcoming elections. Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar cautioned that even stray instances of human errors by polling personnel abd non-compliance of Covid protocols at polling material distribution centres can create a 'deviant narrative and derail the smooth conduct of elections'. According to an EC statement, Election Commissioner Anup Chandra Pandey, while acknowledging that conducting elections amidst COVID-19 was a challenging task, exhorted the designated observers to ensure that a level-playing field is maintained for all political parties and candidates. Officers drawn from IAS, IPS, IRS and other accounts services across the country are deployed as general, police and expenditure observers. Kumar reminded the observers that they are always under strict and microscopic scrutiny by stakeholders and thus should be careful and discreet about their own behaviour and conduct during the election process. He said observers are representatives of the commission and must be acutely aware and cognisant of this sacred and onerous duty entrusted upon them.

Sibal writes to UP, U'khand to prevent hate speeches

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A day after the Supreme Court order on 'dham sansad' events where hate speeches were given, senior lawyer and a former Union Minister Kapil Sibal on Thursday wrote to authorities in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand seeking prevention of inflammatory speeches at more such events planned this month.

On behalf of the petitioners in the hate speeches case in the Supreme Court, Sibal wrote to the district magistrates of Aligarh and Haridwar urging them to take preventive measures including imposition of Section 144 to prevent holding of such events.

"We are in the midst of general elections to the legislative assembly and while we do not want to attribute motives to any person, but if such speeches are made in the midst of an election, they will destabilize the social order and have serious consequences on the polity of this country. We request you to take such preventative action within your powers as is necessary, including under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code,

1973 and Sections 3 and 5 of the National Security Act, 1980," Sibal said in his letter.

He has also sent copies of his letters to chief ministers, home secretaries and police chiefs of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand besides the superintendents of police in Aligarh and Haridwar. A copy was also sent to the Election Commission.

"There are news reports now that another 'dham sansad' is being organised now in Aligarh on January 22-23, 2022 wherein the speakers who participated in the aforementioned events held between 17-19th December, 2021 are likely to be speaking again," Sibal said in his letter to Aligarh DM.

In another letter to Haridwar DM, he said, "There are news reports now that the Shankaracharya Parishad seers announced on 06.01.2022 a protest meeting to be held on January 16, 2022 against the first information report (FIR) registered against speakers at the December 17-19 meeting of the Dharma Sansad."

The senior Congress leader said the responsibility to take preventive measures to prevent any possible incident of mob

violence falls on the district administration, "so the responsibility falls on your shoulders to take preventive action to ensure no speeches of this nature are made".

"We believe if such events are held in the state of Uttar Pradesh as well and similar speeches are made, it will not only disturb the public order but will amount to various criminal offences," Sibal noted. He also referred to the judgement of the Supreme Court in the Tehseen Poonawala versus Union of India case, where the state government was directed to appoint nodal officers in each district for taking measures to prevent incidents of mob violence. These nodal officers have not been appointed in Uttar Pradesh.

The Supreme Court had issued notice to the respondents and posted the matter for hearing after 10 days. The top court was hearing a petition filed by journalist Qurban Ali and former Patna High Court judge and senior advocate Anjana Prakash, who have also sought a direction for an "independent, credible and impartial investigation" by an SIT into the incidents of hate speeches against the Muslim community.

PM Modi to interact with 150 startups today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with 150 startups today which would also include startups linked to the sectors like agriculture, health, enterprise systems, space, industry, security and environment to live up the economic activities in the country.

More than 150 startups have been divided into six working groups based on themes including Growing from Roots; Nudging the DNA, From Local to Global; Technology of Future, Building Champions in Manufacturing;

and Sustainable Development, according to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

Each group will make a presentation before the Prime Minister on the allotted theme in the interaction.

The event marks the 6th anniversary of the launch of the Startup India initiative.

The aim of the interaction, according to the PMO, "is to understand how startups can contribute to the national needs by driving innovation in the country."

As a part of 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav', a week-long event, "Celebrating Innovation Ecosystem", is being hosted by

DPIT, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, from January 10 to January 16.

Prime Minister has been stressing the potential of Startups to contribute significantly to the growth of the nation.

This was reflected in the launch of the flagship initiative Startup India in 2016.

Given the restrictions placed by the Covid-19 situation, the Government has been working on providing an "enabling atmosphere" for boosting the growth and development of Startups and the "startup ecosystem" in the country.

₹2.07 cr assets of former dy drug controller attached

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday said it has attached assets worth Rs 2.07 crore of former Deputy Drug Controller, Licensing Authority Solan, Himachal Pradesh, Kapil Dhiman and others under the Prevention of Money-laundering Act in a disproportionate assets case.

The attached assets include eight immovable properties consisting of land and building in Solan, Mandi, Kullu and Panchkula in the name of Kapil

Dhiman and others and movable properties like balance in bank accounts, fixed deposit receipts (FDRs) and insurance policies maintained in various banks/financial institutions, the ED said in a statement.

The ED had initiated money laundering investigation on the basis of an FIR dated December 14, 2012 and charge sheet dated March 7, 2018 of State Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau, Solan, Himachal Pradesh.

The ED investigation

revealed that Dhiman then Deputy Drug Controller Licensing Authority Solan, Himachal Pradesh used to take bribe for issuing and renewing license of pharmaceutical companies.

He acquired movable and immovable properties out of proceeds of crime to the tune of Rs 2.07 crore, in his name and in the name of his family members and firm/company and projected them as untainted properties, it said, adding further investigation is under progress.

2021 5th warmest year in 121 yrs in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The year 2021 was the fifth warmest year in India since 1901, with the country recording its annual mean air temperature at 0.44 degree Celsius above normal. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Friday released its annual statement on climate of India for the year 2021, which is found to be the fifth warmest year after 2016, 2009, 2017 and 2010 during the last 121 years (1901-2021).

As per the annual statement, as many as 1,750 deaths were reported across India due to extreme weather events such as floods, cyclonic storms, heavy rain, landslides, lightning, among others, during the year. Maharashtra was the most adversely affected state during 2021, which reportedly claimed more than 340 deaths mainly due to extremely heavy rainfall, floods, landslide, lightning, cyclonic storms and cold-wave events.

"The annual mean air tem-

perature for the country was recorded at 0.44 degree Celsius above normal. The warm temperature during winter and post-monsoon season mainly contributed to this," it said.

"In 2016, the mean air temperature was 0.71°C higher than normal; 0.55°C in 2009; 0.54°C in 2017 and 0.53°C in 2010. In the 121 years between 1901 and last year, the mean temperature rose by 0.63°C above normal," the report said.

The report showed that 11 out of 15 warmest years were during the recent fifteen years (2007-2021). The past decade (2011-2020/ 2012- 2021) was also the warmest decade on record with the decadal averaged annual mean temperature anomaly (Actual-LPA) of 0.34 degree Celsius/ 0.37 degree Celsius. The country averaged mean monthly temperatures were warmer than normal during all the months of the year except four months (April, May, June, and November).

"The winter (January to February) and post-monsoon

(October to December) seasons with all India mean temperature anomalies of 0.78 degree Celsius and 0.42 degree Celsius respectively mainly contributed to this warming," it said.

Also, the country last year witnessed a rise in the annual rainfall, which was 105% of its long-period average (LPA). Rainfall during the southwest monsoon season, from June to September, was normal at 99% of the LPA. Notably, the north-east monsoon period saw rainfall at 171% of the LPA - record highest since 1901.

Speaking on the 147th foundation day of the IMD, Union Minister of State for Earth Sciences, Jitendra Singh on Friday said the IMD is going to play a major role in India's crusade for climate preservation at international fora.

The data showed that heavy rainfall and flood-related incidents claimed over 750 lives last year, while thunderstorms and lightning killed at least 780 people in different

IMD predicts cold wave with dense fog in North India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

People should brace up to face severe cold wave along with dense to very dense fog in north India in the next few days. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Thursday predicted dense to very dense fog over North India during next 4-5 days and a wet spell over east and adjoining central India during

parts of the country.

There were five cyclonic storms in 2021 - Tauktae over the Arabian Sea (May 14-19); Yaas over the Bay of Bengal (May 23-28); Shaheen over the Arabian Sea (September 29-October 4); Gulab over the Bay

of Bengal (September 24-28) and most recently, Jawad over the Bay of Bengal (December 2-6). The most devastating of them was Tauktae, which slammed the Saurashtra coastline on May 17, eventually claiming at least 144 lives.

Centre all set to ask carmakers to provide six airbags

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre is all set to make it mandatory for carmakers to provide a minimum of six airbags in motor vehicles that can carry up to 8 passengers for enhanced safety of occupants. Union Minister Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said his ministry had already mandated the implementation of fitment of the driver airbag with effect from July 1, 2019 and front co-passenger airbag with effect from January 1, 2022.

"In order to enhance the safety of the occupants in motor vehicles carrying upto 8 passengers, I have now approved a Draft GSR Notification to make a minimum of 6 Airbags compulsory," Gadkari said. GSR here stands for General Statutory Rules.

He further said that to minimise the impact of frontal and lateral collisions on the occupants seated in both front and rear compartments, it has been decided that 4 additional airbags be mandated in the M1 vehicle category.

"Two side/side torso airbags and two side curtain/tube airbags covering all outboard passengers. This is a crucial step to make motor vehicles in India safer than ever," Gadkari said in a tweet message. According to the Minister, this will ultimately ensure the safety of passengers across all segments, irrespective of the cost/variant of the vehicle

According to latest government data, total 1,16,496 road accidents occurred on national highways (NHs), including expressways, in 2020, causing 47,984 deaths. Last year, Gadkari in an interview had said small cars, mostly

purchased by lower middle-class people, should also have an adequate number of airbags and had wondered why automakers are providing eight airbags only in big cars bought by rich people.

His remarks had come against the backdrop of the automobile industry raising concerns that high taxation and stricter safety and emission norms for vehicles have made their products expensive. Mostly, lower middle-class people buy small economy cars and "if their car won't have airbags and when accidents happen, then it may result in deaths. So, I appeal to all car manufacturers to provide a minimum of six airbags across all variants and segments of the vehicle," he had said.

The minister had acknowledged that additional airbags in small cars will increase their cost by at least Rs 3,000-4,000.

SP takes dig at BJP's 3/4th seats claim

SP supremo says 'BJP meant they will win three or four seats' in UP Assembly polls



Lucknow: Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Friday took a swipe at Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, saying by the '80 versus 20' assertion, he meant only 20 per cent of the population will back the BJP in the Uttar Pradesh elections, while the remaining 80 per cent will support his party. But after the arrival of Swami Prasad Maurya and others in the SP, the saffron party would lose even this 20 per cent, Yadav said in his speech after giving party membership to Maurya and others here. "Baba mukhya mantri

(Adityanath) should engage a math teacher," the SP president said, referring to the chief minister's "80 vs 20" remarks. Adityanath had recently said that in the Uttar Pradesh elections, while 80 per cent supporters will be on one side, 20 per cent will be on the other, which many thought was alluding to the 20 per cent Muslim population in the state. Yadav also pooh-poohed the BJP's claim of winning three-fourth seats in the 403-member Uttar Pradesh Assembly, saying, "they meant they will win three or four seats." **PTI**

Yogi shares meal at Dalit house, says it was 'social exploitation' during SP rule in UP

Gorakhpur: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had a meal at a Dalit household here on Friday and said during the Samajwadi Party rule it was "social exploitation" and not "social justice", whereas the BJP government was working for the development of every section of society without any discrimination. Adityanath's visit to the Dalit family in Gorakhpur came a little before Swami Prasad Maurya, Dara Singh Chauhan and Dharam Singh Saini, who resigned from the government accusing it of being anti-Dalit, gathered at the Samajwadi Party office in Lucknow to take up its membership in the run-up to the assembly polls beginning February 10. Several BJP and Apna Dal legislators have also quit their respective parties to join the SP. After having meal at Amritlal Bharti's home on the



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath having lunch with BJP worker Amrit Lal Bharti at his residence, in Gorakhpur **PTI**

occasion of Makar Sankranti, Adityanath told reporters, "Only 18,000 houses were given to people under PM Awas Yojna in full five-year term of the Akhilesh Yadav government in UP, whereas the present BJP government has given 45 lakh houses to the poor and the deprived under the scheme. "It was 'samajik shoshan'

(social exploitation) and not 'samajik nyay' (social justice) during the SP rule in UP," he said, taking a swipe at his predecessor and SP chief Akhilesh Yadav. He said 2.61 crore households got toilets and 1.36 crore families benefitted from the Ujjwala Yojana under the "double engine" government, referring to the BJP rule at the Centre and in the state. **PTI**

Didi and not anybody else is my leader, says TMC MP

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Voice of decent against alleged dynastic politics seems to have begun in the Trinamool Congress with senior party MP Kalyan Banerjee reiterating that he "will continue in the Trinamool Congress till Mamata Banerjee is around ... no one except her is my leader." Referring to TMC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee's statement that he for one was opposed to any public gathering --political or religious --- for another two months in view of rising corona cases, Kalyan Banerjee said that "such decisions are taken by our supreme leader Mamata Banerjee and not anyone else." He said "such statements need her approval and since my leader Mamata Banerjee has not spoken anything about it I will assume that it is nother view ... in that case I do not subscribe to whatever he

(Abhishek) has said." On whether he regarded Abhishek Banerjee --- who is also the nephew of the Chief Minister --- as his leader the TMC Lok Sabha Chief Whip said, "I consider only Mamata Banerjee as my leader ... I am around till she is there ... I do not accept anyone else as my leader." Attacking Abhishek for making a statement that was in tune with what the BJP demanded Kalyan Banerjee said "whatever he said matches with the views of the BJP ... because his statement came soon after the BJP leadership made similar statements ... but did he (Abhishek) tell anything about the UP elections ... did he tell anything about the crowds gathering in other parts of the country." Though there was no immediate reaction from the Chief Minister another senior leader and party disciplinary committee chairman Patro Chatterjee asked all sides to make statements commensurate to the party policy. "No statement against any leader that goes against the party's conduct rules will be tolerated ... everyone is asked to exercise restraint," Chatterjee said even as State party spokesperson Kunal Ghosh said cognizance of Kalyan Banerjee's statements would be taken by the party. Another TMC MP from Hooghly Aparupa Poddar too came out against Kalyan Banerjee seeking his resignation as the Chief Whip. "He knows full well that Abhishek Banerjee is the party national general secretary and we are bound to follow his line ... now after he has made statements against him, Kalyan Banerjee should resign as the Chief Whip of Lok Sabha because he has acted like Bivishana --- the epic figure of Ramayana who left his brother Ravana the demon king to join the ranks of Lord Rama."

MP Rupa seeks CBI probe into train mishap which killed 9 people

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Technical snags might have led to the Thursday's train accident at Moynaguri in North Bengal that left 9 people dead and many others injured, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Friday said after visiting the spot. This, even as BJP MP Rupa Ganguly demanded a CBI investigation into the mishap considering the timing of the accident. "Are the Railway tracks thinking creatures that they will cause the train to derail ... Do trains derail out of nothing ... we have to consider the timing of the accident ... the elections are around and considering the fact that no big mishap has taken place in the past several years it becomes imperative to get the investigation conducted by the CBI to ascertain the truth," Ganguly said drawing instant reaction from the

ruling Trinamool Congress. "Even the Union Railway Minister has not said anything about any conspiracy ... even he has pointed at some technical snag and here their leader is raising political issues which is unacceptable... instead of reaching out to the people they are politicizing the matter," said TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh. Meanwhile, former engineers of the Railways said that prima facie it seemed that one of traction motors of the engine had fallen off blocking the tracks and causing the coaches to derail. "We are conducting a high level investigation and will make things known soon after we come to a conclusion," Commissioner for Railway Safety Latif Khan said. Twelve coaches of the Bikaner-Guwahati Express train had derailed and some of them capsized near Domohani in Jalpaiguri district on Thursday.

RLD-SP pick candidates on different criteria

Noida: The Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) has chosen educated candidates hailing from the constituency and with no criminal background, while partner the Samajwadi Party picked them on their 'winnability' factor as the alliance announced the first list of nominees for the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls. The alliance of Akhilesh Yadav's and Jayant Chaudhary's parties, which has led the RLD - in western Uttar Pradesh which will go to polls on February 10. These seats across districts like Muzaffarnagar, Shamli, Aligarh, Agra, Ghaziabad, Meerut, Hapur, Ghaziabad were largely won by the BJP candidates in the 2017 elections but have now seen a considerable influence of the recent farmers' agitation and changing caste equations. "The criteria for ticket distribution have been a candidate's background. Of the candidates announced by the RLD today, no one has a criminal

background. They are all educated and qualified candidates having a good connect with the people of their region. None of our candidate is an outsider. All belong to the assembly seat where they are contesting the election," RLD spokesperson Sandip Chaudhary told PTI. He added that party leaders have held campaigns and panchayats in recent months which has led the RLD to also take decisions on the basis of "public feedback". Chaudhary also highlighted that the recent agitation of farmers against the four contentious central farm laws, which have now been repealed, have dented the BJP's prospects in Uttar Pradesh, particularly in the western region. "The farmers are unhappy. The Muslim community is also unhappy with the BJP. The people have realised the BJP's false promises and false dreams it had shown to them last time," he claimed. As the tickets were announced, Samajwadi Party spokesperson Abbas Haider said the alliance of his party

and the RLD has a "definite influence" in western part of Uttar Pradesh. On distribution of tickets, Haider told PTI, "Winnability of a candidate is the first criteria for ticket distribution in the alliance. The party workers are also being kept in mind during the process." "The atmosphere in the region is against the BJP and that is evident as people across sectors have come out in support of the SP-RLD alliance," he claimed. Of the 29 seats on which the alliance announced candidates Thursday, the Samajwadi Party's Nahid Hasan had won the 2017 polls from Kairana and Rafeeq Ansari from Meerut and the party has repeated both the candidates this time. Sahender Singh Ramala was the only RLD candidate who won the party a seat in the last elections. He had won from the Chhaprauli seat in Baghpat district, once considered a party stronghold. The 2022 candidate from the seat is yet to be announced. **PTI**

Bengal BJP dissolves all departments, cells

35 depts, 15 cells all bound to shut amid growing resentment among leaders

Kolkata: BJP's West Bengal unit president Sukanta Majumdar on Thursday dissolved all the departments and cells of the party in the state amid growing resentment among its leaders. The BJP has 35 departments and 15 cells in West Bengal. Among these are the legal department and the refugee cell. "As per instructions of Dr Sukanta Majumdar, all departments and cells stand dissolved till the time they are reconstituted, and new appointments are made," said a statement issued by the state BJP. The announcement was made days after Union

Minister Shantanu Thakur, a leader from the politically powerful Matua community, quit the party's WhatsApp groups amid disappointment over the newly-formed state office bearers' committee. Last month, five MLAs had left the WhatsApp groups in protest after being dropped from the committee. A senior state BJP leader said dissolving the departments and cells is a usual process in the party after a new president takes over. "Whenever a new president takes charge, he forms new committees, departments and cells. After Sukanta Majumdar took over last year, he did not form the new committees and cells," he said. However, a disgruntled BJP leader said all the party old-timers and experienced leaders have been sidelined by the new dispensation in the state unit. **PTI**

Over 3L take holy dip at Gangasagar on Makar Sankranti

Sagar Island: Over 3.5 lakh pilgrims took the holy dip at the confluence of the Ganga and the Bay of Bengal here on the occasion of Makar Sankranti on Friday, even as officials carried out RT-PCR tests as part of the measures to check the spread of COVID-19. Those who have taken the double dose of COVID vaccines and found negative for the disease have been allowed to enter Sagar Island for the Gangasagar fair, a senior official of West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district said. The holy bath began at midnight as pilgrims from different parts of the country gathered at the confluence braving cold and steady drizzle. They also offered prayers at the Kapil Muni temple here. According to locals, physical distancing went for a toss during the dip even though disaster management and civil defence personnel, policemen and volunteers were active to maintain Covid protocols. The district administration claimed it regulated the proceedings to a great extent and most of the pilgrims followed the instructions, an official said. "We didn't allow anyone without RT-PCR test and double vaccination certification this time. The screening was done at all embarkation points, including Kolkata's Babughat and South 24 Parganas' Namkhana and Lot 8. As of now, an estimated 3.5 lakh pilgrims took the holy dip," he said. According to Hindu Calendar, the holy dip on Makar Sankranti is scheduled from 6.02 am on Friday and will continue till 6 am on Saturday. A two-member panel formed by the Calcutta High Court to monitor adherence to COVID-19 norms at the fair had inspected the preparations since Wednesday. **PTI**



Devotees react as they take a holy dip in the Ganga river on 'Makar Sankranti' in Prayagraj, on Friday **PTI**

COVID BULLETIN

'No shortage of vaccines in Maha'

Union Health Ministry scotches media reports on scarcity of jabs

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A day after the Maharashtra Government asked the Centre to provide 40 lakh Covaxin and 50 lakh Covishield doses to increase the vaccination coverage, the Union Health Ministry on Thursday scotched reports in a section of the media that the State was facing vaccine shortage and said that it had 24 lakh unutilised doses of Covaxin and that it received additional 6.35 lakh doses during the day. Alluding to media reports stating that the State Government was unable to increase the pace of vaccination

in the State owing to shortage of vaccine, the Union Health Ministry said in a statement: "Such reports are ill informed and incorrect. It is clarified that, as per the reports available today (14th January 2022), Maharashtra has over 24 lakh unutilized doses of Covaxin available with it. An additional 6.35 lakh doses have been received today." "As per their weekly consumption data available on Co-WIN, the average consumption by Maharashtra for Covaxin to cover the eligible beneficiaries for 15-17 years and for precaution dose is almost 2.94 lakh doses per day. Therefore, the State has

adequate vaccine doses for about 10 days to cover the eligible beneficiaries with Covaxin," the Health Ministry said. "Furthermore, for Covishield, the state has 1.24 crore unutilized and remaining doses available as on date. With an average consumption of 3.57 lakhs per day, this will sustain for more than 30 days for the beneficiaries to be vaccinated using the vaccine," the Union Health Ministry statement said. "Hence, the media reports are not factually correct and do not reflect the correct picture of the available stock of balance and unutilized Covid vaccine

doses with Maharashtra," the statement added. At a meeting of Chief Ministers and ministers of various states called by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take stock of the Covid-19 situation across the country, the Maharashtra government had asked the Centre to provide 40 lakh Covaxin and 50 lakh Covishield doses to increase the vaccination coverage. Talking to media persons after the meeting, State Public Health Minister Rajesh Tope had said: "Covaxin is required for the vaccination for the 15-18 age group and Covishield for people over 60 years of age and the frontline workers."

Karnataka Govt seeks Central assistance to raise number of oxygenated beds, O2 plants

Bengaluru: Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Thursday sought Central assistance to raise the number of oxygenated beds and oxygen plants in the State. Bommai sought the assistance today while taking part in a video conference held by Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Chief Ministers of various states over the COVID-19 situation in the country. "I explained the measures taken by the state government to control and manage Covid. The Prime Minister appreciated the high rate of testing and vaccination in the state which is higher than the national average," the CM was quoted as saying by his office in a release. Noting that the PM was also apprised about measures initiated to ramp up the medical infrastructure, he said, "I

sought the central assistance to raise the oxygenated beds and oxygen plants." The Prime Minister gave instructions on making all preparations based on the experience of the first and second wave of Covid, as the pandemic is expected to peak in February, the CM said. During the third wave over 94 per cent infected are in home isolation, and therefore the Prime Minister wanted to give priority to ensuring supply of medicines, appropriate care and measures to instill a sense of confidence among the infected, he said. Further Bommai said, the Union government has suggested ramping up testing, purchase of ambulances and improving medical infrastructure under the Rs 32,000 crore package it has provided. **PTI**

Kerala, TN see surge in Covid-19 cases in 24 hours

CHENNAI ■ KOCHI

A black Pongal for Tamil Nadu and a black Friday for Kerala. That's how doctors in the two States described the status of pandemic in the two southern States. While the number of people diagnosed with Covid-19 shot up to 23,459 in Tamil Nadu during the last 24 hours (out of 1.5 lakh samples tested), Kerala registered 16,338 cases on Friday. The death toll in Kerala reached 50, 568 while Tamil Nadu's Department of Health Directorate said the number of victims succumbed to the pandemic till date reached 36,956. Tamil Nadu Government, shocked over the spurt in the number of Covid-19 cases have tightened the rules and declared a partial shut down



with many restrictions. Schools and Colleges have been asked to stick to online classes till further notice taking into account the warning issued by the Tamil Nadu Government Doctors Association. The Kerala Government in a review meeting held on Friday decided to shut down all schools and asked the Government and private establishments to opt for online mode in districts where Test Positivity Rate is more than 20 per cent. The State's TPR on Friday stood at 23.68 per cent.

Uddhav should delegate powers if he is not well: BJP

Maha Opp seeks delegation of power after CM skips PM meet due to ill health

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Upping the ante over the ill-health of Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray once again, the Opposition BJP on Friday asked him to step aside and hand over his post to someone elsewhere till his health condition improved. The BJP's demand should be seen in the context of the fact that Uddhav -- who has been recouping from the cervical spine surgery that he underwent at HN Reliance Hospital here on November 12 -- did not attend the Covid-19 review meeting through video conferencing called by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday, owing to health reasons. Talking to media persons at Kolhapur in western Maharashtra, State BJP president Chandrakant Patil said: "The State Health Minister has

said that the chief minister did not attend the Covid-19 review meeting called by the Prime Minister as he cannot sit at one place for two to two and a half hours. That being the case, Uddhav Thackeray should hand over the chief minister's responsibility to someone else in the party till recovers fully from his illness." "People are saying that the chief minister has not met people for almost 70 days now. That being the case, Uddhav Thackeray should delegate his powers to someone who can attend daily meetings and sometimes visit some places in the state," Patil said. "He (the chief minister) is like our friend, so I wish him a speedy recovery. However, the task of administering the state, which has a population of around 12 crore, cannot be done just by sitting at home. Such responsibilities should

be taken more seriously," the state chief said. On Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut's criticism of the BJP, Patil said: "Raut should understand that the Sena is losing due to this coalition government. A Shiv Sena candidate cannot win the election of Mumbai cooperative Bank, whereas an NCP candidate becomes its chairman." Referring to the NCP's decision to contest the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls, Patil said: "If Sena is contesting upcoming elections in Goa and Uttar Pradesh, it is merely to win a certain number of votes in order to get the tag of a national party. You need to get a certain number of votes in more than one state to get such recognition". Patil had made a similar demand that Uddhav should step aside from his chief minister's post till he recovers fully from his

cervical spine surgery that he underwent at HN Reliance Hospital two months ago. The reiteration of his demand by Patil comes a week after the a BJP social media functionary Jiten Gajaria had sparked a controversy by putting out an "objectionable" tweet describing Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray's wife Rashmi Thackeray as "Marathi Rabri Devi". In his tweet put out along with photograph of Rashmi Thackeray, Gajaria had likened her to Bihar's former chief minister Rabri Devi, who had taken over the reins of the northern state after her husband and RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav resigned in the wake of his involvement in the fodder scam. Through his tweet, Gajaria had indirectly referred to the health issues faced by chief minister Uddhav Thackeray.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Stepping up

The Govt and the SC are on same page on the need to bring about criminal law reforms

For the last few days, the Delhi High Court is hearing petitions seeking to criminalise marital rape. During the hearings, the Centre has informed the court that it proposes a comprehensive revamp of the criminal law. This is an echo of the Union Home Minister on Tuesday seeking views from the Chief Justice of India, Members of Parliament and Chief Ministers on forging a “people-centric legal structure”. The Home Minister said the same once before, way back in 2016, when he sought similar views on changes to the Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure, Arms Act, and so forth. The same year, the Supreme Court too asked the Centre to reform police laws as well. Better late than never, as they say. Several sections of these laws and many other statutes like the sedition law are of colonial vintage and are antiquated. They are still used, most in their breach, and should go at once. The one that decriminalises marital rape is another one that is so obviously not ‘people-centric’ and yet exists in the statute books. The Home Ministry is bound to get numerous suggestions on reformation and change. But it is for the Ministry to identify the provisions that require a revision. Some would say the reforms need to be sweeping because some provisions related to classes of offences, legal procedures, the quantum of punishment and principles of criminal jurisprudence have not seen changes in decades.



The IPC, drafted in 1860, has seen only 77 amendments to date, 37 of them coming after Independence. The CrPC has amended 18 times between 1974 and 2014. Social progress and technology upgradation mean these laws need to be modernised to keep pace with the times. New types of punishments, with restorative and reformatory justice in mind, need to be introduced into the Indian system. Principled sentencing is the need of the hour on the procedural side to ensure that different sentences for crimes of similar nature do not have major variations. The Government has to explain how it wants to give the reforms a ‘people-centric’ push. For, in democratic parlance, it means having suitable procedures in place to quickly identify the reasons for victimisation and reforming laws to uphold the rights of victims of crime. The extant laws of Macaulay’s time are tuned to serve the interests of the Crown. They need to be oriented towards people — once the victims of colonial rule who, after Independence, became the victims of colonial laws. They need to enjoy the benefits of victim protection schemes and victim participation in criminal trials, compensation and restitution schemes for victims. Victim advocacy and human rights are the thrust points. But that will not amount to much without the fundamental tightening of the mental resolve to tackle crime: One, political non-interference in the roles of crime investigation agencies; two, a change in the attitude of the police towards complainants; and, three, no external pressures on the police.

PICTALK



Pilgrims gather for a holy dip in the Ganga on the occasion of Makar Sankranti, at Gangasagar Mela

PTI

Rough & tumble

The game of UP’s throne is getting exciting by the day, and the Opposition is thrilled

With just about a month to go for the Uttar Pradesh Assembly election, scheduled to be held in seven phases between February 10 and March 7, there are significantly noticeable rumblings in the electoral playfield. Three Ministers in Yogi Adityanath’s Cabinet (Labour & Employment Minister Swami Prasad Maurya, Environment Minister Dara Singh Chauhan, Ayush Minister Dharam Singh Saini, besides legislators Roshanlal Verma, Brijesh Prajapati, Bhagwati Saran Sagar, Mukesh Verma, Vinay Shakya, Bala Prasad Awasthi and Avtar Singh Bhadana) have resigned in three days, and there is high probability that they may join the Samajwadi Party in the coming days. In fact, Saini warned the party that “every day till January 20, a Minister and two-three MLAs will resign from the BJP”. So far, a total of 14 lawmakers, including the three Ministers, have signaled their exit from the BJP since the poll schedule was announced on January 8. All the major political parties in the fray in the politically significant State — the SP, Congress, BSP and the AIMIM — are contesting separately and the BJP was hopeful that it would easily breast the tape yet again against a splintered Opposition.



Though Assembly elections are going to be held in five States, seen as a template for the Lok Sabha elections in 2024, all eyes are on UP. Only a few months back, everything was going well for the UP Chief Minister. Backed by PM Narendra Modi, Yogi Adityanath seemed unstoppable and ready to return to power, but sudden large-scale desertions have hit his Government and image hard. The recent resignations have dented the BJP’s efforts at consolidating the Hindu vote, which helped it win in 2014, 2017 and 2019. The formula was built around the BJP’s strategy of social engineering, a concept perpetuated by former general secretary and ideologue K Govindacharya, but it appears to be wearing off now. Needless to say, the recent developments are quite comforting to the Opposition camp, and the satraps would likely enter the humdrum of the electoral battlefield with renewed zest and vigour. Meanwhile, the saffron party would need a lot more than its social engineering formula and development slogans to keep its ship stable and on course. This is where the experience of poll-hardened veterans, including the Modi-Shah masterminds, could come in handy. Alas, time is not exactly a friend of the BJP this time.

Fear is the key to rule minds, or is it?

Today’s politicians exploit every opportunity to use fear for recruiting volunteers to their own personal causes without realising the flipside



DEEPAK SINHA

We live in a world that, as Canadian philosopher Brendan Myers puts it, is “utterly saturated with fear. We fear being attacked by religious extremists, both foreign and domestic. We fear the loss of political rights, a loss of privacy, or a loss of freedom. We fear being injured, robbed or attacked, being judged by others, or neglected, or left unloved.”

Politicians understand this well. With the COVID-19 pandemic having already laid us low and in the absence of any real health-revival hopes on the horizon, they have lost no time in using fear to entice and recruit volunteers to their own personal causes.

Former American President Donald Trump is a prime example of a politician who has successfully used fear to his advantage, and continues to do so despite having lost the Presidency by approximately seven million of the popular vote. With absolutely no evidence to show, he has still been able to sell the “Big Lie” that he was denied victory because the election machinery was compromised and allowed incumbent Joe Biden to win fraudulently, something that millions continue to believe even to this day.

This issue, as we are all aware, boiled over on January 6, 2021, the day Congress was to formally certify President-elect Biden’s win. An unruly mob of Trump’s supporters, egged on by him but he choosing not to join them, attacked Capitol Hill in an effort to stop Congress from carrying out its constitutional mandate. In the ensuing violence, two policemen were killed and over 150 injured, leading to the arrest of over seven hundred of those involved, with many more still at large.

One would have expected that the fanatics who attacked the Capitol and unleashed utter mayhem there would belong to the very fringes of American society. Surprisingly, that was not the case, as a study by the University of Chicago’s ‘Project



on Security and Threats’ found. Of those who have been arrested thus far, “over half were business owners, CEOs and from white-collar occupations. Over a quarter had college degrees and only a third had criminal records, while 13 per cent belonged to extreme right-wing militia groups”. It concluded that the mob was overwhelmingly White Non-Latinos, in ages between 35-50 years and the vast majority had come from pockets of Trump supporters in districts and States that were either majority Democrat or had swung towards the Democrats.

The most interesting aspect of the study was the revelation that the single most important motivation for those who participated in the insurrection was their belief in the “Great Replacement Theory”. A conspiracy theory first propounded in France by author Renaud Camus in which white nationalists claimed that the French white population was being demographically and culturally replaced deliberately by Non-European peoples. It has found much traction not just



THE FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN OBLITERATES ALL REASONING AND BRINGS OUT A PURELY EMOTIONAL RESPONSE. WHAT MOST PEOPLE OVERLOOK IS THAT WHILE IT IS RELATIVELY SIMPLE TO START A FIRE, THE CONFLAGRATION LEAVES NONE UNSCATHED

in France but also in other European nations and in the United States and New Zealand. In America, it has come to be seen as the Non-Latino White population being replaced by Blacks, Hispanics and People of Colour. In essence, a growing fear of losing their privileged and entitled position in society that the colour of their skin provided.

A fear that Donald Trump was able to effectively harness not just in the presidential campaign of 2016 but also, even more successfully, in his 2020 campaign despite his eventual loss. Interestingly, the Replacement Theory with appropriate modifications can just as easily be adapted in support of other extremist ideologies as well, both religious and ethnic. In our own context, for example, there are groups within the Hindutva fold that use a similar argument, not supported by any scientific data, to suggest that birth rates in minority communities are so high that they will eventually overtake the majority Hindu population in a few decades. There are groups

that have recently gone further in propagating even more radical views than this.

Clearly, one need not be a social scientist to understand that the motive for such baseless assertions is completely rooted in politics, and works as an effective tool for propagating fear to garner votes. What is truly dangerous is the insidious nature of the threat posed. The fear of the unknown, as we all know, obliterates all reasoning and logic and brings out a purely emotional response. Unfortunately, what most people overlook is that while it is relatively simple to start a fire, the conflagration leaves none unscathed. Those fanning the flames of religious bigotry would do well to heed 18th century English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s wise words that “in politics, what begins in fear usually ends in failure”.

(The writer is a military veteran, who is a Visiting Fellow with the Observer Research Foundation and Senior Visiting Fellow with The Peninsula Foundation, Chennai. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PASSENGER SAFETY JUST FOR MANUALS?

Sir — Since the derailment of Seemanchal Express in February 2019 in Bihar where six people lost their lives, and the curtailment of the railways due to COVID-19, the Railways was trying hard to renew its claims of safety and development. Just at that moment, at least seven people were killed and over 40 injured after 12 coaches of the Bikaner-Guwahati Express derailed in West Bengal’s Jalpaiguri district. The people are unable to digest the claim that due to the pandemic, there were fewer passengers on board the train. It seems to be a wrong statement by the officials concerned. There were 550 passengers in the affected coaches and 1,100 passengers in the train; so, it’s not less.

Moreover, it’s 2022 and still these trains are using IFC coaches instead of LHB (Linke Hofmann Busch) coaches. Instead of inaugurating stations after stations, there’s a pressing need to develop the rail compartments first. The silver lining amid the tragedy was to see about 50 ambulances reaching the spot in no time at such a remote place, also thanks in no small measure to locals for a quick helping hand and all parties for overcoming petty politics and joining hands to help the passengers. It shows that our medical system and coordination improved. Heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and praying for early recovery of those injured.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

TOLERANCE THERAPY NEEDED

Sir — We have too many people around whose sentiments are too easily hurt by what happens in the advertisements but not enough by what happens out there in reality. Added to the fact that we generally lack a sense of humour and every imagined slight is blown out of proportion, it has made it nearly impossible for any creative person to take a different, independent view from the accepted traditional view. After 2014, there is a growing constituency of eagle-eyed ‘protectors’ of Indian cultural and religious traditions waiting to getting offended at the

Allay fears of the workforce



With the surge in COVID cases, the migrant workforce from other States is in the grip of fear as they had bitter experiences of the previous lockdown. They should not be left in lurch and it is expected of the authorities concerned to step forward and allay their fears as some of them have already started trickling homeward. Some reports indicate that labourers from Delhi and the NCR as well as the port hubs of Mumbai and Kolkata are getting infected

slightest chance.

Thanks to the attitude of the Government in power and other elements that are patronised by it extra-constitutionally, which offers them protection from the essence of the law of the land, this creed believes they have the sole proprietary rights over Indian culture. Culture is dynamic and the fossilised thought processes of the many ‘guardians of Indian values’ need a changeover if the nation is to progress.

Anthony Henriques | Mumbai

AMBIDEXTROUS BOWLERS

Sir — While cricket has seen a lot of innovations over the years like coloured clothing, emergence of T20 format, introduction of pink ball, etc, ambidextrous bowling is something that hasn’t made its way yet into the game. But being an ambidextrous bowler, and more so a fast bowler, is highly challenging and far more demanding in terms of physical fitness because the bowler needs to rewire his body very often dur-

ing the game. Across cricketing nations, only five cricketers have so far tested out ambidextrous bowling — Akshay Karnear (India), Kamindu Mendis (Sri Lanka), Yasir Jan (Pakistan), Shaila Sharmin (Bangladesh) and Jemma Barsby (Australia.)

But how far can ambidextrous bowling be really effective and sustainable at international level is the moot question as these days, batsmen like Glen Maxwell are adept at employing switch-hitting at will, a shot which is highly productive in T20 cricket. In fact, ambidextrous bowling was in use long ago when Pakistan’s Hanif Mohammed tried it out a few times, though in desperation, like he did to Gary Sobers during his monumental knock of 365 n.o. at Kingston, Jamaica, in 1958. It’s believed to be the first-ever instance of ambidextrous bowling in international cricket.

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandhar

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

Who will understand what the public wants more than Mamata Banerjee? The party’s policies are decided by her.

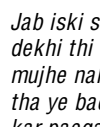


Trinamool MP
—Kalyan Banerjee



Imran Khan is my leader and prime minister and I did not tell him that I will not vote for him.

Pak Defence Minister
—Pervez Khattak



Jab iski shakal dekhi thi na, mujhe nahi laga tha ye bachcha kar paega (to comedienne Bharti Singh’s husband Haarsh).

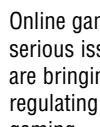


Actor
— Mithun Chakraborty



To come back after losing the first Test... then win the second and now the third Test is pretty incredible.

South Africa head coach
—Mark Boucher




Online games are a serious issue. We are bringing an act regulating online gaming.



Madhya Pradesh Home Minister
—Narottam Mishra


FIRST COLUMN

SEARCHING FOR ANTIDOTE TO COMMUNAL HATE



JAGDISH KAUR

India woke up to the new year with shocking revelations regarding the "Bulli Bai" app targeting minority women in a derogatory and humiliating manner. The app had misused photographs of a number of Muslim women, including students, prominent personalities, journalists, and social workers. Protests were lodged all over the country. With pressure from human rights and women groups, the Bulli Bai app was blocked by Github. A couple of owners of the Bulli Bai App have now been arrested by the CERT-IN (Indian Computer Emergency Response Team) and currently in police custody. The 'Sulli Deals' App, which was launched last year, had listed Muslim women for 'auction' with photographs sourced without permission and doctored. Its mastermind has also been arrested now. Will these arrests stop this kind of humiliating intent against certain religions, sects, communities, castes, or groups? Certainly not, because these are not one-time or stand-alone crimes. These are the



result of organized and sustained hate campaigns poisoning the minds of Indians, especially youth, against minority communities. For last some years, the social media has been extensively used to create platforms and material by these perpetrators of hate. As per Statista Research Department, most hate crimes during 2015-2019 were targeted at Dalits, followed by Muslims. There have been several reports of Muslims not being allowed to pray in certain places in North India and Christians being targeted on suspicion of being involved in religious conversions. Human rights groups which monitor atrocities against Christians in India have documented the violence by Hindutva groups from all states and released a fact-finding report titled 'Christians under attack in India'. The report released by the Association of Protection Civil Rights, United Christian Forum and United Against Hate at a press conference in Delhi in October 2021 says over 300 such instances were reported from across 21 states, particularly in North India, in nine months of 2021.

The farmers who protested for almost a year were repeatedly labelled as 'Khalistanis' and hate messages against them were doing the rounds on all social media platforms. Various forms of provocative incidences against minorities have been on the rise in the last few years. We keep hearing about the incidences of 'love jihad', 'ghar wapsi' and other newly coined terms to target certain communities. The Supreme Court has agreed to take up a PIL seeking probe into alleged hate speeches at two separate events at Haridwar and Delhi in December 2021. There are messages and videos circulating on social media regarding the atrocities committed on Hindus by Mughals (Muslims) during the Middle Ages. The voices for making India a 'Hindu Rashtra' are getting louder by the day. The hate speeches and hateful actions against any religion can only serve to imbalance the public order and peace in society. Educated young people are debating religion and hate rather than constructive issues for nation building. Do we have a solution? The harrowing trend of communal hatred is likely to meet with retaliation by those targeted in due course leading to destruction of the very fabric of multi-cultural Indian society. As Mahatma Gandhi said "an eye for an eye will only make the whole world blind". The Constitution of India enshrined and ensured equality and respect for all Indians. Hate campaigns against any religion, community or sect need to be condemned in the strongest words and strict legal action should be taken against the perpetrators. Politicians, religious and community leaders, and people from all walks of life should come together to oppose hate campaigns. School curricula should have mandatory content on communal harmony so that future generations learn to value of compassion and brotherhood.

(The writer is President, Women's Initiative for Liberation, Growth & Action, a national body working for women empowerment. The views expressed are personal.)

Mahatma Gandhi an ecological economist?



BKP SINHA

Gandhi's ideas could not be more relevant than today when India is witnessing jobless growth and facing the worst unemployment crisis



India was earlier known for its flourishing trade in spices and textiles, along with precious metal and stone. After Independence, India inherited an economy that was one of the poorest in the world with no industrial base and mostly devastated land deprived of forest and fertility. The British left a poor base for the already developed handicrafts universally acclaimed for their quality and craftsmanship.

In Mahatma Gandhi's view, industrial civilisation fostered by British rule was the main cause of India's social, ecological and economic distress. He believed that India's salvation lay in the restoration of its ancient civilisation where economic progress and moral progress intertwined.

Gandhi knew that "India lives in her seven lakh villages" therefore the economic and social revival of these villages is a pre-condition for reconstruction of India. He wanted to make the villages self-sufficient and build a rural economy which is not solely based on agriculture and allied activities but also has strong rural industries thereby generating employment for the villagers.

Gandhi once said, "If the village perishes, India will perish too". He imagined his ideal village will consist of cottages made from locally sourced materials with sufficient light, ventilation, proper sanitation and produce its own grains, vegetables, fruits, and Khadi. It will have wells, places of worship, a common meeting place, a common grazing field, a co-operative dairy, primary and secondary schools where vocational training will be imparted and panchayats for settling disputes.

Gandhi was against the concentration of power and the system that makes the individual subservient to the machine and material. He wanted a development process which is harmonious, poverty free, non-violent, based on cooperation and ethics. Therefore, he proposed an ecological model centered on limitation of wants in contrast to the modern civilization that promotes material welfare and individual profits. He was sure that too much emphasis on materialism could lead to violence, unhappiness and a culture of oppression, exploitation, and dominance.

Gandhi's concept of sustainable development is rooted in a holistic approach which emphasizes the development of an individual and society as a whole in connection with nature. By preaching "simple living," Gandhi sought to curb both human greed and mindless exploitation of natural resources. He said, one should know the difference between 'need' and 'want' and taking more than required to fulfil our need, in a way is theft from other species, humans and the future.

Gandhi often said, "The earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed".

He warned against the perils of massive industrialization and unsustainable patterns of consumption in the west. He

described the process of urbanization as a "double drain", i.e., it will harm the villages and the villagers and thus proving fatal to both. Hence, in order to ensure economic balance, it is important that the urban sector does not drain the rural sector and shift the focus from centralization to decentralization. He argued, that a technologically sophisticated economy will have two major consequences: it would disempower the economic autonomy of the masses and greatly undermine the ecological fabric on which millions depend.

Therefore, to increase the productivity, we should avoid indiscriminate use and non-selective adoption of imported technology. He foresaw that the development of small-scale technology could boost efficiency in rural production without displacing rural labour and advocated an appropriate technological mix with controlled production to maximise the social benefits of science and technology and to maintain a proper balance between man and environment.

He emphasized the development of village and cottage industries where handicrafts, spinning, weaving, and likewise remain constant sources of income and revenue generation. This will protect the village crafts and the workers from the crushing competition of the power-driven machinery and ensure jobs for the villagers.

Gandhi's ideas could not be more relevant than today when India is witnessing jobless growth and facing the worst unemployment crisis in this pandemic situation. It is evident that the current paradigm of development is causing serious environmental problems which is neither ecologically nor socially sustainable. It is leading the planet into a vortex of inequality, widening the rift

between rich and poor, and proved inadequate to address the issues of the millions living in poverty.

Gandhi was well aware of the pitfalls of such developments as well as the consequences of unequal distribution of wealth between different classes. The World Inequality Report 2022 ranked India as the most unequal country in the world. The top 10 per cent and top one per cent hold 57 per cent and 22 per cent of the total national income, respectively, while the bottom half's share has come down to 13 per cent and they barely have anything. Thomas Piketty asserts in his influential book, Capital in the Twenty-First Century, that inequality is rapidly intensifying and global cooperation is desirable to prevent the wealthy from simply shifting assets into other jurisdictions. He proposed, an extremely high income-tax rates on upper-income taxpayers along with a global wealth tax. Economic progress devoid of moral elements will deepen divisions and increase dissensions among people.

With growing population, the increase in food demand has considerably altered land-use practices which has led to agricultural intensification at the expense of forests and grazing lands. Increased use of chemicals and fertilizers are causing pollution, soil and ground water contamination, loss of biodiversity and kill the beneficial organisms which increases fertility. Gandhi believed in sustainable agriculture and advised the use of bio-manures and bio-pesticides to improve soil fertility. Today, the experts in the healthcare are emphasizing the importance of chemical-free crops because excessive amounts of chemicals in plants are causing health related problems in humans as it affects kidneys, lungs, may also cause cancer and congenital abnormalities like malnourished children, etc.

Gandhi's understanding of the ecological crisis was far ahead of his time and anticipated many of our greatest challenges of today. Knowing that afforestation can be an effective step to combat future water crisis, he urged people to plant trees. He also proposed, water harvesting for irrigational purposes to prevent droughts and famines.

Climate change has once again shed light on Gandhi's philosophy of self-sufficiency and sustainable development and made the world realize the importance of practicing a lifestyle that has minimal environmental impact. These principles remain the driving force behind all the UN's climate agreements, environmental conservation treaties, and sustainable development goals. Many of his ideas foreshadow the holistic thinking behind the "Agenda 2030: Transforming Our World" for Sustainable Development. The central idea of Agenda 2030 is captured by the tagline "Leave No One Behind." The plan aims to achieve prosperity for people and the planet and calls for "transformative" change, which includes changing the way we live, produce, and consume.

Thus, the current climate crisis and the need to find sustainable means has brought a long-suppressed and quintessentially Galbraith's unanswered question to the fore — "How much should a country consume?" — along with Gandhian corollary — "How much should a person consume?". They have become fundamental questions for the 21st century and will dominate the intellectual and political debates.

CLIMATE CHANGE HAS ONCE AGAIN SHED LIGHT ON GANDHI'S PHILOSOPHY OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND MADE THE WORLD REALISE THE IMPORTANCE OF PRACTISING A LIFESTYLE THAT HAS MINIMAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT. THESE PRINCIPLES REMAIN THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND ALL THE UN'S CLIMATE AGREEMENTS, ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION TREATIES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

(The writer is a former Indian Forest Service officer. The views expressed are personal.)

POINT COUNTERPOINT



DILIP GHOSH IS LYING THAT ONLY FIVE OF THEM WERE CAMPAIGNING. HIS SECURITY GUARDS ALONE ARE FIVE IN NUMBER.
—BJP NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT
DILIP GHOSH



DILIP GHOSH IS LYING THAT ONLY FIVE OF THEM WERE CAMPAIGNING. HIS SECURITY GUARDS ALONE ARE FIVE IN NUMBER.
—TMC LEADER
MOLOY GHATAK

Poisonous tobacco products must be made unaffordable

The sale of 'sin products' needs to be limited and kept out of reach of the maximum number of citizens, especially teenagers



KIRIT BHAI SOLANKI

Tobacco consumption is a menace that is worse than the current Covid-19 pandemic and causes innumerable fatalities. Both Finance Ministry and GST Council appear to have overlooked the causes of this malady despite representations by civil society organizations, Members of Parliament, the medical fraternity, state representatives, Ministers and citizens.

There have been no major tobacco tax increases after the GST council placed tobacco products in the 28 per cent bracket in 2017. The option of tax increase on tobacco products gives the government a golden opportunity to raise badly required finances. Remember, lower taxes increase the affordability of

tobacco consumers, especially teenagers and children. The Union Government has the option of hiking the excise duty and NCCD in the annual budget while the GST Council can increase the cess. This will ensure India has optimal tobacco taxation as mandated by WHO.

A submission to Parliament mentioned that a small excise duty hike ensured tax collection of Rs 4962 crores. This proves the point that raising excise duty and calamity duty substantially in the coming budget can fetch a handsome revenue.

The costs imposed on our society and our economy, both direct as well as indirect, have been huge. India has over 27 crore tobacco users today and the consumption of tobacco

kills more than 13 lakh Indians annually. At a global level, eight million deaths are reported every year. Over seven million deaths are due to direct use of tobacco while the rest are caused by passive smokers exposed to the poisonous smoke. As per the data of GYTS (Global Youth Tobacco Survey) in 2019, nearly one-fifth of the students aged 13-15 have used any form of the tobacco product (smoking, smokeless, and any other form) in their life. Clearly, consumption of tobacco is not just about one's health at the individual level, but a societal problem we face nationally.

Tobacco taxes and, therefore, the prices have to be increased regularly, so as to significantly reduce the affordability over a period of time. This was the practice in the pre-GST era with additional options of the states adding VAT. Tobacco taxes and prices have not been increased enough over time to reduce the affordability of these products resulting in more numbers of consumers getting addicted. A long, four-year gap of no tax increase has tobacco companies share prices soaring on the one hand, and on the other, we see rampant consumption leading to more deaths and spread of dreaded diseases. The tobacco industry may have its reason to look the other way, but the government has no such option.

The annual economic cost from all tobacco products is estimated to be Rs 177,341 crores in 2017-18 amounting to more than one per cent of India's GDP. This will continue to grow in the post-Covid era and the next GATS report will surely point out the alarming rise of casualties. In a country like India, an estimated 1.3 million deaths are accounted for by tobacco abuse. As per WHO data, the most common way tobacco kills is through cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) - nearly 4,49,844

deaths such deaths occurred in India as of 2018. The high prevalence of non-communicable diseases due to tobacco use is posing a huge challenge to the country's response to Covid-19 management, amplifying India's health burden in such difficult times.

It is time that the Finance Ministry launches a multi-pronged attack for the social cause of tobacco control by increasing taxes on tobacco products both in the annual budget and also in the GST council to wipe out the gap of the last four years. Doing this social good will not raise any eyebrows and citizens will welcome it for reasons of public health.

I am sure that the listening posts in the Ministry will convey the right message to the

Minister and also work out the modalities of tax rationalization which mandates that a sin product sale needs to be limited and citizens be protected. We are especially talking about children and teens who are major contributors to our economy.

A resilient healthcare system as an outcome will emerge that complements our 'Atma Nirbhar Bharat' mission, which not only focuses on revival of the economy but also on overall improvement of the health of our citizens. To mark the National Youth Day which has the theme, 'Saksham Yuva, Sashakt Yuva', by making tobacco products unaffordable we may save the young generation from this deadly product and make them healthy and aatmanirbhar.

(The writer is a medical practitioner and Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha. The views expressed are personal.)

Rich nations dump near expiry Covid jabs on poor countries

IAN S ■ LONDON

Third world nations were offered about 100 million Covid-19 vaccines that were near expiry, which countries were forced to dump, according to UN's children's fund Unicef. According to Unicef's head of supply Elevea Kadilli, more than 100 million vaccines were, in December alone, rejected by countries as they were unable to distribute them, BBC reported. The problem was compounded by many countries' insufficient storage facilities, Kadilli was quoted as saying to members of European Parliament on Thursday. Many of world's poorest countries, most of them in Africa, have been relying on UN-backed Covax scheme for their vaccines. The programme faced challenges in accessing doses early last year, but situation significantly improved towards end of 2021 with wealthier countries releasing doses they were hold-

ing. According to provisional tracking by UNICEF, about 910 million doses were delivered through UN-backed initiative as of December 30. Nearly half of doses delivered in December came from three US-backed vaccine manufacturers: Johnson & Johnson, Moderna and Pfizer. However, many of doses offered have been close to their expiry date, and have been rejected by recipient nations, BBC report said. Some countries such as Nigeria struggled with administering vaccines forcing them to destroy expired jabs. Only about 10 per cent of population on continent has been fully vaccinated. "More than 9.4 billion vaccine doses have now been administered globally. But 90 countries did not reach target of vaccinating 40 per cent of their populations by end of last year, and 36 of those countries have not yet vaccinated 10 per cent of their populations," Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, chief of World Health Organization.

UK PM faces fresh 'partygate' allegations at Downing Street

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Friday faced mounting leadership pressure amid further allegations of parties held at his Downing Street office-residence by staff, categorised as a "partygate" scandal due to the apparent serial breaches of lockdown rules in place at the time. 'The Daily Telegraph' reported on two farewell parties made up of about 30 people drinking alcohol and dancing to music until the early-hours of April 17 last year, the night before the funeral of Prince Philip – the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral. Downing Street said the timing was "deeply regrettable" and that it had apologised to Buckingham Palace. "It is deeply regrettable that this took place at a time of national mourning and Number 10 has apologised to the Palace," the UK Prime Minister's spokesperson said. "You heard from the prime minister this week, he's recognised Number 10 should be held to the highest standards and take responsibility for things we did not get right," the spokesperson said. It is understood that a call from the Prime Minister's office was made to the Palace on Friday. Restrictions at the time banned indoor mixing between different households and Queen Elizabeth II sat alone during the church ceremony for her late husband in keeping with social distancing rules. "This event should not have happened at the time that it did. I am deeply sorry, and take full responsibility," said James Slack, the UK Prime Minister's former Director of Communications, at the centre of the farewell that led to the party last April. Slack, now deputy editor-in-chief at "The Sun" newspaper, apologised "unreservedly for the anger and hurt caused". While Prime Minister Johnson was not at either of the two gatherings in April 2021 as he was spending the weekend at his Buckinghamshire country estate Chequers, the latest revelations added to the saga around rules being broken at the heart of the UK government. Ministers have insisted that top civil servant Sue Gray's ongoing internal investigation into such gatherings will determine the extent of wrongdoing and therefore judgment should be reserved until her probe concludes. "If the details that are in this story turn out to be true, clearly people are going to form their judgment," UK Security Minister Damian Hinds said on Thursday, with reference to the fresh revelations which call Boris Johnson's leadership of his party and country into question. "I am entirely behind the Prime Minister and the government, and I think the leadership that the Prime Minister has shown, particularly through the coronavirus, has been very strong," said Hinds. But battle lines are being drawn within the Conservative Party, with many of Johnson's own MPs demanding he step down as leader. "I want to apologise.

Rishi Sunak: British PM in waiting?

PTI ■ LONDON

As Boris Johnson's "partygate" troubles mount and members of his own Conservative Party demand he step down as the British Prime Minister, one name is doing the rounds as a frontrunner to take charge – his Indian-origin Chancellor and Downing Street neighbour Rishi Sunak. The UK-born son of a pharmacist mother and a National Health Service (NHS) general practitioner (GP) father is an Oxford University and Stanford graduate. He is married to Akshata Murty, the daughter of Infosys co-founder Narayana Murthy, and the couple has two young daughters, Krishna and Anoushka. The MP for Richmond in Yorkshire first entered the UK Parliament in 2015 and has quickly risen up the Tory party ranks as a staunch Brexiteer, who had backed Johnson's strategy to leave the European Union (EU). From working in my mum's tiny chemist shop to my experience building large businesses, I have seen how we should support free enterprise and innovation to ensure Britain has a stronger future," Sunak had said during the Brexit referendum. He co-founded a 1-billion-pound global investment firm and specialised in investing in small British businesses before his entry into politics. As the first Chancellor of the Exchequer of Indian heritage, Sunak made history in February 2020 when he was appointed to the most important UK Cabinet post. If the Tory party murmurings and bookie betting odds are anything to go by, then the 41-year-old may well be in line to make history as Britain's first Indian-origin Prime Minister. "No, definitely not. Seeing what the Prime Minister has to deal with, this is a job hard enough for me to do," Sunak said back in October 2020, when asked if he had prime ministerial ambitions. But a lot has happened since, with Sunak leading the charge for the country's economic fightback against the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of the schemes he put in place as finance minister, including the furlough-based Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and COVID support grants for struggling businesses over the course of several lockdowns have proved largely popular. However, proposed tax hikes coming up from this April and consistently rising energy and cost of living costs have proved less popular within the Conservative Party base. The famously low-tax favouring Tories may find his high tax plan to recoup some of the lost economic ground during the pandemic hard to digest when things really come to a leadership scrum. In fact, there is already talk within the party ranks of him having overplayed his hand by not speaking out more firmly in support of 57-year-old Johnson, following his Parliament apology earlier this week over a Downing Street garden party in apparent breach of lockdown rules. Sunak, who was miles away on a business visit, tweeted much later in evening to say that "the PM was right to apologise and I support his request for patience while Sue Gray carries out her enquiry". This was seen as a half-hearted show of support and viewed as reflective of his own leadership ambitions. The wealth associated with Sunak and his wife Akshata has also often hit spotlight for wrong reasons, with the Chancellor's 95-pound pair of slippers spotted in official photographs released pre-Budget last October the latest luxury item to hit the headlines. This followed being pictured with a 180-pound so-called "smart mug", which was reportedly a gift from his wife.

CHINA EXPANDING SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

China devoted resources to expanding mass surveillance systems nationwide, in the absence of meaningful legal protections against unlawful or abusive government surveillance, the Human Rights Watch (HRW) said in its World Report 2022. Chinese companies with reported links to government continue to draw global scrutiny for their data collection practices, the HRW report said. March 2021 marked fifth anniversary of landmark Anti-Domestic Violence Law, yet victims continued to face an uphill battle in seeking authorities' protection and accountability for their abusers. In February, an article by former journalist Ma Jinyu on violent abuses she suffered by her husband ignited a heated discussion on social media about government's persistent failure to prosecute domestic violence. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), announced in 2013, is the government's trillion-dollar infrastructure and investment program stretching across some 70 countries. Some BRI projects have been criticized for lack of transparency, disregard of community concerns, and negative environmental impacts, the HRW said. The HRW published a report last August that documented economic, social, and cultural rights violations in Cambodia resulting from Lower Sesan 2 dam's displacement of nearly 5,000 people between 2013 and 2018 and impacts on livelihoods of tens of thousands of others upstream and downstream. The dam was a BRI project funded mainly by a Chinese-state owned bank and built by a Chinese-state owned electricity generation company. China Labour Watch, an NGO, reported, in April, that overseas Chinese workers working on BRI infrastructure projects in Algeria, Indonesia, Pakistan, and other countries were victims of human trafficking and forced labour, including being deceived into working illegally, held against their will, and forced to work while infected with Covid-19 in early and mid-2020. China is by far largest emitter of greenhouse gases globally, making a major contribution to climate crisis that is taking a mounting toll on human rights around globe. China's imports of agricultural commodities drive more deforestation globally than those of any other market, including imports of all 27 member states of European Union (EU) combined. Canada, the EU, the UK, and US imposed coordinated and bilateral targeted sanctions on Chinese government officials and companies responsible for serious human rights violations, including international crimes, in Xinjiang. The US also imposed sanctions on several senior Hong Kong officials for imposing the National Security Law. In August, the US gave Hong Kong people in US a temporary 18-month "safe haven." In September, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet expressed "regret" that authorities had not given her meaningful access to Xinjiang, and said that her office would issue an assessment of human rights in that region. Parliamentarians in Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, the Netherlands, and UK passed resolutions accusing Chinese government of committing genocide against Uyghurs; some also called on their governments to limit participation in 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics. The UK Parliament passed a non-binding motion supporting a diplomatic boycott of Games. Members of European Parliament halted EU's proposed Comprehensive Agreement on Investment with China, citing human rights concerns, and freezing consideration of deal for as long as they are subject to Beijing's counter sanctions. In September, they also adopted a recommendation for a new, more assertive, and better coordinated EU strategy on China, placing human rights at its core.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, DURG CIRCLE DURG (C.G.)

Durg, Dated: 07.01.2022

e-Procurement Tender Notice

1st Call

Online tenders in form "A" percentage rate basis are invited on behalf of Governor of Chhattisgarh dated 27-01-2022

NIT No.	Name of work	P.A.C. (Rs. in lacs.)
353/90590	SR/MOW/Deposit/ Renovation in Essential works of Non Residential Quarters under P.W.D. Durg Division Durg	195.00
354/90591	SR/MOW/Deposit/ Renovation in Essential works of Non Residential Quarters under P.W.D. Betemara Division Betemara	195.00
355/90592	SR/MOW/Deposit/ Renovation in Essential works of Non Residential Quarters under P.W.D. Balod Division Balod	195.00
356/90593	SR/MOW/Deposit/ Renovation in Essential works of Non Residential Quarters under P.W.D. Sub Division No 1 & 2 Rajnandgaon	175.28
357/90594	SR/MOW/Deposit/ Renovation in Essential works of Non Residential Quarters under P.W.D. Sub Division A, Chowki	103.31
358/90595	SPECIAL REPAIR OF CEMENT CONCRETE ROAD AT GUNDERDEHI ARJUNDA ODARSAKRI AMTI ROAD IN KM 6/4 TO, 6/8(60) = 460 M (ODARSAKRI VILLAGE) KM 8/10 TO 9/4(70) = 470M (CHICHA VILLAGE) & 1/16 TO 1/11(80) = 460 M (BHILAJ VILLAGE), BLOCK- GUNDERDEHI	87.35
359/90597	SR/MOW/Deposit/ Renovation in Essential works of Non Residential Quarters under P.W.D. Khairagarh Division Khairagarh	195.00

Note :-
1. NIT No 353 are under Public Works Department Durg Division, NIT No. 354 are under Public Works Department Betemara Division, NIT No 355,358 are under Public Works Department Balod Division, NIT No 356,357 are under Public Works Department Rajnandgaon Division, NIT No 359 are under Public Works Department Khairagarh Division.,
2. General Conditions, detailed NIT, Tender documents & other information of the above construction work downloaded from the Eprocurement web portal or departmental website <http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in>.
3. NIT No. & Name of the Work should be essentially mentioned on the envelope through the Registered Post/Speed Post in this office.

Sd/-
Superintending Engineer
P.W.D., Durg Circle Durg (C.G.)
R.O No:- 66883/5
R.O Date:- 14/01/2022
Tel. 0788-2210876

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution, DRM's Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi for & on behalf of President of India, invites open e-tender under single packet system for the under noted work:

Name of work with its location	Design, supply, erection, testing & commissioning of 25 Kv ac OHE modification work required in connection with augmentation of homing capacity of ELS/GZB from 200 to 225 Locomotives.
2	Approx. Cost of work Rs.2036062.22
3	Earnest Money Deposit Rs.40800/-
4	E-Tender Bid Online Submission Period 23.01.2022 (00.00 Hrs.) to 07.02.2022 (15.00 Hrs.)
5	E-Tender Bid Submission End Date & E-Tender Open Date & Time 07.02.2022 (15.00 hrs.)
6	Fund Allocation 21426203
7	Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen www.ireps.gov.in

E-Tender No.: 16-TRD-NDLS-2021-22 Dated : 14.01.2022 95/2022

Serving Customers With A Smile

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY, PRAYAGRAJ

E-Tender Notice Number: PUB/AF/Zone-III/2022/01 Date : 11.01.2022

E-Tender Notice

For and on behalf of the President of India, Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, North Central Railway, Agra invites e-tender on prescribed forms under single packet system for the period of 05 years from the interested parties for the following works. Details of tenders to be awarded :-

e-tender No.	Description of work	Details of site, Area and type of media for commercial Publicity	Minimum reserved Price of contract for first Year (in ₹)	Minimum Reserved Price of Contract for 05 Years (in ₹)
PUB/ AF/ Zone-III/ 2022/01	Commercial Publicity Advertisement Contract at Agra Fort. Railway Station-Zone-III (PF No. 01 side Circulating Area Boundary wall)	As per ANNEXURE - I	1,97,760/-	10,50,106/-

Earnest Money (in ₹) : 21,100/-, Cost of Tender Form (Including GST): 2360/-, Time & date for the opening of tender : At 15.30 hrs. on 10.02.2022. For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railway website www.ireps.gov.in. Tender can only be submitted through web portal www.ireps.gov.in. 40/22 (D)

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in C PRONCR

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General public is hereby informed that an unidentified deadbody of female Age : Approx. 62 years, Height: 4'6", Complexion : Wheatish, Face: Oval, Identification: A small cut mark on face, wearing pink colour saree, cream colour blouse and cream colour jersey, was found dead on 05.01.2022 at T-16/19, Safeda Jhuggi Parking, Near Shamshan Ghat Picket, Geeta Colony, Delhi. In this regard a DD No. 21-A dated 05.01.2022 has been lodged at P.S. Geeta Colony, Delhi.

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

SHO - P.S. Geeta Colony, Delhi
Tel. No. : 011-22506665, 9813813768

DP/698/SHD/22

EASTERN RAILWAY

e-Tender No.: W2_623_16 Br17A-SDAH 21-22, dated 14.01.2022. e-Tender is invited by Principal Chief Engineer, Eastern Railway, Kolkata from reputed & eligible contractors for the under mentioned work.

Name of the work : Construction/rebuilding of Bridge No. 17A (Jalangi Bridge) (Span 1x18.3m composite girder + 1x45.7m open web girder +2x76.2m open web girder +1x30.3m open web girder) on Up line between Krishnanagar & Bahadurpur station of Krishnanagar-Lalgola section of Sealdah Division. Approximate Cost of the work : Rs. 55,82,23,782.13. Earnest Money Deposit : Rs. 29,41,100/- Date & Time of closing of tender : 09.02.2022 at 15.00 hrs. The details of tender documents are available at website <https://www.ireps.gov.in>. Tenderers are requested to submit their offer online on the above website. No manual offer will be accepted. MIS-181/2021-22

Tender Notice is also available at websites : www.eindianrailways.gov.in / www.ireps.gov.in

Follow us at: Eastern Railway Eastern Railway Headquarter

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that Sh. Amit Gupta (hereinafter referred to as the said Mortgagor/Borrower) is intending to purchase the Entire Third Floor (With Roof Rights) "Said Floor" Property Bearing No. 264 area measuring 186 Sq. Yds. Block-B, Situated in the Layout Plan of the Govt. School Teachers Co- Operative House Building Society Ltd. known as Saraswati Vihar, Pitampura Delhi- 110034 (hereinafter referred to "said property" from Mrs. Daya Gupta and Mr. Vijay Gupta, who are the owners of above the said property by way of Sale Deed dated 19.02.2016 Doc. No. 2170 and Gift Deed dated 05.02.2022 Doc. No. 1750 and Now, Sh. Amit Guptas agreed to create mortgage in respect of the said property in favour of our clients IDFC FIRST Bank Limited. Further, if any person, body, individual, institution having any claim, title, interest and/or objection in respect of or against or relating to or touching upon said property or part of the property by way of sale, exchange, lease, lien, mortgage, charge, encumbrance, gift, trust, easement, maintenance, inheritance, testamentary disposition or otherwise or having in their custody any title, documents pertaining the said property shall communicate the same to the undersigned at below mentioned address within 10 days from the publication of this notice with documentary evidence in support thereof, failing which all the claim, of such person shall be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned. Any objections raised after the completion of the 10 days shall not be binding upon the said property or my Clients in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 10 days of this publication to Mr. Manuash Dhawan/ Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Vertitas, Unit no 907, 3rd Floor, G3-411, Tower: (B-28), Netaji Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9066707172/9818228636 (M)

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that Vinod Singh Bisht is the absolute owner of Flat No. 45/1 at Paryatan Vihar Co-operative Group Housing Society also known as Paryatan Vihar, Plot no.B-8 Vasundhara Enclave, Delhi-96 having acquired by Relinquishment Deed dated 13.12.2021 (registration No. 10142) executed by Vijay Singh Bisht, Subhash Singh Bisht, Savitri Bisht & Kiran Negi legal heirs of Late Baldev Singh Bisht. All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage(equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Kamal Kanti Gupta (Advocate)
Shop No. 5 & 6, Pkt-E, Sector Vihar-II, Delhi-31
011-43552822, 09811006353

PUBLIC NOTICE

Surrender Of SEBI Investment Advisor registration by PROFITGATE INVESTMENT ADVISORS, a registered partnership firm NGP000002179, is registered with SEBI as an Investment Advisor under the SEBI (Investment Advisor) Regulation, 2013 from 06-05-2016. After doing a detail business evaluation, the firm has decided to surrender its Investment Advisor License on 20-08-2020. There are no outstanding or pending investment advisory mandates as on 31-03-2020. In view of the same, if any one has any grievance, they can inform the grievance with us at mohit@profitgate.in or SEBI scores.gov.in within 15 days of the date of this notice. Registration Name: PROFITGATE INVESTMENT ADVISORS Registration No.: NA00004641 Category of intermediary: Investment Advisor. «Registered Address.» PROFITGATE INVESTMENT ADVISORS Plot No. 95, 2nd Floor, Sanda Transport Bldg. CA Road, Bagadganj, Nagpur 440008 13 January 2022

APPENDIX IV A

[See proviso to Rule 8(6)]

Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Properties

E-Auction sale notice for sale of immovable assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property(ies) mortgaged/ charged to Indiabulls Housing Finance Ltd. [CIN: L65922DL2005PLC136029] ("Secured Creditor"), the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "as is where is", "as is what is", "whatever there is" and "without any recourse" basis on 17.02.2022 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M. (with unlimited automated extensions of 5 minutes each in terms of the Tender Document), for recovery of Rs. 22,10,384/- (Rupees Twenty Two Lakh Ten Thousand Three Hundred Eighty Four only) Pending towards Loan Account No. HHLNDAA00341973 by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 11.01.2022 with applicable future interest in terms of the Loan Agreement and other related loan document(s) w.e.f. 12.01.2022, along with legal expenses and other charges due to the Secured Creditor from AKASH TIWARI and RAKHI TIWARI.

The Reserve Price of the immovable Property(ies) will be Rs. 13,00,000/- (Rupees Thirteen Lakh only) and the Earnest Money Deposit ("EMD") will be Rs. 1,30,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Thirty Thousand only) i.e. equivalent to 10% of the Reserve Price. The EMD shall be paid by DD/ RTGS/ NEFT or through any other proper banking channels to the credit and in favour of INDIABULLS HOUSING FINANCE LTD., Account No. 32180585427 with State Bank of India (IFSC: SBIN0009995), having its branch at CAG Branch, Mumbai (Maharashtra), before submitting the tender in order to participate in the online public auction. The successful bidder shall pay 25% amount of the sale price (less 10% of the Reserve Price paid before submitting the tender) immediately i.e. either on the same day or not later than the next working day and the remaining balance of the Sale Price shall be paid within 15 days from the date of confirmation of sale.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY(IES)

P.NO. B-152, UGF (REAR SIDE/EASTERN PORTION), BLOCK-B, VISHWAS PARK, UTTAM NAGAR, PIN-110059, NEW DELHI.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on the website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.indiabullshomeloans.com and www.auctionfocus.in

Sd/

Date: 11.01.2022 Authorized Officer

Place: NEW DELHI INDIABULLS HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED



—IANS

SOUTH AFRICA WRAP UP SERIES WITH SEVEN-WICKET WIN

PTI ■ CAPE TOWN

A South African team going through one of its toughest transition phases embarrassed a star-studded Indian team with a clinical seven-wicket victory in the third Test to clinch a memorable 2-1 series triumph here on Friday.

The target of 212 wasn't a tough ask and starting the day at 101 for two, young pretender Keegan Petersen (82, 113 balls) along with Rassie van Der Dussen (41 not out) added 54 runs for the third wicket to seal the match before Temba Bavuma (32 not out) helped in putting the final touches.

Petersen walked away with both the player of the match as well as player of the series honours.

Sunil Gavaskar termed it as a "Nightmare for India" as they were not even close to competing in the last two Tests and Dean Elgar's ear to ear grin and the bear hugs that he shared with his teammates said it all.

It was especially sweet for the hosts who lost premier pacer Anrich Nortje to injury before the series and were then hit by Quinton de Kock's sudden mid-series retirement.

The Indian team, meanwhile, lost it in their mind after the contentious DRS review of Elgar that went wrong on Thursday and their focus on using stump microphone more to take digs at broadcaster Supersport instead of focussing on getting Petersen out spelt their doom.

"It's a great spectacle of Tests for everyone to watch; hard-fought series. Great first game but SA did amazingly well. In both Tests they won, they were clinical with the ball in crunch moments," India skipper Virat Kohli admitted after the game.

With this series defeat, India's record of never having won a Test series in the Rainbow Nation for three decades, remained intact.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni is the only India captain to have managed a drawn series back in 2010.

It was one of the strongest Indian teams on paper against one of the weakest South African teams on paper.

However, the operative word here was "on paper" as Elgar's unheralded bunch showed a lot of character in punching above their weight and also getting heavily rewarded for their relentless efforts.

"The way our bowling unit delivered throughout the series is brilliant.

I threw down the challenge after the first game and the guys responded brilliantly," said an elated Elgar.

The mindless chatter and incessant sledging didn't bother the likes of Petersen and Van der Dussen as they went about their job in a thoroughly professional manner.

India's batters were far too dependant on bowlers to bail them out for the past few years but this series showed that this attack is human too even though they put their best foot forward, which was-



n't complemented at all by the willow wielders.

The only hope for India was the first spell from Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami in sultry conditions with the semi-new ball and they did their bit with all sincerity.

Petersen was beaten time and again but, in between, scored his

runs to keep the scoreboard ticking.

Their strategy was to see off the first spell and capitalise when Umesh Yadav, who is known to bowl boundary balls, was brought into the attack.

Bumrah, in his second spell, did get one to straighten but Cheteshwar Pujara, enduring a poor series with

the bat, dropped a crucial regulation slip catch with the batter on 59.

If one remembers, it was Ross Taylor, who had got a 'life' when Pujara dropped a sitter during World Test Championship final and the bowler at the receiving was again, Bumrah.

It was Shardul Thakur who

finally had the young man played on but by then Petersen had ensured a series win for his team.

It needs to be put as it is. India did not lose the Test because of one DRS that went wrong but for the consistent poor batting throughout the series save the first innings of the first Test.

The scores of 202, 223 and 198 is the reason India lost and the second innings effort at both Wanderers and Newlands showed that Indian bowlers could only do as much.

The heavy duty tirade against the host broadcasters Supersport with their customised diatribe did not look good in the face of a dismal performance.

The skipper himself led the attack and it seemed like a forceful way of trying to put the blame squarely on technology that "may or may not have gone wrong".

The die-hard Kohli fans believe that the Indian skipper needs a narrative to spur him on and his favourite script is "he and his team against the entire world" as his deputy for the series KL Rahul would have fans believe on the stump-mic.

It's far from truth but it works well for him to push the envelope.

Van der Dussen was subjected to intense sledging on the fourth morning and so was Petersen but they remained unfazed.

Once Bavuma started hitting those boundaries, the strokes did the answering.

But Kohli losing his counsel and blowing his top was also a projection of a man who is under immense pressure and a Test defeat against a much lower-ranked side which had been grappling with all kinds of socio-political issues over the past few years, isn't going to go down well with the BCCI.

It's really immature, you can't be a role model in this manner: Gambhir

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Virat Kohli's outburst against a controversial DRS decision during the third Test against South Africa was "immature" and with such "exaggerated" reaction, the India skipper will never be a role model for youngsters, feels former opener Gautam Gambhir.

Kohli, his deputy KL Rahul and off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin made some unsavoury comments about umpiring and technology in stump mic after rival skipper Dean Elgar got a massive reprieve due to a contentious DRS decision in the last hour on day 3 on Thursday.

"This is really bad. What Kohli did, going near the stump mic and reacting in that manner, that is really immature. This is not what you expect from an international captain, from an Indian captain," Gambhir told Star Sports.

Australian great Shane Warne felt the ball was hitting the stumps.

"That's going on to smash half way up middle though, there is no way that's going over, even Erasmus



shook his head," Warne was quoted as saying by Fox Sports.

Gambhir pointed out that Mayank Agarwal too had got a reprieve during the first Test in Centurion but it didn't invite similar response from the South African skipper.

"Then technology isn't in your hand. Then you have reacted in the same manner when there was a

caught-behind appeal on the leg-side, neither did Dean Elgar react in that manner. During that Mayank Agarwal appeal, it looked out from the naked eye, but Elgar did not react in that manner," he said.

Former England captain Michael Vaughan was critical of the Indian skipper.

"I think that is disgraceful from the Indians personally," Vaughan said on Fox Sports.

"Decisions go with you, they go against you, that didn't go the way they think it should have gone. Virat Kohli is a legend of the game, but that's not the way to act, that is not the way to act in a game of Test match cricket.

"The ICC have to stamp this down, they have to stamp down on the Indian side, you can't get away with talking down the stump microphone like Ravi Ashwin has done and the Indian captain has done," said Vaughan.

In the 21st over, Elgar was adjudged LBW by on-field umpire Marais Erasmus when he was hit on the pads by an Ashwin delivery. However, the decision was overturned on review.

Livid with the decision, a fuming Kohli went up to the stumps and said: "Focus on your team as well when they shine the ball eh, not just the opposition. Trying to catch people all the time."

Rahul and Ashwin also expressed similar reactions.

AP ■ HOBART

Travis Head spoiled a promising start for England in the Ashes on Friday with his second century of the series as Australia recovered from 12-3 to reach 241-6 at stumps on a rain-hit first day of the fifth Test.

Head, who scored 152 in the opening test at Brisbane, counter-punched England's early success with an aggressive 101 off 113 balls in the day-night test as Australia came back strongly after losing the toss.

Cameron Green contributed an authoritative 74 and Marnus Labuschagne scored a rapid 44 before rain arrived around half an hour after tea and prevented further play.

Head entered with Australia in serious trouble after a brilliant spell of swing and seam bowling from Ollie Robinson (2-24), one of the five changes England made, and the Stuart Broad (2-48) on a lively green wicket.

Head, who missed the Sydney Test due to the coronavirus, first put



the innings back on track with a 71-run stand with Labuschagne, but not before Zak Crawley had dropped Labuschagne at second slip before the batter had scored.

That drop proved costly for England which has already lost the Ashes after losing the first three test matches at Brisbane, Adelaide and Melbourne before the draw in Sydney. "Nice to be back and contributing," Head told Channel 7.

"I was really conscious of making the right decisions -- attacking

the right balls, defending the right ones, being hard to get out.

I felt like I came into this test ready to go."

Labuschagne counterpunched the pace of Chris Woakes (1-50) and Mark Wood (1-79) by clobbering nine boundaries before getting dismissed in a bizarre fashion just before the first session. Labuschagne was clean bowled in an unusual style when he appeared to slip in the crease and Broad had the middle stump knocked back with the batsman falling over on his knees while going way across his stumps. But Head and Green continued to prosper against Wood and Woakes in a dominant middle session which yielded 130 runs. Head played some exquisite drives on both sides of the wicket, particularly in front of square as he hammered 12 boundaries before raising his century by cutting Woakes to backward point for two runs. However, Head fell a ball later after reaching his hundred when he lobbed a gentle catch to mid-on. Green didn't have trouble with the pace before he finally fell to a trap

Can class of 2022 go all the way at U-19 World Cup?

PTI ■ GEORGETOWN (GUYANA)

Record four-time champions India will be aiming to maintain their enviable record and unearth a plethora of talent along the way when they begin their U-19 World Cup campaign against South Africa here on Saturday.

Expectations will be high from the likes of Harnoor Singh, Rajvardhan Hangargekar, skipper Yash Dhillon and Ravi Kumar, who have already shown glimpses of their potential in tournaments leading into the World Cup.

India flew into the Caribbean straight after their Asia Cup triumph and tuned up for the ICC event with wins over hosts West Indies and Australia in the warm-up games.

India have been the most successful team in the tournament's history and getting into the final of the last three editions is a testimony to their remarkable consistency.

No player from the 2020 batch, which finished runners-up to first-time champions Bangladesh, has gone on to play for India and only time will tell if someone from the class of 2022 reaches the highest level.

The current batch doesn't possess prodigies like Prithvi Shaw and Shubman Gill (2018 pass outs) but some of the players have already attracted attention.

Jalandhar-born left-hand opener Harnoor is expected to score a bagful of runs in the tournament, much like what Yashasvi Jaiswal did in the previous edition.

The 18-year-old was India's leading run-getter in the Asia Cup with 251 runs in five games and struck an unbeaten 100 against Australia in the team's final warm-up game on January 11.

Right-arm pacer Hangargekar, who has played senior cricket for Maharashtra, is another player to watch out for.

He impressed with his raw pace in the Asia Cup, picking up eight wickets, and is also a handy batter down the order.

Left-arm pacer Ravi Kumar will also be expected to provide timely breakthroughs and he will be high on confidence following a four-wicket haul against the Australians.

Skipper Dhillon, who is a highly rated batter in Delhi cricket circles, did not do anything noticeable in the Asia Cup but his back-to-back



fifties in the warm-up games show he is in good touch. All-rounder Raj Bawa, who bowls right-arm medium pace and bats left-handed, will also play a crucial role for the team.

Head coach Hrishikesh Kankar spoke about India's rich legacy in the competition ahead of the South Africa game.

"There is a huge legacy since India has done so well in this tournament.

It doesn't help that we have won four times. There is a new team, so you have to start afresh," said Kankar adding that the players are also getting used to bi-bubble life in COVID times.

India are placed in Group B alongside South Africa, Ireland and Uganda. Top two teams qualify for the knockouts.

The game against South Africa is likely to be the toughest one for India.

The 2014 edition winners South Africa's chances of success on home soil were ended at the quarter-final stage two years ago.

All-rounder Dewald Brevis has generated maximum attention in the junior Proteas camp.

He played in the CSA Provincial T20 Knockout competition in October and his batting style drew comparisons with AB de Villiers, while his leg-spin caused West Indies plenty of problems in a recent warm-up series against the hosts.

Left-arm spinner Asakhe Tsaka and captain George van Heerden will also hope to make a name for themselves in the coming weeks as South Africa look for a second title.

Ireland beats West Indies in rain-hit 2nd ODI

AP ■ KINGSTON

Ireland beat the West Indies by five wickets in a rain-interrupted second one-day international at Sabina Park.

Ireland was chasing 230 to win and was well ahead of the run rate at 157-4 in the 32nd over when rain stopped play for 90 minutes.

When the match resumed, the Duckworth-Lewis method reduced Ireland's ask to 168 from 36 overs, or 11 more runs from 28 balls. The Irish knocked them off in seven balls, winning on a pair of no balls at 168-5.

Victory tied the series 1-1, with the deciding ODI on Sunday on the same ground.

This ODI was rescheduled from Tuesday, when Ireland was too depleted to field a side because of five coronavirus cases and two injured players. Four weren't available on Thursday, including captain Andy Balbirnie.

The West Indies successfully defended 269 last Saturday but not so much 229, which



was boosted by 30 extras.

William Porterfield and stand-in skipper Paul Stirling gave Ireland a flying start of 37 in the first five overs.

Harry Tector anchored the show with 54 not out off 75 balls, his second straight half-century and fourth in his last five ODIs.

Tector featured in stands of 44 with Andy McBrine, who added 35, and 53 with Curtis Campher.

McBrine also starred with the ball when West Indies was made to bat first.

The West Indies was cautious from the start and medium-pace Craig Young took

advantage with the first three wickets, all cheap. He took out openers Shai Hope, Justin Greaves and No. 3 Nicholas Pooran to have 3-12 off four overs.

McBrine's offspin was introduced in the 18th over with West Indies 53-3, and he claimed Roston Chase then Kieron Pollard for 1.

Sharmarh Brooks, who made 93 in the first ODI, held the innings together again until he was out lbw for 43 off 64 balls, attempting to sweep left-arm spinner George Dockrell.

The West Indies didn't look like reaching 200 at 143-7 in the 40th, but Odean Smith immediately hit two sixes over McBrine's head, hit two more against Campher, and swatted Mark Adair over the long off fence. Smith made 46 off 19 balls in a partnership of 58 with Romario Shepherd to get West Indies over 200.

Shepherd then hit four boundaries and was the last man out with two overs left while trying to pull McBrine, who took 4-36.

Isolation hitch threatens NZ-Aus white-ball series

AP ■ WELLINGTON

New Zealand's white-ball cricket tour to Australia later this month is in doubt because of extended border restrictions which require the team to have isolation places booked for their return.

The Black Caps are due to leave for Australia on Jan. 24, to play one-day matches on Jan. 30, Feb. 2 and Feb. 5 and a Twenty20 international at Canberra on Feb. 8.

New Zealand Cricket didn't book places in managed isolation for the team in February because they anticipated the implementation in mid-January of a policy which would allow New Zealand citizens and residents returning from Australia to do so without going through managed isolation.

The change has now been delayed until late February because of the emergence of



the omicron variant which New Zealand so far has contained at the border.

New Zealand Cricket on Friday said it expects the Australian tour to go ahead but is discussing options with Cricket Australia. That might include rescheduling or delaying the team's return from Australia.

A spokesperson told media the team will not travel to Australia unless a plan is in place for its return.

Sindhu, Sen enter semifinals of India Open



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Two-time Olympic medalist P V Sindhu and world championship bronze medallist Lakshya Sen registered contrasting wins to advance to the women's and men's singles semifinals, respectively, at the Yonex-Sunrise India Open badminton tournament here on Friday. Top seed Sindhu, a former world champion, got the better of compatriot Ashmita Chaliha 21-7 21-18 in 36 min-

utes, while Sen rallied his way to a hard-fought 14-21 21-9 21-14 victory over H S Prannoy in another all-Indian quarterfinal. The 26-year-old from Hyderabad set up a women's singles last-four clash with Thailand's sixth seed Supanida Katethong, who entered the semifinals after the third seeded Yeo Jia Min of Singapore pulled out of the tournament due to "high fever". Sen, seeded third, will square off against Malaysia's

Ng Tze Yong in the semifinals. In the other women's semifinal, Aakarshi Kashyap will face second seeded Thai Busanan Ongbamrunphan after the Indian notched up a 21-12 21-15 win over compatriot

The 26-year-old from Hyderabad set up a women's singles last-four clash with Thailand's sixth seed Supanida Katethong, who entered the semifinals after the third seeded Yeo Jia Min of Singapore pulled out of the tournament due to "high fever." Sen, seeded third, will square off against Malaysia's Ng Tze Yong in the semifinals.

Malvika Bansod on Friday. Busanan trounced USA's Lauren Lam 21-12 21-8 in another last-eight clash. Second seeded men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty also entered the semifinals with a 21-18 21-18 win ver Singapore's Hee Yong Kai TerryAnd Loh Kean Hean. Haritha Manazhiyl Harinarayan and Ashna Roy also made it to the last four in women's doubles after beating Rudrani Jaiswal and Jamaludeen Anees Kowsar 21-16 21-16 in the quarterfinals. The last time Sindhu was up against Chaliha, at the 83rd

Yonex-Sunrise Senior National Championship in 2019, the youngster from Assam had produced a spirited performance. On Friday, Chaliha took time to get into the groove and put up a good fight in the second game but couldn't stop Sindhu from walking away with the match. Sindhu came out all guns blazing in the opening game, jumping to a 11-5 lead at the interval and then reeled off the last 10 points to earn the bragging rights. Chaliha gave a better account of herself in the second game as she tied 9-9 before Sindhu managed a slender one-

point advantage at the break. Sindhu zoomed to 15-11 but Chaliha again clawed her way back to 15-15. Thereafter, Sindhu switched gears and grabbed four match points. Chaliha saved two match points before Sindhu closed out the tie. In men's singles, it was the first international meeting but third overall between Sen and Prannoy as the duo engaged in a battle of supremacy. On a comeback trail, Prannoy, who had reached the quarterfinals at the last world championships, dominated the proceedings initially to secure a 6-2 lead. He got his acts together in time to turn

the tables at 12-10 and then zoomed from 15-14 to pocket the opening game. "The pace was high in the first game as both of us tried to up the pace but I made errors at 13-13 and it cost me the game," Sen said. Sen, however, roared back into the contest in the second game as he ran up a huge 12-5 lead and didn't look back from that point, as Prannoy crumbled. In the decider, Prannoy took the early initiative, opening up a 6-1 advantage but couldn't sustain it as Sen moved to 11-9 at the interval and then pocketed nine of the next 11 points to seal the match in his favour.



First target is to make quarters, which is realistic one: Dennerby

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Indian women's football team head coach Thomas Dennerby said his side is well prepared and its first realistic target is to reach the quarterfinals of the upcoming AFC Asian Women's Cup.

Hosts India will open their campaign against Iran on January 20. "I said from the beginning when we started, we said that yes, to come to the quarter-final is our first target, first aim," Dennerby said during a virtual media interaction in the run-up to the continental tournament on Friday.

"And if we come all the way to the quarterfinal, everything can happen because when we are in quarterfinal and it's a knock-out stage, everybody, all teams will play under pressure. But definitely (reaching) quarterfinals is our target and we also think it's a realistic target."

The Indian team has been drawn against Iran (January 20), Chinese Taipei (January 23) and China (January 26) in Group A of the competition that consists of 12 teams.

Talking about the opposition, Dennerby said: "It is (like) three different teams with three different playing styles. I guess the first game against Iran will be a tough one for us because what we have seen so far (they are) defending very well. They are organized and they will play low, defending."

"They also have one really good striker that's always on the run. So, even if we dominate the game, as a defender you always have to be on your toes."

"They are also good on set pieces, they scored a lot of goals on free-kicks and corners, so we also need to be very sharp on that (front). Don't give them

any corners or easy free-kicks," he added.

According to Dennerby, India's second game against Chinese Taipei will be an "equal game" but the final match against China will be a tough one. "Finally, China, I will say from my point of view; classical Asian style with a lot of short passes with good combinations."

CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD
8, JAN MARG, SECTOR 9-D, CHANDIGARH
Phone : 0172-4601826

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for information of general public that the **Booth No.269, Sector Manimajra, Chandigarh** was allotted to **Sh. H.K. Sharma S/o Sh. M.R. Sharma R/o #1541, Sector 18A, Chandigarh** and the said booth was cancelled due to non payment. Further, as per directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, **Sh. H.K. Sharma (Ex-allottee)** and **Sh. Harmesh Goyal (GPA Holder)** were requested to deposit the Damage and occupation charges of **Cancelled booth No.269, Manimajra, Chandigarh** on various occasions but the letters received back undelivered/unclaimed. Hence, it may be treated as last opportunity to deposit a sum of **Rs.35,93,595/- within 15 days** from the issuance of this public notice failing which it shall be presumed that both the concerned persons mentioned are not willing to deposit the said amount. In such case, suitable legal action will be taken against them. **Chief Executive Officer**
Chandigarh Housing Board, Chandigarh

WEAR MASK, WASH YOUR HANDS, WATCH YOUR DISTANCE

CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD
8, JAN MARG, SECTOR 9-D, CHANDIGARH
Phone : 0172-4601826

PUBLIC NOTICE

Subject:- Mutation/Transfer of Ownership in respect of **D.U. No. 2614, of MIG-II, Category in Sector 40-C, Chandigarh** in the name of **Sh. Jatinder Keshav S/o Late Sh. Man Chand Keshav** from the name of allottee/ Transfree **Sh. Man Chand Keshav S/o Sh. Dalip Ram** on the basis of Registered WILL.

It is hereby notified for the information of the general public and all concerned that **Sh. Jatinder Keshav S/o Late Sh. Man Chand Keshav** has applied after death of its allottee/transferee of **Sh. Man Chand Keshav S/o Sh. Dalip Ram** to the Chandigarh Housing Board for transfer of the dwelling unit **No. 2614, of MIG-II, Category in Sector 40-C, Chandigarh** in his name. **Sh. Man Chand Keshav S/o Sh. Dalip Ram** expired on **11.02.2020** at Chandigarh, and had left behind a WILL which was registered with Sub-Registrar Chandigarh dated **31.05.2012** in his favour. He has further stated that the WILL of the deceased allottee/transferee is the last WILL executed by him which has neither superseded nor cancelled till the death of the deceased. If any body has any objection upon the mutation of the said property in favour of applicant, he/she/they may submit the objection in writing to the undersigned within **30 days** of the publication of this notice, failing which, the registration and allotment of the said dwelling unit shall be transferred in favour of above said claimants. **Secretary,**
Chandigarh Housing Board, Chandigarh

WEAR MASK, WASH YOUR HANDS, WATCH YOUR DISTANCE

बैंक ऑफ बड़ोडा Bank of Baroda
BRANCH OFFICE NALAGARH:- NEAR TRUCK UNION, NALAGARH, DISTT. SOLAN, H.P. - 174101

Date: 14.01.2022

To,
Mrs. Sapna Sagar W/o Sanjay Kumar, Village Manpure 164, Tehsil Baddi, District Solan, H.P. - 174101.
Dear Sir,

Re:- Notice under Rule 6(2) and / or Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI Act, 2002).

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Bank of Baroda U/s 13(2) of the above said SARFAESI Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred u/s 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 issued a Demand Notice on **25.05.2021** calling upon the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Corporate Guarantor(s) **Mrs. Sapna Sagar W/o Sanjay Kumar (Borrower)** to repay the amount in terms of the said notice within 60 days from the date of the said notice.

And whereas the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Corporate Guarantor(s) having failed to repay the amount and hence, the undersigned, in exercise of the powers conferred u/s 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 4 and / or Rule 8 of the rules has seized / taken over the possession of the property / properties (hereinafter referred as the said properties) more particularly described herein below on **20.09.2021**.

And whereas the undersigned in exercise of the powers conferred U/s 13(4)(a) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 proposes to realize the Bank's dues by Sale of the said properties. And whereas the Sale of the said properties will be done on **"AS IS WHERE IS BASIS AND WHATEVER IS BASIS"** through E-Auction and the date of Sale has been fixed on **17.02.2022** from **1:00 PM to 3:00 PM** wherein based on the Valuation Report dated **22.09.2021** Reserve Price and EMD as mentioned below has been given in respect of the Immovable / Movable Property and as per other terms and conditions as stipulated under the said Act / Rules.

The amount due from the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Corporate Guarantor(s) as above to the Bank as on the scheduled date of sale will be **Rs. 5,01,672.68 + Interest and charges w.e.f. 31.12.2021** which has to be realized by the sale of the said properties, which please note.

Sr. No.	Description of Secured Assets with Boundaries	Reserve Price	EMD
1.	All that part and parcel of the property consisting land measuring 5.0 Marla being 487/267120 share out of land measuring 134 Kanal 07 Marla bearing share of Kitas - 23(137-07), Kh./Kt. No. 63/63-76 HB No. 143, Mauja Kirpalpur, Tehsil Nalagarh, District Solan, H.P.	Rs. 8.52 Lacs	Rs. 0.85 Lac

CHIEF MANAGER

CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD
8, JAN MARG, SECTOR 9-D, CHANDIGARH
Phone : 0172-4601826

PUBLIC NOTICE

Sh. Rajat Passi S/o Late Sh. Krishan Basant Passi, r/o H.No. 2863, Sec-40-C, Chandigarh, has approached to the Chandigarh Housing Board for the issuance of Duplicate copy of Allotment letter, Possession letter/slip in respect of **Dwelling Unit No. 2863 Sector- 40-C, Chandigarh** due to loss of this document. They have also furnished L.A.R.No.2022/000976, registered with Police Station -39, Chandigarh on dated **01/11/2022**, regarding the loss of above said document. Any person having any objection, against the issuance of duplicate copy of Allotment letter, Possession letter/slip in respect of the above said Dwelling Unit to the said **Sh. Rajat Passi S/o Late Sh. Krishan Basant Passi** he/she should file the objection before the undersigned in writing within **15 days** from the publication of this notice, failing which the documents shall be issued. Further, in case original documents as mentioned above are found by anyone, the same should be submitted in the above noted Police Station or in the office of the undersigned. **Secretary,**
Chandigarh Housing Board, Chandigarh

WEAR MASK, WASH YOUR HANDS, WATCH YOUR DISTANCE

CHANDIGARH HOUSING BOARD
8, JAN MARG, SECTOR 9-D, CHANDIGARH
Phone : 0172-4601826

PUBLIC NOTICE

Subject:- Transfer/ Mutation of Allotment/ Registration **D.U. No. 2731 of Category MIG-I in Sector 40-C, Chandigarh** in the name of (i) **Smt. Gurleen Kaur W/o Late Sh. Darshan Lal (ii) Sh. Deepak Verma S/o Late Sh. Darshan Lal (iii) Smt. Rosy Sharma D/o Late Sh. Darshan Lal and W/o Sh. Pawan Sharma**, on the instestate Demise of allottee/transferee **Sh. Darshan Lal Kreer S/o Late Sh. Mela Ram**.

It is hereby notified for the information of the General Public and all concerned that **Sh. Darshan Lal Kreer S/o Late Sh. Mela Ram** owner of **Dwelling Unit No. 2731 of Category MIG-I in Sector 40-C, Chandigarh** expired on **05.07.2020** at Mohali (Punjab) as informed by their legal heirs. (i) **Smt. Gurleen Kaur W/o Late Sh. Darshan Lal (ii) Sh. Deepak Verma S/o Late Sh. Darshan Lal (iii) Smt. Rosy Sharma D/o Late Sh. Darshan Lal and W/o Sh. Pawan Sharma** have requested for transfer of ownership of **Dwelling Unit No. 2731 of Category MIG-I in Sector 40-C, Chandigarh** in their name on the basis of instestate demise of **Sh. Darshan Lal Kreer S/o Late Sh. Mela Ram**. He has further stated that no other legal heir has been left out and he is the only legal heirs of deceased owner of the above said Dwelling Unit. In case anybody has any objection regarding the claim/right/interest in the dwelling unit which is proposed to be transferred by the Chandigarh Housing Board in favour of (i) **Smt. Gurleen Kaur (Wife) (ii) Sh. Deepak Verma (Son), (iii) Smt. Rosy Sharma (Daughter)**, he/she may submit the objection in writing to the undersigned within **30 days** of the publication of this notice, failing which the registration and allotment of the said dwelling unit shall be transferred in favour of the above claimant's. **Secretary,**
Chandigarh Housing Board, Chandigarh

WEAR MASK, WASH YOUR HANDS, WATCH YOUR DISTANCE

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVERNMENT OF N.C.T. OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER (M)-I
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (M)-62 / T-2 E-BLOCK PARK: PREET VIHAR: DELHI-110092
Phone No. 22502206, Mail ID : - djbeeeastii@gmail.com

PRESS SHORT NIT No. 35 / (2021-22)

S. No.	Name of Work	Amount Put to Tender	Tender Processing Fee	Earnest Money	Tender ID No. & Date of release of tender in E-Procurement Solution	Last Date / Time of receipt of tender E-Procurement Solution
1.	Replacement of old damaged / rusted internal water distribution network in Vigyan Lok in AC-59 in East-II.	48,54,933.00	500.00	97,100.00	2022_DJB_214770_1 14-Jan-2022 04:00 PM	22-Jan-2022 02:00 PM
2.	Trapping of discharge of Patparganj Industrial area from SPS (DSIIDC) to interceptor sewer in AC-59 under AEE (M)-59.	37,90,455.00	500.00	76,000.00	2022_DJB_214770_2 14-Jan-2022 04:00 PM	22-Jan-2022 02:00 PM
3.	Replacement of old damaged / rusted internal C.I. water lines in Jagriti Enclave Ph-II/Id in AC-59 in East-II.	33,18,400.00	500.00	66,500.00	202_2_DJB_214770_3 14-Jan-2022 04:00 PM	22-Jan-2022 02:00 PM
4.	Replacement of settled sewer line (300 mm) dia in the back lane from H.No. 13 to H.No. 28, Gagan Vihar to prevent contamination in AC-59 under ACE (M)-I	31,75,318.00	500.00	64,000.00	202_2_DJB_214770_4 14-Jan-2022 04:00 PM	22-Jan-2022 02:00 PM

Further details in this regard can be seen at <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>
ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
Advt. J.S.V. 1009(2021-22)

Devender Kumar
EX. ENGINEER (M) -59

STOP CORONA: Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene

The Panipat Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd.
(MULTI STATE BANK)
Head Off. : Om City Centre, 932-935, Opp. I.B. College, G.T. Road, Panipat.
Branch : G.T. Road, Samalkha. Phone No. 0180-2693921

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property/ies)

• Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised officer of The Panipat Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd., G.T. Road, Panipat under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued a Demand Notice (dated 27.10.2021 calling upon the borrower Sh. Vijay & Smt. Kanika Devi to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 7,25,728/- (Rs. Seven Lakh Twenty Five Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty Eight Only) as on 27.10.2021 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

• The borrowers / guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers / guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property (ies) described herein below, in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the said act read with rule 8 of the said rules on this 04th day of January of the year 2022.

• The borrowers/guarantors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of The Panipat Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd., G.T.Road, Samalkha for an amount Rs. 7,25,728/- (Rs. Seven Lakh Twenty Five Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty Eight Only) as on 27.10.2021 and Interest thereon...

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower & Guarantor	Date of Demand Notice & Amount O/s	Description of the Immovable Property	Date of Possession Notice
1.	Sh. Vijay S/o Sh. Dharam Singh (Borrower)	27.10.2021 Rs. 7,25,728/- (Including Interest)	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of a built-up Residential Area 300.00 sq. Yards, Sale deed no. 209 dated 16.04.2012, situated at Hanuman Colony, Railway Line Paar, Inside MC Limits Samalkha, Distt. Panipat, Khasra No. 33 vide mutation no. 22535 in the name of Smt. Kanika Devi Sh. Vijay Kumar and bounded as under- North- House of Sh. Subhash & Ram Mehar, South- House of Prem & Chaina Ram, East-Gali, West-Gali.	04.01.2022

Place : Samalkha
Dated : 04.01.2022

Authorised Officer
The Panipat Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd., G.T. Road, Panipat



Indo - Pak War 1971, An Interesting tale

ACT of Gallantry 1971 War. 1 During 1971 Indo Pak War 2/Lt Mahinder Singh Beniwal from Corps of Engineers (Bengal Sappers) was commanding a platoon in Western Sector. Aug 1971 onwards his platoon was intensely involved in mine FD laying day in day out. During Oct 120 ft bridge was constructed in 72 hrs without rest for passage of our tanks. In Nov 1971 the Br was prepared for Demolition by 2/Lt Beniwal and he also laid mine field. 2 After ceasefire on 17 Dec 71 2/ Lt Beniwal was detailed along with a party of Sappers to remove the Explosives from a bridge which was captured by Enemy before onset of hostilities. The bridge has been badly tempered by the Enemy and Explosive Chambers were partially damaged. The explosive too became sensitive. Realising the Risk involved, Beniwal set upon doing the task himself and made the bridge safe for public use.

Will request the Government of India in the form of a pre-budget letter to compensate for the loss caused to the industries in Corona : Punjab-Chandigarh Federation of Association of Small Industries of India Director Abhinav Mahajan while interacting with the reporters said that just as all the industries during the first and second wave of Corona followed the rules of Covid and to prevent it. All precautions were taken, in the same way, now take all precautions to prevent the rising outbreak of the said corona in the form of third wave and make all the workers of your industries, office staff as well as other people aware of it and make it necessary that All their personnel have got both the vaccines so that the corona can be stopped from progressing.

