OPINION 6

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN

KAZAKHSTAN, & WHY?

WORLD 8

BIDEN REDOUBLING FOCUS ON TESTING

AMID SHORTAGES, CONFUSION

MCAP OF BSE-LISTED FIRMS AT ALL-TIME HIGH OF ₹ 278 LAKH CR

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Omicron global deaths at .25%

Mortality rate was in double-digit in some nations when Covid-19 hit world 2 yrs ago first time

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The fatality rate of Omicrondriven Covid-19 has stabilised around 0.25 per cent across the world. This is far below the double-digit mortality rate some countries saw when the first wave of Covid-19 hit the world two years ago

On Wednesday, the world recorded 3,238,025 new cases and 8,425 deaths. The USA reported 8,29, 2928 cases and 2,283 deaths which translates to nearly 0.25 per cent both in global terms and for the USA.

Among the European nations, France has been the worst hit by Omicron. The country reported. 3.61 lakh cases on Wednesday but only 246 deaths. In fact, France is managing coronavirus in better ways than most other countries, including India. On Wednesday, India clocked 2.47



Amid rise in Covid-19 cases, a large number of devotees take part in the golden chariot procession of the Lord Venkateswara temple on the occasion of auspicious Vaikuntha Ekadasi, at Tirumala in Tirupati, on Thursday

cases and 30 deaths.

The number of weekly reported deaths has remained stable since October 2021, at an average of 48,000.

Meanwhile, World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus has said the highly transmissible Omcircon variant of Covid is

driving a huge spike in Covid infections across countries but the death rate is stable.

He also noted that though vaccines do not fully protect from infections, the overwhelming majority of people admitted to hospitals around the world are unvaccinated.

The sheer number of cases also means more pressure on already overburdened and exhausted health workers.

Last week, more than 15 million new cases of Covid-19 were reported to WHO from around the world, by far the most cases reported in a single week. While these are official estimates, the actual numbers

could be really high.

"This huge spike in infections is being driven by the Omicron variant, which is rapidly replacing Delta in almost all countries," said Ghebreyesus at his Press address on Wednesday.
"However, the number of

weekly reported deaths has remained stable since October last year, at an average of 48 thousand deaths a week," he added.

This could be due to the reduced severity of Omicron, and widespread immunity from vaccination or previous infection, he noted

Continued on Page 2

Of 8 crore 15+ population, 3 cr get vaccinated

Of the total 8 crore teens population in the country, over three crore have already received their first dose of the vaccine as on Wednesday, in just ten days since the drive for children aged between 15 and 18 years beginning January 3.

As of now only Bharat Biotech indigenously-made Covaxin is available for vaccinating this age group.

According to the CoWIN portal, as of now, total of 3,06,60,329 teens have been vaccinated and the numbers are increasing every minute. However, a total of 3,21,63,781 youngsters of this age group have registered themselves for the vaccines till now.

"Great sense of responsibility and enthusiasm among Young India. Over 3 crore youngsters in the 15-18 age group have received 1st dose of the Covid-19 vaccine," said Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya in a tweet on Thursday.

He also appealed to all eli-



Covid-19 vaccine to a teenager in Mumbai on Thursday

gible young beneficiaries to get vaccinated at the earliest.

As per an estimation around 7.50 crore teens of this age bracket are to be adminis tered the vaccine. Out of the total, over three crore have received their first dose of the vaccine so far. As of now only Bharat Biotech indigenouslymade Covaxin is available for vaccinating this age group.

According to the Union Health Ministry, additional doses of Covaxin have been sent to all the States and Union Territories for administering the vaccine to this population

OBC leaders' exodus hits Yogi Cabinet

Another Minister Dharam Saini, 4 MLAs quit BJP

PNS LUCKNOW

The exodus of OBC leaders from the BJP continued on Thursday as another Minister Dharam Singh Saini, the third in three days, and four legislators resigned from the party showing allegiance to Swami Prasad Maurya. Maurya's resignation from the Cabinet on Tuesday has triggered the exodus. Interestingly, Saini, who

held the Ayush portfolio and was considered close to Swami Prasad Maurya, had refuted reports of leaving the saffron party barely a day ago.

The day Maurya resigned he said, "I am with BJP and if Maurya has given his name as defector this is wrong."

The four legislators who resigned from the primary membership of the BJP on Thursday are Dr Mukesh Verma, Bala Prasad Awasthi, Vinay Shakya and Avtar Singh Bhadana. They have accused the party leadership of ignoring the interests of the Dalits, backward classes, and farmers. 7. Bhadana has joined the Continued on Page 2 Rashtriya Lok Dal.



welcomes former UP Minister Dharam Singh Saini into the party in Lucknow

"During the tenure of five years by the BJP Government, no attention was given to the leaders and public representatives of the Dalit, backward and minority communities, and these communities were neglected," Verma, a backward caste leader, wrote in his resignation letter. "Hence, I resign from the primary membership of the BJP.

As many as three BJP Ministers and 13 MLAs, most of them hailing from the OBC community, have quit in one week triggering panic within the party and altering its electoral scene in the key State.

Continued on Page 2

Situation worsening in Delhi, positivity soars to 29%, 31 die

PNS NEW DELHI

The Ciovid-19 situation is turning from bad to worse in Delhi. The national Capital recorded the biggest-ever spike in Covid infections on Thursday with 28,867 new cases. Wednesday, the city had registered 27,561 Covid cases and

The positivity rate leaped lost their lives to the virus during the last 24 hours.

Delhi's positivity rate on Thursday was higher than what it witnessed on May 3 last year at the peak of the second wave of Covid-19. So far, Delhi has logged over 16.46 lakh cases and more than 25,000 Covid deaths

The situation was equally bad in Bengaluru which recorded 18,374 on Thursday. Test positivity rate in Bengaluru hits 20 per cent as cases rise to 18,374 today. Karnataka's capital saw an increase of 18 per cent over Wednesday tally of 15,617. Overall, Karnataka reported 25,005 new Covid-19 cases, 8 deaths. Karnataka Chief Minister Basavara Bommai attended a virtual meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the Covid

situation in all States. Bengaluru Bruhat

Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) in an advisory issued has stated that entire apartment complex will be declared "containment zone" for a minimum of seven days in case of more than three Covid-19 cases. The civic body also stated that all residents will be tested and detailed contact tracing will be con-The situation remained

static in Maharashtra, while number of cases compared to Wednesday. Maharashtra on Thursday recorded 46,406 new cases and 36 deaths in the last 24 hours. On Wednesday, the State had reported 46,723 cases. Out of the new cases, as many as 13,702 new cases and 6 deaths were reported from Mumbai as against 16,420 reported on Wednesday.

Pongal, the annual harvest festival and Tamil New Year festivities suffered a setback as Tamil Nadu registered 20,911 new Covid-19 cases on Thursday. Tamil New Year and Pongal falls on Friday and the pandemic have robbed the gaiety and enthusiasm associated with the festivities.

The traditional Jallikkattu (bull taming) will be celebrated with restrictions amidst the Covid-19 and Omicron pan-

derails: 3 killed, 10 trapped

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

t least three persons were Akilled and more than 40 injured when the Guwahati bound 15366UP Bikaneroff track near Moynaguri town in Jalpaiguri district of north Bengal, sources in the North-East Frontier Railways and Jalpaiguri district administration said, adding the number of casualties could go up as more people remain trapped inside the mangled coaches.

The accident occurred about 5 pm when seven coaches of the train got derailed. While some of the coaches turned turtle, two coaches "most probably S-6 and S-5 collided against each other with one telescoping on the other," causing most number of

injuries, sources said.
"Till now three persons have been reported dead on the spot while we have admitted 25 others in Jalpaiguri Super Specialty Hospital," Jalpaiguri District Magistrate Madhumita Godhara said, adding ambu-Continued on Page 2 | lances and team of doctors had



Mangled remains of Guwahati-Bikaner Express train after it got derailed at Mainaguri in Jalpaiguri district on Thursday

rushed to the spot.

"The accident occurred at around 5 pm and my Siliguri SRP had rushed to the spot," said Adhir Sharma, DGP Railways, adding everything possible was being done to facilitate the rescue work.

The local block health officer of Moynaguri said out of 16 injured persons admitted in the Block hospital 15 were critically injured and were being rushed to Jalpaiguri.

The accident occurred near an overbridge between

Moynaguri and Domohuni, sources said, adding the train was bound for Guwahati via Alipurduar. "As the accident occurred at a 'block area' (an area which is far stations) it is becoming more difficult for the rescue teams to reach the spot. said a senior railway official.

As the area is far away from urban centres hundreds of local villagers joined the initial rescue work extracting the trapped passengers and sending them to hospitals, sources said.

Continued on Page 2

Bikaner-Guwahati Express Covid fight must not hamper eco activities, PM tells CMs

As the country witnessed an alarming rise in Omicron cases in the last 24 hours, Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi on Thursday Chief Ministers (CMs) of all

Modi said that "vaccination" and the "local containment" that did not impede "economic activities" should form part of their strategy to counter the new variant of the Covid-19 virus.

Cautioning all to be "alert", the PM said Omicron is "rapidly spreading" and called for adhering to the Covid-19 protocol that includes masking and social distancing.

"Compared to previous variants, Omicron is rapidly spreading...it's more transmissible...Our health experts are assessing the situation. It's clear that we have to stay alert, but also ensure to avoid panic," said Mode during the meeting with the CMs.

Almost all CMs attended the meet with Modi calling for continuous cooperation



Covid-19 situation in the country via video conferencing, in New Delhi

between the Centre and the States and expressed happiness that all were confident of overcoming the current spell of the infection.

"The ₹23,000 core package allocated by the Centre to the States has been utilised well with many States are strengthening their health infrastructure. The Centre and States need to follow this pre-emptive, collective, and proactive approach this time too," he

Union Home Minister Amity Shah and Health Minister Minsk Mandaviva attended the meeting that was held virtually

Modi said given the past two years experience of fighting coronavirus, all States need to see that the speed of economic activities continues

while managing the current wave of the pandemic. "Any strategy needs to keep

this thing in mind", he said and suggested "local containment from where large cases are emerging."
Modi asked CMs of States

where a surge of cases is palpable, to encourage "home isolation so that there is less pressure on the hospitals. Better home treatment and tracking would prevent crowd-

ing of hospitals, the PM said, adding he was happy "many States were doing innovative experiments in Covid management."

The Centre and States need to further accelerate the 'Har Ghar Dastak' programme to reach 100 per cent vaccination coverage, he said.

Continued on Page 2

CAPSULE

WOMAN BRANDED WITCH, SET ON FIRE

Simdega: Close on heels of a lynching incident in Jharkhand's Simdega district, a 60-year-old

India, China fail to defuse LAC stand-off in 14th round of talks

PNS NEW DELHI

India and China failed to **L**achieve a breakthrough to ease tension on the border in Ladakh during the 14th round of military-level talks on Wednesday. The two sides agreed to meet again to find a solution to the face-off persisting at several points. The Corps Commander-

level talks were held on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Chushul sector of Eastern Ladakh. The Indian side was led by 14 Corps chief Lt General Anindiya Sengupta. The talks lasted for more

than 12 hours and ended at 10.30 pm. The joint statement

released on Thursday said the representatives from the defense and foreign affairs



establishments of the two sides were present at the meeting. The two sides had a frank and in-depth exchange of views for the resolution of the relevant issues along the LAC in the Western Sector, it said. Both sides agreed to follow

the guidance provided by the State leaders and work for the resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest. It was noted that this would help in the restoration of peace and tranquillity along the LAC in the Western Sector and enable progress in bilateral relations.

to consolidate on the previous outcomes and take effective efforts to maintain the securitv and stability on the ground in the Western Sector including during winter. The two sides agreed to stay in close contact and maintain dialogue via military and diplomatic channels and work out a mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest. In this context, it was also agreed that the next round of the Commanders' talks should be held at the earliest. Army Chief General MM

The two sides also agreed

of Uttar Pradesh Shia Waqi Naravane had said on Wednesday that results cannot Board. be expected during every round of talks on such an issue. He also said both the sides try to understand each

other's perceptions and differ-

ences of opinion.

Haridwar hate speech: Wasim Rizvi, alias Jitendra Tyagi, arrested

PTI ■ DEHRADUN

In the first arrest in the Dharma Sansad hate speech case, Waseem Rizvi, aka Jitendra Narayan Tyagi, was arrested from Roorkee in Haridwar district on Thursday Rizvi who changed his

name to Jitendra Narayan Tyagi after converting to Hinduism is among more than 10 people named in the FIRs lodged in connection with the case. He was formerly the head

Waseem Rizvi was arrested from Narsan border, Roorkee, Haridwar Senior Superintendent of Police Yogendra Rawat told

Pick your AAP's CM face for Punjab by call, text: Kejriwal

candidate should be. In a his-

He said that all the surveys

are stating that the AAP will get

Kejriwal added

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday sought suggestions from the public to decide the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) chief ministerial candidate for the Punjab Assembly polls. Addressing the media,

Kejriwal said people can call, SMS, or WhatsApp their choice of the chief ministerial candidate on the number 7074870748 till January 17 evening. "It is almost certain that the Aam Aadmi Party Government will be formed in Punjab and the chief ministerial face of the AAP will be the next Chief Minister. After 1947, so many elections have been held, but till date no party has had the guts to ask the public

who their chief ministerial



Delhi CM and AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal with party leaders Bhagwant Mann and Raghav Chadha at a press conference in Chandigarh on Thursday

"I appeal to all the residents toric first, the AAP is asking the public who should be their chief ministerial face. Whoever the public votes for will be made the Chief Minister,"

57 to 60 seats.

and volunteers of Punjab to give a strong push so that the AAP gets at least 80 seats, and not just 60. I wanted to make Bhagwant Mann the CM face, but he said no."

Continued on Page 2

woman was set on fire by locals at a village here on the suspicion that she practised witchcraft, a police officer said on Thursday. Five persons have been arrested in this connection, the officer said The victim with severe burn injuries was undergoing treatment at Sadar Hospital Jharya Devi had gone to a

PLEA AGAINST RAMANI New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Thursday agreed to examine former Union Minister M J

HC ADMITS AKBAR'S

defamation case over her allegations of sexual harassment.

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RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH

DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

Published From

relative's place for a funeral ceremony.

Akbar's appeal against the trial court order acquitting journalist Priva Ramani in his criminal

Cop martyred in anti-terrorist op in J&K's Kulgam | China: Naravane's

selection grade constable of Athe Jammu & Kashmir Police on Wednesday attained martyrdom during an antiterrorist operation in which one Pakistani terrorist Babar Bhai of Jaish-e- Mohammad terror outfit was gunned down by the security forces in the South Kashmir district of Kulgam. Three army jawans and two civilians also received injuries during the operation.

The police constable identified as Rohit Chib was serving in the special operations group for a long time and had earned out of turn promotions due to his gallantry in the past.

The braveheart has left behind his pregnant wife, younger brother, sister and mother. He was staying in the Jagti Migrant camp near Nagrota. His family had migrated from Kashmir valley.

As per police records, the killed terrorist was a categorized terrorist active since year 2018 in the areas of Shopian-Kulgam and its adjoining areas. He was



wanted by law in several terror crime cases. So far 14 terrorists have been neutralized during the current year out of which 7 are foreign terrorists including 1 killed at LOC in Kupwara.

According to police, one police personnel, three Army soldiers and two civilians got injured during the operation. All the injured were immediately shifted to the hospital for treatment however police personnel SgCt Rohit Chib succumbed to his injuries and attained martyrdom. The condition of other injured including two civilians who had sustained minor injuries is stated to be stable.

The mortal remains of Rohit Chib were brought to Jammu early Thursday morning. Later he was cremated with full honors in the presence of top cops including Director General of Police Dilbagh Singh. Several local politicians, cutting across party lines along with a large number of local residents attended the last journey of the braveheart in

7 Pakistani terrorists among 14 killed in 8 operations in J&K this year: DGP

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbag Singh on Thursday said that 14 terrorists, including seven Pakistani nationals, have been killed in eight encounters in the union territory so far this year and asserted that anti-terrorist operations will be intensified to clear the region of terrorism.

The police chief paid tribute to police constable Rohit Chib who was killed during an encounter with terrorists in Kulgam district of

Jammu. Paying rich tributes DGP Dilbagh Singh said selection grade constable Rohit Chib joined the police services in 2011 and had volunteered to work in the special operations

group.

DGP said he was a brave policeman and remained in the forefront during operations.

south Kashmir on Wednesday. In the operation, Pakistan-origin Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) terrorist Babar was killed and five, including two civilians and three soldiers, were

"This year, we have under-taken eight successful opera-tions. As many as 14 terrorists have been killed in these operations. Among these 14 terrorists, seven are Pakistani terrorists," Singh told reporters.

The police chief further

said the terror modules and

Last night he along with army jawans was conducting house to house search in the general area of Kulgam when a hiding terrorist opened fire and also lobbed a grenade. Rohit had received critical injuries while safely evacuating civilians being used by the terrorists as human their networks helping terrorare eliminated.

The elimination of these terrorists are going on at a fast pace. In these operations, seven terrorists who had come from Pakistan to engineer terror have been eliminated," he said.

He said people heaved a sigh of relief in 2021 as there have been largescale elimination of terrorists. "We will clear this land of terrorism so that people live in an environment of peace," he added.

Vijay Kumar,IGP Kashmir while interacting with media at Kulgam Thursday said that the owner and his family members where the killed terrorist was hiding deliberately misled the search team by saying that no terrorist was hiding in their house which led to collateral

Omicron

global

deaths

From Page 1

But for those who are unvaccinated "Omicron remains a dangerous virus",

the WHO chief said even as he added that "at the same time,

while the immunisations

remain very effective at pre-

venting severe disease and death, they do not fully prevent

deaths a week is 50 thousand

deaths too many," Ghebreyesus

said. "Learning to live with this

virus does not mean we can, or

should, accept this number of

He stated that the world cannot "allow this virus a free

ride" when so many people around the world remain

unvaccinated. In Africa, for

example, more than 85 per cent

"Almost 50 thousand

transmission?

remarks on face-off 'unconstructive' Beijing: China said on Commander level r

Thursday that it hopes 'relevant people' in India will refrain from making 'unconstructive comments', a day after Chief of Army Staff Gen M M Naravane stated that threat in eastern Ladakh has 'by no means reduced' and the Indian Army will continue to deal with the Chinese military in a 'firm' and resolute' manner.

In his press conference on Wednesday ahead of the Army Day on January 15, Gen Naravane also said that war or conflict is always an "instrument of last resort" but if it is thrust upon India, then the country will come out victorious.

His comments came on a day India and China held the 14th round of Corps Commander level talks to resolve the military standoff in eastern Ladakh.

Asked for his reaction to Gen Naravane's comments, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told a media briefing here on Thursday that "now China and India have been in communication and dialogue through diplomatic and military channels to ease the bor-

der tension".

"We hope relevant people on the Indian side will refrain from making uncon-structive remarks," he said in response to a question from the Western media.

About the Corps Commander-level talks, Wang said "regarding the 14th

will release information if there

However, sources in the security establishment in New Delhi said on Wednesday that India pressed for an early disengagement of troops in the remaining friction points in eastern Ladakh at the 14th round of military talks with China which took place at the Chushul-Moldo border point on the Chinges side of the Line on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual. The Indian side also insisted on disengagement as soon as possible in all the remaining friction points including resolution of issues in Depsang Bulge and Demchok.

The 13th round of talks had taken place on October 10 and they ended in

The eastern Ladakh border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas. Both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry

As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two sides completed the disengagement process last year in the north and south banks of the Pangong lake and in the Gogra area. Each side currently has around 50,000 to 60,000 troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the sensitive sector. *PTI*

Pick your AAP's CM face for **Punjab by call...**

From Page 1

At the same time, AAP MP and Punjab Convenor Bhagwant Mann said, "CM sahib told me that your name can be declared as the CM's face (for Punjab). But I told him that usually parties force a CM face on the people and do not ask their choice. For the next five years the CM has to look after the people, so why not ask the public which one of

want to be the CM. So if people choose, they will have faith that the CM is their choice. Therefore, the trust of the public should be secured for the CM's face."

He said, "I am a true soldier of the AAP. Even if my duty is pasting posters, I will do that too. If my duty is to sweep the streets, then I will do that too. Punjab is important to me. That's why I don't have any



sengers to Moynaguri from where they are beingsent to Jalpagirui," a local villager said adding he had seen rescuepersonnel cutting the leg of a trapped passenger to extract him andsend him to the hos-

"Our men involved in the rescue work have informed that quite a fewpassengers were trapped inside the bogies and had to be extracted after cutting the metals with gas cutters," a senior officer at NewJalpaiguri said adding "prima facie it does not seem to be a problemof points as the train was not nearing any station and neither was anytrack point nor any signal." Sources contradicted each

other even as some said the train wasspeeding away while some others said it was running at a gentle speedof about 40

kmph.

Though there was no information about the number of passengerstravelling in the train at the time of the accident sources said thetrain had started with 700 passengers from

BJP are: Swami Prasad Maurya,

Bhagwati Sagar, Roshan Lal

Verma, Vinay Shakya, Avtar

Singh Bhadana, Dara Singh

Chauhan, Brijesh Prajapati,

Mukesh Verma, Rakesh

Rathore, Jai Chaubey, Madhuri

Verma, R K Sharma, and Bala

the state Cabinet on Tuesday is

likely to join Samajwadi Party

Maurya who resigned from

Prasad Awasthi.

suddenly things came to a halt and my bogie tilted to a side ...I immediately leapt out of the train and found that bogies ahead ofmine had telescoped on each other," said Dipak Bharani a businessmanfrom Guwahati who was travelling in

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee who was in the midst a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi briefed the former about the accident andissued directions from Kolkata. At least 50 ambulances were rushed tothe spot from both Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar, sources in the stateadministration said.

While Dilip Kaur the NF Railway CPRO said "a high level investigationhas been ordered and things would be ascertain soon," an engineer fromthe same Division said "ICF bogies were being used in the BikanerExpress which is why some of the coaches tele-scoped."

Meanwhile, the NF Railways had given three helpline numbers for theanxious relatives of the passengers. These are 9002041951-55,8134054999,

on Friday. "Just wait and see as how many people will join

with me," he told reporters. Earlier in the day he had, in another tweet said: "I will start a new political inning on January 14. Later in the day Maurya along with some legislators who had resigned from BJP visited Lohia Trust and met Samajwadi Party national president Akhilesh Yadav. The meeting continued for over half an hour. Coming out of that meeting Maurya tweeted to call RSS as Naag and BJP as Saap and himself as Nevla (mon-



Army jawans display their war skills during the full dress rehearsal for the Army Day Parade, at Army Parade Ground in New

Covid fight must not hamper eco activities, PM tells...

Modi said the Centre has developed tele-medicine techniques which "greatly helped Corona patients

The PM told the CMs that boosting health infrastructure. ahead of all Corona variants now and mutual cooperation would give us strength in this

"We, the 130 crore people of India, will surely emerge victorious from the Coronavirus pandemic with our collective efforts", he said. "Initial skepticism about Omicron is slowly getting cleared. This variant is infecting the general population several times faster than

previous ones", he cautioned. "Hard work is our only path and victory is our only option...", said Modi who assured that the Centre was extending all help to the States goose) that will destroy them. | in coping with the latest surge.

for his support and guidance and for funds provided by the Central Government which has been of immense help in

paredness to tackle increasing cases, through steps like increase in beds, oxygen availability etc. The Karnataka CM talked

about the spread of cases in Bengaluru and measures taken to contain spread in apart-The West Bengal CM dis-

cussed the possible increase in cases in the State on account of upcoming festivities and the administration's preparation to

The Tamil Nadu CM said the State stands together with the Centre in the fight against this wave, while the Jharkhand CM talked about misconceptions in some rural and tribal areas which have caused some difficulties in the vaccination programme.

The Uttar Pradesh CM spoke about steps being taken of the vaccination drive. Punjab CM thanked the PM for funds and infrastructure support, especially in meeting oxygen requirements and Assam CM said that steps like precaution dose have proved to be an immense confidence booster. Manipur CM said that the State is taking efforts to increase the vaccination cov-

Meanwhile, the Health Minister complimented the youth for showing "great sense of responsibility & enthusiasm" as over 3 crore youngsters between the 15-18 age group have received the 1st dose of the Covid-19 vaccine, he said.

of people are yet to receive a the leaders of the AAP do they desire to become the CM? single dose of vaccine.

Health workers admit a suspected Covid-19 positive patient to a hospital amid concern over spread Omicron variant, in

Situation worsening in Delhi, positivity soars to 29%,...

Though Tamil Nadu and Kerala were showing reduced number of Covid-19 cases throughout December, matters took a turn for the worst in new year as the number of new patients started rising from January 1.Kerala Minister for Health Veena George said on Thursday that the Health Department diagnosed 13,468 new patients with Covid-19 during the last 24 hours. The death toll till date in Kerala mounted to 50,369.

West Bengal is also seeing no respite from Covid. The State reported 23,467 fresh Covid-19 cases and 26 more fatalities. of

the basis Wednesday's case count, India

added 2,47,417 new coronavirus infections taking the total tally of Covid-19 cases to 3,63,17,927 according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Thursday.

It is the highest single-day increase in the ongoing wave. The infections increased by more than 165 per cent compared with the case count a week ago.Of the total 5,488 cases of Omicron variant reported from 28 States, 2,162 people have recovered or migrated so far.

Assam recorded 3,274 new cases on January 12 after 49,915 samples were tested. The test positivity rate stood at 6.56 per cent. Four new deaths were also reported on the day. The active case count stood at 11,792.

It was no different in Andhra Pradesh, where 3,205 fresh cases were reported in the 24 hours ending January 12

On Omicron front, Maharashtra recorded the maximum number of 1,367 cases followed by Rajasthan at 792, Delhi 549, Karnataka 479 and Kerala 486. The active cases have increased to 11, 17,531, the highest in 216 days, while the death toll has climbed to 4,85,035 with 380 fresh fatalities, the data updated at 8 am stated.

The active cases comprise 3.08 per cent of the total infections, while the national Covid-19 recovery rate decreased to 95.59 per cent, the Ministry 4 and three crore on June said. An increase of 1,62,212 23.

cases has been recorded in the active Covid-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

The daily positivity rate was recorded at 13.11 per cent while the weekly positivity rate was recorded at 10.80 per cent, according to the Ministry. A total of 2,11,298 coronavirus infections were reported in a single day on May 26.

An increase of 1,33,873 cases has been recorded in the active Covid-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

India's Covid-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 2020, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19.

India crossed the grim milestone of two crore on May

Of 8 crore 15+ population, 3 cr get...

From Page 1

According to the Ministry data, over 26,73,385 precaution doses have been administered to healthcare workers, frontline workers and those aged 60 and above with comorbidities. With the administration of over 76 lakh (76,32,024) vaccine doses in the last 24 hours, India's Covid-19 vaccination coverage has exceeded 154.61 crore. This has been achieved through 1,65,65,942 sessions, said a statement.

While testing capacity has been enhanced across the country, the weekly positivity rate in the country currently stands at 10.80 per cent and the daily positivity rate also reportto be 13.11 per cent.

MADHYA PRADESH HOUSING & INFRASTRUCTURE **DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

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S. No.	System Tender No.	Name of work	Probable amount of contract, EMD and Cost of tender form	Start date of purchase and last date of submission of bids	Date of opening of tenders Envelop A & B	Date of opening of Financial bid Envolep C	
1.	2022_ MPHID_ 177775_1	Const. of 6 Class rooms at first floor, E-Library block and Renovation work at Swami Vivekanand P.G. College Neemuch (IInd Call)	Rs. 324.44 Lakhs Rs. 324500.00 Rs. 17700.00	13.01.2022 to 02.02.2022 17:30 PM	04.02.2022 12.30 Hrs.	08.02.2022 12.30	

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(B. RAJKUMAR) E.E., Division Ratlam Ph. 07412-236910

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Hospitalisation rate is low: Health Min

 $D^{\text{elhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain said}}_{\text{that according to the audit of the death}}$ committee, the highest number of deaths caused due to Corona is of those patients who were admitted in hospitals due to any comorbidity or any other diseases.

The rate of admission of patients is currently very low. There is no increase in the number of hospitalizations of patients," he said.

Giving detailed information on the Coronavirus cases in Delhi on Thursday, he said "The number of patients admitted in the hospital has stabilized. The number of hospitalizations as compared to new cases coming daily is currently under control. We are hopeful that this is the peak. The existing health system in Delhi is in a good shape and we are fully prepared to deal with the most

He added, "Despite the surge of new cases daily for the last few days, the number of patients admitted to the hospital remains the same. This could be a sign that the peak of the corona has now arrived. I hope that this peak of corona ends as soon as possible so that the cases of corona in Delhi and the country can come down thereafter and people can get relief

ICU, Jain said, "There are very few such cases among the patients admitted to the ICU beds the hospitals, who are admitted only because of the Corona. Most of the patients are those who are being treated for some other

Apart from this, while talking about the number of patients admitted to the hospital and the preparedness of the Government, the Health Minister said that at present very few patients are admitted to the hospital. For example, 30 corona patients are admitted to GTB hospital, there are a total of 750 beds available. Similarly, at present, a total of 750 beds are available in LNJP Hospital but only 136 patients are admitted. If needed, we can increase 1000 beds in both these hospitals.

Similarly, preparations have been made in other hospitals of Delhi like Deendayal Hospital, Lok Nayak Hospital, and Rajiv Gandhi Super Specialty Hospital.

"A total of 37 thousand beds have been arranged for by the Delhi Government in these hospitals. At present, 15,000 beds have been made operational. We can double the number of beds overnight if needed, but as the number of hospitalized patients is so less at present, the need to increase the number of beds is not taken into consideration.

BJP forced EC change party registration norms: AAP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI/PUNJAB

 A^{AP} national spokesperson Raghav Chadha alleged that the Election Commission is making major changes in the process ing major changes in the process of registration of the political parties under the pressure of the BJP to prevent the formation of the Aam Aadmi Party government in Punjab. "The Election Commission is reducing the 30 day objection period to 7 days to make special changes for the reg make special changes for the registration of a special political party. Despite the imposition of the code of conduct, the EC is going to register this political party just 25 days before the election. What was the need to change the laws overnight to register a particular political party," he asked? Chadha further said "It is for the first time in India's history that the Election Commission of India, the body responsible for upholding our democracy by conducting free and fair elections, is providing special treatment by bringing about two major changes in the registration process of a

'This is the same election commission whose sole responsibility is to establish a fair and democratically elected government in our country, a body which we consider to be a crucial pillar of Indian democracy. I will first elaborate on the two changes that the EC is introducing and later go into the politics and power play of the matter," he

He said "The two changes that Election Commission of India is bringing about includes: one, there is a month-long objection period prior to the registration of any political party in India, during which people can raise their grievances and objections against the establishment of said political party to the Election Commission.

This period lasts 30 days. However, giving special treatment this time, the Election Commission has shortened this objection period to a mere 7 days, reducing it by more than one-third of the original timeframe, to accelerate the registration of a special party."

Green cover of Delhi is up by 18 sqkm: Rai

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

reen cover of Delhi has Gincreased from 21.88 percent to 23.06 per cent in the last two-year, Delhi Government said on Thursday. Environment Minister Gopal Rai said, "Green Cover of Delhi has increased by almost 18 sq km. The Union Environment Minister released the State of Forest Report (SFR)-2021 today. The report has been prepared by Forest Survey of India, Union Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change. As per this report, Green Cover of Delhi has increased by almost 18 sq km in comparison to SFR 2019.

He added, The tree cover of Delhi as per SFR 2019 was 129 sq km which has now increased to 147 sq km that means there is an increase of 18 sq km within 2 years. The overall green cover (Forest cover + Tree cover) is now 342 sq km (as per SFR 2021) which was earlier 324.44 sq km. Thus, there is a net increment of 17.5 sq km in green

BSF Commandant, 3 others held in ₹125 cr tender cheating case

 \mathbf{I}^{n} a breakthrough, a Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Gurugram police have arrested a Border Security Force (BSF) Commandant his wife, sister and one other man for allegedly cheating of Rs 125 crore in the name of getting a construction tender at the National Security Guard (NSG) campus Manesar in Gurugram.

The police said on Thursday, a total of 13.81 crores and 6 highend vehicles (Tata Harrier, Rangerover, Jeep Compass, BMW, Safari and Volvo) were recovered from his possession.

The culprits have been identified as BSF Deputy Commandant Praveen Yadav, his wife Mamta Yadav, sister Rituraj Yadav who was a manager at a private bank, and Dinesh. According to the police, ?the complainant Monesh Israni and three others filed separate written complaints to the Deputy

Manesar, Gurugram on January 8. Israni told the police that Praveen Yadav, posing as the Deputy Commandant, Dinesh Mohan Sorkhi and Kamal Singh in connivance with their other associates had cheated them of Rs 125 crore in the name of getting the construction tender of Perifill Road, STP and housing flats in the NSG campus Manesar.

Acting promptly, Commissioner of Gurugram police constitutes an SIT led by ACP (crime), Preet Pal Sangwan including Inspector Sandeep Kumar, Incharge Manesar crime branch who with the held of lead inputs arrested the alleged criminal on Thursday.

During police interrogation, they disclosed that Yadav was the mastermind of this fraud. Yadav works as a Deputy Commandant in the BSF and was on deputation and was stationed till the last year-2021 in the NSG campus

8 Delhi Police personnel awarded Home Minister's Medal Training), Inspector Ravinder Kumar Verma, Dilip Kumar Shukla & Sita Ram Arya (Indoor Training), Sub Inspector (SI) Bushpender Kumar

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Delhi Police's eight personnel have been awarded the "Union Home Minister's Medal for Excellence in Police Training' for the year 2020-21.

According to a statement released by the Public Relation Office of Delhi Police, the eight police personnel have been selected in recognition of their excellent work towards imparting training in Delhi Police Academy's different campuses to produce good officers and personnel in different fields. "They have been selected for

their commendable training techniques in Outdoor (Drill and Physical Activities), Indoor (Law, Police Science, Scientific & Forensic Investigation and Cyber Proficiency) and other such



training modules. They have

been steadfast in developing

and updating training tech-

niques to suit the evolving

aspects of policing," the state-







Bisht, Assistant Commissioner

of Police (ACP), Surender Singh

Rathee, ACP (Outdoor

ment read. According to the police, the awardees are Kamlesh

SI Satva Narain

and support staff of police training institutions of State and Central Police Forces to promote the quality of training in the country,

Training).

(SI) Pushpender Kumar

(Outdoor Training), Sl

Satya Narain Sain and

Head Constable (HC) Satender Singh (Outdoor

The Ministry of Home Affairs has insti-

tuted the "Union Home

Minister's Medal for

Excellence in Police

Training" for motivating

and awarding the trainers

BJP ruled MCDs not carrying out development work, says AAP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) accused the BJP ruled MCDs of not carrying out any development work despite taking money from MLA-Local Development

AAP senior leader and MLA Somnath Bharti said that the Delhi government has widened and repaired many roads that come under Public Works Department but cannot improve roads that come under Municipal Corporation of

Infant dies during treatment in hospital, family cries negligence

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

The parents of a two month old infant on Thursday alleged that their boy died due to negligence on part of doctors at Paramjeet Chikitsha Kendar in Outer Delhi during the course of treatment. According to a senior police official, on Wednesday at 10.43 PM, a police control room (PCR) call was received regarding the death of a male child during treatment at Paramjeet Chikitsha Kendar,

"On reaching the hospital, complainant Ankit gave a written complaint to them alleging that on October 28, 2021, his wife delivered a male baby at Paramjeet Chikitsha Kendar. On January 12, 2022, the baby was admitted to the same hospital for treatment of cold and vomiting but during the course of treatment, the infant died," said the senior police official. "The father and relative

then took the infant to a private hospital and they advised for higher centre and subsequently the child was taken to SRHC hospital in Narela," said police. The father and relatives of

the deceased are claiming negligence act on the part of doctors of Paramjeet Chikitsha Kendar and are willing to take further legal action, said police.

Petrol pump looting plan thwarted, 5 held

Gurugram: A team of the New Colony Police Station of the Gurugram police have arrested 5 people who were planning a petrol pump robbery and also planned to execute a decoity of Rs 1 crore at a house of the Faridabad based businessman on Thursday.The police also recovered 1 pistol and 1 cartridge, 1 Breeza car, 1 Knife and an Iron rod from the arrested people. The five arrested people were identified as Anuj Kadyan, Ajay, Vinesh and Ravinder are all residents of different districts of Haryana while Wazid a resident of Úttar Pradesh.

As per the information received, Police received a tip-off from an informer that some suspicious people were planning a petrol pump robbery.

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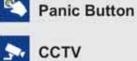
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Arvind Kejriwal Chief Minister, Delhi

in the august presence of Kailash Gahlot

Transport Minister, Delhi

Friday, 14th January 2022 at 12 noon

Venue: Rajghat Cluster Bus Depot



दिल्ली सरकार

Transport Department, Government of NCT of Delhi

Cong fields Unnao rape survivor's mom, anti-CAA activists in UP

40% women candidates while another 40% are youth, says Priyanka

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

Going ahead with its 'Ladki Hoon Lad Sakti Hoon' campaign, the Congress on Thursday named the mother of the Unnao rape victim, an anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) activist, an Asha worker and female journalists as its candidates in the party's first list of 125 candidates

including 50 women for the upcoming Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls, spearheaded by general secretary Priyanka

Releasing the list at a Press conference on Thursday, Privanka said the inclusion of a number of women who suffered injustice as contestants sends a "new message" that those "who face injustice have the power to fight back for their

Priyanka said the Congress is making a new beginning by fielding 40 percent women candidates while another 40 percent are youth.

"Congress in UP will give you this power, support and help you in every possible way so that you can fight your battle. Come into politics, fight for your rights by being part of the power structure," Priyanka said at the AICC press confer-

Asha Singh, mother of the rape victim, has been fielded from the Unnao Assembly seat



party spokesperson in Uttar Pradesh, Sadaf Jafar, from the Lucknow central seat.

The 2017 Unnao gang rape incident had made headlines as Singh Sengar was not only convicted for sexually assaulting a 17-year-old victim, but also was found to be involved in the death of her father.

Soon after the list was released, former party president Rahul Gandhi tweeted, "In Unnao, the one with whose daughter the BJP did injustice. now she will become the face of justice — will fight and win!#Election2022."

Asha worker and activist Poonam Pandey, who fought for the rights of Asha workers, has been fielded from Shahjahanpur and Ram Raj Gond, a tribal leader who fought for the rights of the Adivasis in Sonbhadra, from the Ponga constituency.

"I don't see this as creating new vote bank of young women. I see this as empowering women to ask for their rights and stand up for themselves. They are 50 percent of the population, and frankly, it is absolutely their right to participate in politics," Priyanka said when asked if the Congress was creating a new constituency of women voters in these elections.

Exuberating confidence, Priyanka who is leading from front in the State as in-charge, said Congress would like to strengthen its organisation and work towards dislodging the Yogi Adityanath government.

"Today, the government in Uttar Pradesh is a dictatorial government," Priyanka said, adding the party would be open to supporting a non-BJP alliance post poll if the need

Apart from fielding Pradesh Congress Committee chief Ajay Kumar Lallu (Tamkuhi Raj), legislature party

(Rampur Khas) and Louise Khurshid (Farrukhabad), the party has given tickets to journalists, actors and social workers who have struggled on the

streets for their rights. Journalist Pankhuri Pathak has been given ticket to contest from Noida while former Union Minister Salman Khurshid's wife Louise Khurshid will contest from

A ticket from Umbha has been given to the leader who raised her voice for the Sonbhadra massacre victims.

Farrukhabad.

CISF men manning Delhi Metro to get booster shots by Jan 20

 $A^{
m mid}$ the surge of Covid-19 cases in the paramilitary ranks, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has begun administration of booster vaccine shots to its person-

Out of the 12,000 CISF personnel engaged in securing the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation corridors in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Harvana, 2,500 personnel have been administered the booster doses. The CISF is also securing the airport in the national capital and elsewhere.

The CISF is securing mass transit corridors in Delhi-NCR and facilitating safe mass rapid transit of 35 lakh passengers on a daily basis and are at the frontline in terms of vulnerability and exposure to Covid-19 due to contact with passen-

gers.
"To combat raging wave of Covid Pandemic and to ensure safety and good health of its personnel performing duties at Delhi Metro, a special drive camp for administering Covid vaccine booster has been organised at Shastri Park campus of CISF unit DMRC," the CISF said in a statement.

The camp was inaugurated on Sunday and a team of doc-



tors from East Delhi District along with civil defence volunteers are running two centers for administration of booster dose to CISF personnel.

The CISF aims to cover all eligible personnel of DMRC under the protection of the booster vaccine by January 20. At the Shastri Park camp

here, an additional counter for vaccination of eligible wards (children between age 15-18) of personnel has also been opened which is also witnessing good turnout, it said.

'The CISF, being a Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) or

paramilitary force, with a pan India presence and the largest public interface, has already vaccinated over 9,000 of its personnel with the booster dose across the country to enhance protection against Covid-19 infection," it further said.

The booster dose vaccination drive is running across all the 353 CISF Units, including

The booster dose vaccination drive seeks to ensure that 100 percent eligible personnel are inoculated against the deadly viral disease at the

WHO cautions against concurrent outbreaks of Covid, other diseases

PNS NEW DELHI

World Health The World Health Organization (WHO) has cautioned and urged for preparedness against concurrent outbreaks of Covid-19 and other respiratory diseases during the coming spring.

Maria van Kerkhove from WHO's Health Emergencies program, on Wednesday said at a press briefing that this could happen as population mixing increases, and as other respiratory pathogens such as influenza circulate in spring.

More than 15 million new

Covid-19 cases were reported to WHO from around the world last week, by far the most cases reported in a single week. This has been driven by "the Omicron variant rapidly replacing Delta in almost all countries," according to WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

Meanwhile, the number of weekly reported deaths has remained stable since October



While the number of patients being hospitalised is increasing in most countries, it is not at the level seen in previous waves. That is possibly due to the reduced severity of Omicron and widespread immunity from vaccination or

previous infection, he said. 'Let's be clear: while Omicron causes less severe disease than Delta, it remains a dangerous virus, particularly for those who are unvaccinated," said the WHO

The organisation has constantly warned that the sheer volume of cases is putting a heavy burden on healthcare "We will have to see what

happens as this virus evolves," said Van Kerkhove, warning of future outbreaks among those who are unvaccinated and not well protected. Severe disease and death

can be reduced by vaccination, as well as by improving clinical care, she added. However, this does depend on the nature

Hurt religious sentiments among major triggers

for ads found 'offending' in last 3 years: ASCI

CBI arrests DSIIDC manager, middleman for taking bribe

PNS NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Thursday said it has arrested a Senior Manager, Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (DSllDC), Delhi and a private person for demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 1.7 lakh from the complainant.

A case was registered on a complaint against the accused SK Singh, Senior Manager, DSllDC. Besides Singh, the CBI also arrested one Subhash, a private person, the CBI said in a statement. It was alleged that the com-

plainant was running a business for manufacturing cream separator machines from a Shed in Mangolpuri, Delhi which was allotted to him by DSllDC. It was further alleged that the public servant demanded a bribe from the complainant for not sealing his shed on account of alleged encroachment and directed the complainant to deliver the bribe money to a private person in Karol Bagh here, it said.

The CBI laid a trap and caught the accused while



THE ACCUSED WHILE ACCEPTING A BRIBE OF ₹1,70,000 FROM THE COMPLAINANT

accepting a bribe of Rs 1,70,000 from the complainant.

"Searches are being conducted today at the premises of the accused in Delhi. Both the arrested accused will be produced tomorrow before the Competent Court at Delhi," it

Forest cover in Himalayan States, including NE, declined: Forest report '21

New Delhi: Forest cover in the 140 hill districts of the country has shown a decrease of 902 sq km (0.32 per cent) with all eight states of the northeast region also showing a decline, as per the India State of Forest released on Thursday

As per the current assessment, the total forest cover in the hill districts is 2,83,104 sq km, which is 40.17 per cent of the total geographical area of these districts. Hill districts are those which have 2/3rd area as

Arunachal Pradesh, that has 16 hill districts, has shown a loss of 257 sq km forest cover compared to 2019 assessmen, Assam's three hill district (- 107 sq km), Manipur's nine hill districts (- 249 sq kms), Mizoram's eight hill districts (- 186 sq km), Meghalaya's seven hill districts (- 73 km), Nagaland's 11 districts (- 235 sq km), Sikkim's four districts (- 1 sq km), and Tripura's four districts (- 4 sq

In the case of the other districts in the Himalayan states and UTs, not all have shown decline. West Bengal's sole district has shown a slight decline (- 18 sq km), Jammu &

Kashmir's 22 districts (29 sq km), Ladakh's two districts (18 sq km), Uttarakhand's 13 hill districts (2 sq km) and Himachal Pradesh's 12 districts (9 sq km).

sq km, which is 64.66 per cent of its area. The current assessment shows a decrease of forest cover to the extent of 1,020 sq km (0.60 per cent) in the

Incidentally, Assam, as a whole, has shown smaller negative change (- 15 sq km) compared to just three of its hill districts (- 107 sq km).

The ISFR2021 divides forests into distinct categories according to density of canopy: very dense forest (VDF), moderately dense forest (MDF) and open forest (Open). India is blessed with a multitude of forests that vary with altitude and the ISFR2021 has also brought out the forest cover data according to altitude with respect to the total geographical area of the country at that

At 0-500 m altitude, of the 23,29,321 sq km, as much as 39,456 sq km is VDF, 1,51,917 sq km is MDF and 1,90,571 sq

km is open, totalling to 3,81,944 sq km of forest cover. Similarly, at 500-1,000 m altitude, of the total 541,747 sq

km, as much as 25,956 sq km is VDF, 94,259 sq km is MDF Total forest cover in the and 77,747 sq km is open, mak-Of the 1,17,835 sq km

between 1,000-2,000 m altitude, the forest cover is 15,743 sq km is VDF, 34,599 sq km is MDF and 75,261 sq km open to make the total 75,261

So is with the 2,000-3,000m altitude, of the 56,891 sq km, the forest cover is divided as 15,241 sq km is VDF, 18,500 sq km MDF and 7,162 sq km open to make 40,903 sq km total forest cover.

And for, 3,000-4,000 m altitude, of the total 59,298 sq km, the forest cover is 3,356 sq km is VDF), 7,458 sq km MDF and 6,304 sq km open to total 17,138 sq km forest cover.

Last, for altitude above 4,000 m, of the total 1,82,377 sq km, an area of 27 sq km is VDF, 157 is MDF and 417 is open, to total 601 sq kms of forest cover, the ISFR 2021 data

Afeeling of a conspiracy against their faith and for "hurting religious sentiments" complaints against advertisements, as per a study conducted by the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI).

PNS NEW DELHI

Taking note of what upsets Indians most about ads, the ASCI has conducted a study and come out with a report titled 'What India takes offence to' detailing six trends that offend the sensibilities of Indian consumers. For the report, ASCI mapped 1,759 complaints against 488 advertisements received in the last three years.

Last year, the ASCI found itself flooded with scathing complaints against an advertisement of Mohey Manyavar showing Bollywood actress Bhatt portraying 'Kanyadaan' as an oppressive practice and suggesting Kanyamaan' as an alternative.

The complainant said that Mohey Manyavar is falsely projecting Hindu religion as regressive and hurting Hindu religious sentiments by mocking Indian culture and traditions like Kanyaadan.

Specifying instances of ads found offensive for hurting said the ad's attempt at portraying the wedding ritual of 'kanyadaan' as an oppressive practise was deemed to be mocking religion, while the use of the phrase 'upar wala' in an ad by ICICI Bank was seen as promotion of Islam by a complainant who felt there is no upar wala' in Sanatan dharma.

The ASCI report comes at a time when concerns are being raised over majoritarianism, and how it is making advertisers, including multi-billion corporations, buckle under pressure if there is a controversy over some campaign. Hurting religious sentiments continues to be a criminal offence in the liberal democracy and calls have been made to repeal it.

Campaigns deemed to be crossing cultural boundaries" by mocking what is considered sacred and those showing the youth and women in an individualistic way were also among the major triggers that



led people to complain, the A complainant is driven by a feeling that religious identity is constantly under attack, and is under the threat of becoming diffused or diluted, the report said, pointing out that they believe such ads are part of a conspiracy against their religion.

The underlying issue, which triggers complaints of the cultural kind, was specified as fear of new, emerging social structures and the complainant is generally self-righteous and

antagonistic in her tonality, as per the report. "Complainants here con-

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sider themselves the gatekeepers of tradition. As long as the change depicted celebrates or makes tradition grander, they are fine by it, but the moment there is a discontinuity in how things are supposed to be, they are angered," the report said.

Sharing of ice cream by a woman with a stranger, and not with the companion she is with, was found to be offensive because they feel this is not how a woman should behave in a traditional relationship, the report said, citing an instance under this category.

In another advertisement showing two women talking about Cars24's promise that you can test drive the car and return it with full refund in seven days if it doesn't work for you has upset a section of men. In the ad, the women say there should be such a policy for husbands, too. "Will same return policy be taken so laughingly as this one if we reverse the #gender? (sic)" asks a com-

Twitter announces initiatives for voters ahead of upcoming elections

PNS NEW DELHI

head of the Assembly elec-Ations 2022, micro-blogging site Twitter on Thursday announced a series of initiatives to empower citizens with the right knowledge before they cast their vote. Twitter said these initiatives, powered by an open internet, are directed towards not just ensuring a high voter turnout, but also aiding in ensuring voters are involved, engaged and informed throughout the election cycle, and that everyone with the right to vote is a

'jagruk voter.' "Twitter is what's happening, and events of political and civic significance always find a place among the conversations on the service," Payal Kamat, Public



Policy and Government, Twitter India, said in a statement.

"In line with that, we have been working in partnership with official authorities, including the Election Commission of India to empower every #JagrukVoter on Twitter, and we will continue to harness the power of the Open Internet to strengthen civic dialogue and encourage quality participation this election season,'

Kamat added.

In the first line up of initiatives, Twitter said it will be

launching a customized emoji which will further be supported with a notification and reminder mechanism which will allow people to voluntarily sign-up for reminders on the day voting starts. A voter education quiz will

be aimed at engaging people in Q&As with necessary facts about the polls. Twitter will also be expanding its dedicated search prompt, powered by the Election Commission of India (@ECISVEEP) to provide people with real time updates and developments on the elections from 'credible' and 'authoritative' sources.

In addition to English, the Search Prompt will be available in Hindi, Punjabi, and Konkani, and will be supported by several hashtags

AITUC condemns deal between Govt and Vodafone Idea

PNS NEW DELHI

The Communist Party of The Communist Tarry
India's trade union AITUC on Thursday urged the Central Government to withdraw from taking shares in private telecom companies having large tax

Citing the Vodafone Idea (Vi) move to issue the Government 35.8% shares to swap its around two lakh crore rupees dues, the AITUC national secretariat termed it as a criminal and anti-people step when the Government's telecom companies like BSNL and MTNL are facing lack of resources and millions of people are starving in the country. "Why this largesse to these TSPs (telecom service

Government's own BSNL and MTNL are starved to death? Why buy shares of a bankrupt company when the Government swears by the philosophy "the government has no business to be in business"? Why give up what is due to the Government by way of taxes and then float the insidious scheme like the National Monetization Pipeline(NMP) allegedly to raise funds for new infrastructure? What if the corporates lapping up Government assets coming out of the NMP turn around saying we cannot pay the agreed lease rent? Will the government then shamelessly announce the mother of all reforms?

"AITUC condemns this

deal as a criminal act on the part of the Government. The Government has no right to go about waiving off taxes like this when multitude of our people are reeling under pathetic living conditions. We demand that the Government simply withdraw this anti-people step,

said AITUC in a statement. Soon after Vodafone's deci-

sion to allot 35.5 percent shares to Government in lieu of dues in spectrum usage fee and sharing of revenue per call, Tata Telesevices also offered 9.5 percent shares to Government to liquidate their dues of more than Rs.12,500 crore. Only Airtel agreed on Government offer for four year moratorium on dues payment with interest.

Degree denial to Prez draws flak in Kerala | 1st-phase nomination for

Guv's offer to honour Prez with D.Litt was denounced by KU syndicate members

The refusal by the Kerala University syndicate to honor President Ram Nath Kovind with an honorary D Litt during the latter's visit to the State last month has shocked educationists, cultural icons and literary figures.

It is said that when the Maharaja of Travancore decided to set up an independent Travancore University in 1937, C P Ramaswami Aiyar, the then Diwan of the princely State wrote to Albert Einstein asking him to join the new University as a professor on a monthly pay of ₹6,000/-. But the Nobel laureate preferred to join Princeton for reasons known to him only. That was the era of visionaries like Aiyar who

always dreamt and thought big.

If the recent letter by V P Mahadevan Pillai, the present Vice Chancellor of Kerala

Mohammed Khan (the Governor) reaches Aiyar, the latter would have turned in his grave, said R Sanjayan, director, Bharathiya Vichara Kendra, Kerala's leading think tank on socio-political-cultural issues.

Governor Arif Mohammed Khan while interacting with the media the other day said that the Vice Chancellor's handwritten note shocked him because of the kind of language and the spelling mistakes. . Sources close to the

Governor Arif Mohammed Khan, said that he was aghast to learn that the University has not held its annual convocations for decades. As a sign of atonement, the Governor decided to hold the convocation in a grand style and got in touch with President of India and requested him to be the chief guest of the function. The President obliged the Governor



who summoned the vice chancellor to Raj Bhavan and asked him to make arrangements for the convocation and get the syndicate pass a mandatory resolution to honor the President with the D Litt. But the syndicate members, all of them nominees of the CPI(M)-led Government decided not to honor the President.

The vice-chancellor, a CPI(M) appointee, too toed the party line and the plans of the Governor came a cropper. "The issue is not honoring the President of India. But the University of Kerala lost a chance to honor itself by the

The universities in the State, Kerala, MG, CUSAT, Kannur, Sree Sankara Sanskrit

University, Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences (KUFOS), Calicut and Kannur have been politicized and communalized beyond imagination, according to Prof C I Issac, member, Indian Council of Historical Research. "It is an unconscionable mistake taken by hardcore politicians blinded by political power. I can say that they were challenging the Constitution of India by refusing to honor the First Citizen of the Country," said Prof Issac.

Prof Issac, a widely respected educationist did not mince words when he came down heavily on politicians of all hue and cry. "The appointments of vice chancellors in the universities in Kerala are based on caste, communal and political lines. The Kerala University

vice-chancellor is appointed from Hindus while Mahatma Gandhi University post is meant for Christians. Calicut and Kannur Universities are for Muslims representing SDPI and PFI. This is a sad state of affairs," said Issac.

Both Sanjayan and Issac pointed out that it was the State Committee of the CPI(M) that decides who becomes the heads of university and cultural organisations. "I was reading a series of articles in local media about the election process of KUFOS that said the person approved by the State Committee would be appointed as the Vice Chancellor. Have you heard of such a thing anywhere in the country?" asked Sanjayan.

Pillai, the vice chancellor, opted the easier way out by issuing a statement in which he said that he preferred to be 'careful with the spelling and

UP Assembly polls today

PNS LUCKNOW

With political parties grappling in the selection of candidates for the 403 Assembly seats in the State, the Election Commission of India (ECI) will set the ball rolling for the 7- phase crucial Assembly polls as a nomination for the first phase begins tomorrow.

Termed as a semi-final before the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, UP is witnessing a wide-scale defection in all the major political parties, with three Cabinet Ministers of the Yogi Adityanath Government resigning and like to join the Samajwadi Party. Several MLAs from BJP, SP, and Congress too were joining other political parties.

On the other hand, ECI will issue notification for the first phase of polls in 58 Assembly segments covering 11 districts in western UP on Friday at 1100 hours to kick start the poll process.
State Chief Electoral

Officer (CEO) Ajay Kumar Shukla here on Thursday said that all preparation for the issuance of notification for the first phase has been completed. "Nominations in these 58 assembly seats will commence with strictly following Covid norms and guidelines," he said. Already over 120 compa-

nies of Central forces have reached UP to maintain law and order during the polls.

ECI has announced a 7-

BSP to field Noman **Masood from Gangoh** PNS LUCKNOW Sayeed has been fielded by the

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) supremo Mayawati on Thursday announced two candidates, including former Congressman Imran Masood's brother, for western Uttar Pradesh in the upcoming polls. In a tweet, the BSP chief

announced Salman Sayeed as the party's candidate from Charthawal and Noman Masood from Gangoh Assembly constituencies. "Salman Sayeed, son of former Uttar Pradesh home minister Saiduzzaman, met the BSP president late on Wednesday evening and joined the BSP after quitting the Congress.

phase poll this time similar to 2017 polls though the duration has been reduced by 5 days. In 2017, the poll dates were announced on January 4, and results were declared on March 11. But this time, the polls were announced on January 8 and results would be declared on March 10.

The poll process will commence from January 14, with the issuance of notification for the first phase starting from western UP on January 14 where polling will be held on

BSP as its candidate from Charthawal," Mayawati tweeted in Hindi.

In a related tweet, she wrote, "Noman Masood, nephew of former union minister Rashid Masood and brother of Imran Masood also joined the BSP yesterday (Wednesday) leaving the Lok Dal. The BSP chief has made him the candidate of her party from the Gangoh Assembly seat." Imran Masood had recently quit the Congress and

Meanwhile the BSP has already decided at least 300 of its total 403 candidates for Uttar Pradesh.

joined the Samajwadi Party.

The polling dates for UP re February 10,14, 20, 23, 27 March 3, and 7. Counting of votes for all 403 seats will be held on March 10. A total of 58 assembly seg-

ments will go to the polls in the first phase of 11 districts of Shamli, Meerut, Muzaffarnagar, Baghpat, Meerut Hapur, Ghaziabad, Bulandshahr, Mathura, Agra, and Aligarh.

In the 2017 elections, BJP had won 53 seats of these 58 assembly segments while SP and BSP won 2 each and RLD one.

NIA weakening Malegaon blast case, safeguarding all accused, says Cong

T N RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

With as many as 16 'important witnesses' having already turned 'hostile' in the 2008 Malegaon blasts cases, the Maharashtra Congress on Thursday accused the NIA of 'weakening' the case and 'not prosecuting all the accused with honesty and sincerity'.

In a letter shot off to the Maharashtra Anti Terrorism Squad (ATS) chief Vineet Agrawal, State Congress' Working president Mohd. Arif Naseem Khan recalled that the ATS, under its martyred chief Hemant Karkare, had 'cracked' the Malegaon blasts case, arrested prime accused Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur and Lt Col Prasad Shrikant Purohit and filed a charge-sheet in the trial court.

"Subsequently, the NIA took over the case and filed a supplementary charge-sheet and exonerated Sadhivi Pragya at the behest of the Central government and dropped MCOCA charges against the case and has in the process weakened the case," Naseem Khan said.

In a serious accusation masde against the central investigating agency, Khan said: "The NIA is not prosecuting all the accused with honesty and sincerity. (Out of 223 witnesses, 16 important accused have more witnesses are left to be accused. These witnesses are crucial. They need to be protected," the Congress leader

"The NIA has not challenged any order passed in favour of the accused in higher court which shows its intentions clearly. Strict supervision by the ATS is a must for a

fair trial and effective prosecution, since the ATS had recorded the statements of maximum and conducted most part of the investigations," Khan wrote in his letter to the State ATS chief.

"So that the guilty can be punished and justice can be delivered to the public at large and through your action, a tribute will be paid to the martyred ATS chief Hemant Karkare," Khan wrote.

It may be recalled that an improvised explosive kept under the seat of a LML Freedom motor-bicycle had exploded between Bhikku Chowk and Anjuman Chowk, near Noorani Masjid, at Malegaon in north Maharashtra, on the night of September 29, 2008, leaving six persons dead and injuring

Based on a strong case against the accused by the ATS which investigated the case initially before the NIA took over the case a Mumbai-based special court had on October 30, 2018 framed charges against Lt Col Prasad Shrikant Purohit, Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur and five other accused under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) and various other sections of the IPC for their alleged involvement in the 2008 blasts.

In his letter to the State ATS chief, Khan stated: "It influence of the accused and are deliberately taking the names of the BJP-RSS people to get mileage in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections and defame the Maharashtra government and the ATS, as Prosecution Witness no 220 went beyond what was recorded in his earlier statements by mentioning the name of (UP

minister) (Adityanath) etc and the irony is that Special Public Prosecutor did not take objection on it".

Khan went on to say that after the prosecution witness no 220, a leading national television channel went to town confirming that the witness had taken the name of UP chief Yogi Adityanath's name.

Khan said that "the ATS as an investigation agency is being maligned as to be anti-Hindu' and that under the circumstances to maintain the trust of public in ATS and on the Maharashtra government, it was necessary that ATS deployed its officers who were part of the investigations in the case to attend the court which is hearing the case on a day-to-

Seven key accused, including Lt Col Purohit and Sadhvi Pragya, are being tried under sections 16 (committing a terror act) and 18 (criminal conspiracy) of the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), and sections 120(b) (punishment of criminal conspiracy), 302 (murder), 307 (attempt to murder) and 326 (intentionally causing harm to others) of the IPC. They were framed harges under the Explosives Substances Act. On December 27, 2017, a

Special NIA court had dropped Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime (MCOCA) against Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur, Lt Col Prasad Purohit and five other key accused in the much-discussed case. However, the NIA court observed that it could not exonerate Sadhvi Pragya from the case as her motorbike has



A pilgrim taking a holy dip at Gangasagar on the occasion of 'Makar Sankranti', in South 24 Pargana district of West Bengal, on Thursday



DELHI POLLUTION CONTROL COMMITTEE

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

https://www.dpcc.delhigovt.nic.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

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



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

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

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

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

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

- a. Choose a cleaner commute share a ride to work or use public transportation or walk or
- b. People whose positions allow them to work from home should work from home.
- c. Do not use coal and wood for heating purposes.
- d. Individual house owners may provide electric heaters (during winters) to security staff to avoid open burning.

a) Children, the elderly and those with respiratory, cardiovascular, cerebrovascular or other

chronic diseases stay indoors as much as possible, and to avoid outdoor activities.

e. Combine errands and reduce trips. Walk to errand when possible. f. Do not burn garbage, plastics and other discarded items.

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

Member Secretary (DPCC)

up in Goa to defeat BJP: Didi to Cong **Panaji:** Trinamool Congress leader's statements, Moitra said (TMC) leader Mahua Moitra the fight in Goa is between the on Thursday hit out at the BJP and anti-BJP forces. "The anti-BJP forces in Congress, saying it should

TMC ready to tie

realise that its leaders are not "emperors of India" and added that had the grand old party discharged its duty well in Goa, there was no need for the TMC to enter the coastal State's poll fray to defeat the ruling

She said the TMC is ready for an alliance in Goa as defeating the BJP is the "need of the hour", but added that the Congress should get off its "high horse" and wake up to its depleted strength.

Moitra was reacting to senior Congress leader P Chidamabaram's assertion made earlier in the day that the Congress and the BJP are the two main contestants in Goa and if the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the TMC fielded candidates and secured some votes in the upcoming assembly polls, in effect they will be splitting the non-BJP vote.

In an interview to PTI, Chidambaram also said that the TMC and the AAP do not have cadre base in constituencies in Goa and they attempt to build their parties through

Referring to the Congress

Goa today are Congress, AAP and TMC. Now, this is a fight between them. Neither of them can stake a claim that we are the only ones in the fray," she Moitra, who is TMC's

desk-in-charge for Goa, said that all the three parties are in the fray in Goa, and this is the reality that the Congress should wake up to.
"I think that it is important

for people to realise that if Congress had done its job, there was no need for us (TMC) to be here. We are here because Congress could not do their job. Congress is a platform which is not adequate enough to defeat the BJP," she added.

The TMC is ready for an alliance, Moitra said, adding, "We are saying come to the table and talk to us to see how we can defeat the BJP. This is the need of the hour.'

She said the people of Goan will respect the fact that the TMC is not sitting on a high horse and that the party has no ego. "TMC is saying if everybody come together we can defeat the BJP," she PTI

Cong can't win Goa polls on its own

Raut, who had held a round of discussions with AICC in-Chodankar, said he had placed a proposal that the Congress allies. He said the 10 assembly won elections in the past 50

Shiv Sena:

New Delhi: The Shiv Sena is upset at being given a cold shoulder by the Congress over its proposal to repeat the Maharashtra coalition experiment in the Goa Assembly

elections. Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut on Thursday said the political situation it Goa is such that the Congress cannot go beyond single digit if it contests the assembly polls in the coastal state on its own.

"The Congress has only three MLAs in Goa. The party's MLAs have deserted it enmasse. Key political parties, we (Shiv Sena and NCP) had offered to support the Congress in its difficult times. But I don't know what the Congress is thinking. It cannot cross the single digit mark if it contests alone," Raut told reporters here.

charge of Goa Dinesh Gundurao, CLP leader Digambar Kamat and Goa Congress chief Girish contest on 30 of the 40 assembly seats and leave the rest for its seats, where Congress has not years, could be allocated to Shiv Sena, NCP and Goa Forward

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Home truth

The COVID-19 test results from home kits could throw up false negatives

he Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) says it is making available a range of COVID-19 testing kits with a definite purpose. It feels that easily available and cheap testing options will help in the early detection of symptomatic cases, infection among the infirm and those with co-morbidities. It is a well-intentioned move that has some flip sides considering most Indians are indifferent to following science protocols and could make a meal out of the testing kits if they were freely available. The ICMR has approved 740 test kits, of which 580 are made in India. They range from RT-PCR tests, rapid antigen tests and home antigen tests. At the same time, the ICMR insists that asymptomatic contacts of a laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 case need not undergo testing unless they are above 60 or have underlying medical conditions. Now, the issues. There are several problems with home testing. People buy test kits and test themselves unnecessarily or, without knowing that the home test results could throw up false negatives, will refrain from going in for RT-PCR testing. The highly dangerous first two waves saw many people not reporting symptomatic positive cases.

The propensity to be silent about positive cases will now be more, particularly when home testing gives a positive result but the person is asymptomatic. Asymptomatic patients, whether home tested or not, would not know if their infection can take a serious turn in the absence of the RT-PCR result that tells them the CT value (level of infection). Needless to say, home testing is a serious and responsible proposition and the fact needs to be drilled into people through intensive national campaigns.

The second issue relates to the easing of norms for testing. It is now a universal belief that the Omicron

variant is highly transmissible but low on infection. Hospitalisations and deaths, though, continue to occur. Unless all positive cases are compulsorily sent for genome sequencing, we will not know which variants are at work in the current wave. Absence of such information can hamper future preparations and research. A guideline is necessary to ensure that those symptomatic people whose home tests show negative mandatorily get a confirmatory RT-PCR test done. The relaxation of norms for exit testing should also be evaluated again. At present, isolation and precautions for the asymptomatic can be discontinued between a week and 10 days after the first positive viral test, without having to undergo another RT-PCR test. In the case of symptomatic patients, a testbased strategy is in operation. Research shows that prolonged shedding of the viable virus, beyond the first 10 days after its onset, is usually noticed in immunocompromised patients. However, cases have been detected where people with the mild disease also have remained replication-competent for longer periods. Without exit testing, how do we handle this aspect of the infection? The need is to strike a balance between symptom-based and testing-based strategies for ending the isolation of most patients.



People walk through a snow-covered valley at Jahalman village, in Lahual-Spit

Caution ahead

The conduct of Assembly elections in pandemic times promises to be a tough ride for the EC

■ ith the recent announcement of dates for the Assembly polls in five States — Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Manipur, Goa and Punjab — the Election Commission of India may have flagged the start of the race at the hustings, but more likely than not it's going to be nothing short of an obstacle course. A total of 690 Assembly constituencies (403 seats in UP, 117 in Punjab, 70 in Uttarakhand, 60 in Manipur and 40 in Goa) will go to polls this time. For its part, the poll panel has done basic preparations to ensure COVID-safe elections, hassle-free voter experience and maximum voter participation. The commission members visited the poll-bound



States to review preparations, met senior health officials there and have been working diligently to ensure pandemic incident-free elections. Since the COVID situation is very dynamic, all Central and State officials on election duty have been directed to be doubly vaccinated. All EC officials and employees will be treated like frontline workers and also vaccinated with the booster (or precautionary) dose. Another happy development is that physical campaigns have been banned till January 15 as of now, and a decision on the rest of the canvassing duration will be taken after reviewing the situation.

It sounds meticulously planned but there is many a slip between the cup and the lip; the challenges lie in implementation of these plans. The cases of COVID-19, especially of its latest and highly transmissible Omicron variant, have again started spreading like wildfire through the nation. The pandemic cases in Punjab and UP have gone up 10-fold in about 10 days and Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur have registered a five-fold rise during the same period. Owing to the spiralling rise and the damage elections at this juncture can cause, the EC is under pressure to prevent State polls from becoming COVID super-spreaders. Therefore, it's a good idea to increase the number of polling booths in each constituency, thus reducing the number of voters further from 1,200 per booth. Also, the proof of vaccination might become mandatory to cast votes, in addition to making the wearing of masks and maintaining social distancing mandatory, though there isn't a final decision on it yet. There's no denying that the right to vote is supreme in a democracy but the right to life is paramount; of self, and of others, too.

What's happening in Kazakhstan, & why?



Amid bloody riots, no one except those in charge in Moscow and Almaty seems to know what exactly is happening on the streets of Kazakhstan

oldiers shot at protesters in Kazakhstan's biggest city, Almaty, recently, after a few days of violent unrest. The riots have prompted the ruling regime to declare a state of emergency and appeal for help from Russia and other ex-Soviet republics, which were all part of the now-deceased Soviet Union. Dozens of people have died in the riots and thousands have been detained in this Central Asian country during the worst violence seen here since it became independent in the early 1990s. Security forces seem to have reclaimed the main city's streets a day after Russian paratroopers arrived to help quash the uprising.

Kazakhstan is located between Russia and China and also shares borders with three other ex-Soviet republics. It is the largest economy in Central Asia, with rich hydrocarbon and metal deposits. Kazakhstan is the top global producer of uranium and world's second largest miner of Bitcoin after the United States. It has attracted hundreds of billions of dollars in foreign investment since becoming independent in 1991. The recent unrest in Kazakhstan has caused an 8 per cent jump in the price of uranium that fuels nuclear power plants. It is the world's ninth biggest oil exporter, producing some 85.7 million tonnes in 2021, and the 10th largest producer of coal.

For a petroleum-rich country like Kazakhstan to have to raise, or rather double, price of the fuel in one go is surprising. However, the Soviet leadersturned-noncommunists did not have a reputation of efficient governance. The common folk believe that the leaders are corrupt; whether they are or not is not out in the open. The current Prime Minister, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, is new, having taken over recently from the 81-yearold Nursultan Nazarbayev, and is yet to prove himself.

For Russia, Kazakhstan is of vital importance since the Baikonur Cosmodrome is vioscow's sole launching paid for manned space missions. There is none on the Russian end and, therefore, it cannot let if we do not take note of US



share a border.

The yellow giant is a landhungry country while Kazakhstan is one of the world's largest countries in terms of land area with only about six persons per sq km. Kazakhstan has therefore to be cautious in what its Government does, how sternly or gently it treats its currently rebellious citizens. For the present, the law and order is being helped by the presence of some 3,000-odd soldiers that Moscow has urgently sent. They are on the streets armed with orders to shoot to kill. Several hundred agitating Kazakhs have already been killed and many more injured in firing.

The picture is incomplete



THERE ARE

MORE COOKS READY TO DABBLE IN THE KAZAKH KITCHEN THAN THERE IS MEAT TO COOK IN THERE. WHAT AMERICA CAN. OR WISHES TO, DO IN THIS **FARAWAY CENTRAL ASIAN COUNTRY IS** A MATTER

Foreign Secretary Antony Blinken's diplomatic moves, who has said that President Biden's administration is "very concerned" about the situation in Kazakhstan. Blinken iterated Washington's full support for Kazakhstan's constitutional institutions and also stressed the importance of respecting human rights, media freedom et al. Evidently, there are more cooks ready to dabble in the Kazakh kitchen than there is meat to cook in there. What America can, or wishes to, do in this faraway Central Asian country is a matter of wonder.

Two more points have been talked about in the media. One is that if people on the streets of Almaty see Russian soldiers, they would react strongly. And if the Russians see on television their soldiers on the streets of Almaty being killed by Kazakh rebel bullets, they would react furiously. No one except those in charge in Moscow and Almaty seems to know what exactly is happening on the streets of Kazakhstan. One can only guess that the political opponents of the Tokayev regime have seized this opportune author and a former member time to try and overturn the of the Rajya Sabha. The views Government. Are they polit-

January 15 even though rallies are an inte-

gral part of any election campaign. As per

the directions of the EC, political parties need

to switch to digital mode of campaigning.

While the attempt to incorporate technolo-

gy with election campaigning is com-

are at a disadvantage. True, restrictions need

to be imposed whenever required. When

election campaigns are allowed without any

restrictions, people will behave as they wish.

In the absence of strict restrictions, the sec-

ond wave of the pandemic had caused a cat-

astrophe in the country. We cannot afford

to repeat such a folly. By ordering a ban on

rallies, the EC has acknowledged the grav-

ity of the situation and shown awareness

about the dread of a public health emer-

gency. It would be better if the commission

extended the duration of the ban. Political

parties must devise plans to reach out to

Venu GS | Kollam

people without mass gatherings.

Voters who have no digital knowledge

mendable, it has disadvantages as well.

ical autocrats or democrats, it is difficult to tell because we do not know them. The Government for its part has described them as bandits or terrorists.

However, one factor is certain and that is that history is against autocracy. Information and the spread of knowledge have by now reached mindboggling dimensions and levels. With Information Technology, Google, YouTube, the versatile mobile telephony and super-smart phones, e-mail and what not, it is difficult to not know. Very recently, one heard on TV that one out of two adults on earth have a mobile telephone. Evidently, facts are known immediately, almost in a flash, though not necessarily the explanations beyond the facts.

A hundred years ago, few would have debated as to which is better, autocracy or democracy. Many considered a benevolent dictator to be an ideal compromise. That is not certainly the case anymore, with the information being the catalyst.

(The writer is a weii-known columnist, an of the Rajya Šabha. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO T

POLITICS AS A PLAYING FIELD

Sir —Politics is a different cup of tea altogether. The crossing over to another party is part and parcel of the ritual of contesting elections. And after election results, we do come across horse trading as well. A national party like the BJP will not be shaken up with these defections as they have formed a solid base and the party enrolled members throughout its tenure in the last seven years. Political parties and people may think that the ruling party has suffered a major blow but it has actually benefited by removing and exposing these unscrupulous elements.

Senior OBC leader Swami Prasad Maurya's exit from the State Cabinet may seem to be a body blow to the BJP. but it has levelled the playing field ahead of the Assembly election. With his resignation and that of his followers, the BJP can rest assured of retaining power in UP and the ticket issue for party cadre can be amicably solved with these vacancies. Moreover, the party was trying to maintain a clean image and such people are just a burden rather than an asset. It is just a matter of time before we all get to see the final answer to all these speculations.

CK Subramaniam | Navi Mumbai

A TRUE VISIONARY

Sir — It refers to the editorial 'Arise! Awake!' (January 13). Vivekananda's exploits on the sporting field don't come as a surprise, though. There is no second opinion about Swami Vivekananda remaining an ambassador of sports even after he became a monk. One of his famous sayings goes like, "You will be nearer to God playing football than studying the Bhagavad Gita." What he meant was that merely following spirituality through reading is useless unless you give importance to physical fitness which, in turn, helps develop your mind. On various occasions, Swami Vivekananda has also spoken about treating one's body as a temple; for this, he gave high importance to physical activities like sports.

Extend ban on poll rallies



he Election Commission's decision to ban all political rallies, road shows and other processions is praiseworthy. It has shown awareness to the fact that the upcoming elections are being held in the middle of the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. As the pandemic cases surge alarmingly, we must not lose sight of the fact that the third wave is tightening its grip. The EC has banned physical campaign rallies until

sports right since his school days. He was undoubtedly an all-rounder, who was a great philosopher and a player. He was one of the individuals who spread the concept of Humanism across the globe. In his life of 39 years, Swami Vivekananda not only set the foundation for the creation of Indian Institute of Science (Swami Vivekananda died in July 1902 and Jamsetji died two years later, unaware that their shared vision would be realised five years later. The Tata Institute of Science was born in 1909 and renamed the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in 1911. It also inspired John Rockefeller to start the first business charity in the US! How many do

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

to Rathsaptami is an auspicious period.

HAPPY INDIAN FESTIVALS Sir — The period from Makar Sankranti

He himself was actively involved in Any donation and meritorious deeds in this period prove more fruitful than normally. The time from sunrise to sunset on Makar Sankranti is considered auspicious; a holy dip in the rivers Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Krishna and Kaveri during this period carries special significance.

Those who take the dip at one of the holy sites on the banks of these rivers receive the highest boon. Today, when the nation and dharma are in peril, flying kites for the sake of entertainment is akin to 'Nero playing the fiddle while Rome burned. If the time spent on flying kites is used for the nation's development, it will progress faster and, if used for spiritual practice and missions related to dharma, society and the individual will benefit.

Ramchandra Lugade | Pune

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneér@gmail.com

Force levels (in eastern Ladakh) are more or less the same and from our side enhanced.



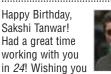
Indian Army chief -Gen Manoj Naravane

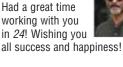


I want to apologise (for the May 2020 garden party) ... With hindsight, should have

sent everyone back inside

British Prime Minister —Boris Johnson





He (Virat) always gives a lot of motivation to all bowlers. He brings



Indian bowler

— Anil Kapoor

Mr Modi's safety was endangered deliberately. The CM and other





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FIRST COLUMN

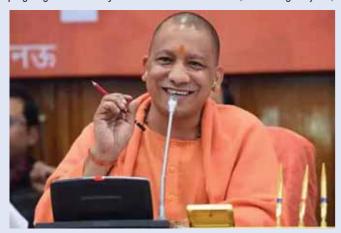
UP POLLS: INTRA-BJP POLITICKING TO WATCH FOR

Swami Prasad Maurya's exit may cause some in the party to question Yogi's credentials



NILOFAR SUHRAWARDY

ot with standing the assumption that victory in UP assembly polls is going to be A cakewalk for BJP and Yogi Adityanath, politicking at several levels may play a more complicated role than expected. Prospects of Congress returning to power are remote. Chances of other rival parties performing better in 2022 than they did in 2017 elections cannot be ruled out. A bigger damage may be caused by the future aims of Yogi. Yes, the 49-year politician is not likely to be satisfied with being just UP chief minister for too long. Prior to taking charge of UP, he was elected member of Lok Sabha for five consecutive terms from Gorakhpur. At 26, he was the youngest member of 12th Lok Sabha. He apparently had eyes set on the national stage from the day he joined politics. Besides, attempts made to enhance his political base cannot be ignored. These include his campaigning in assembly elections of other states, including Gujarat,



Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala Tamil Nadu, Tripura and West Bengal. He was even labelled as party's "star-campaigner". Of course, there is a difference in his being considered a "favoured" politician by some but not by all within BJP. The same may be said about the appeal of his right-winged religious card within UP and other parts of India. Yogi is not as close to Prime Minister Narendra Modi as Amit Shah is assumed to be. Shah is not at all keen on such factor disturbing his ties with Modi. They have shared a good political understanding from their common home state, Gujarat. Besides, he has also been an active campaigner during several states' assembly polls. Prior to taking charge as Union Home Minister, Shah served as BJP president from 2014 - 19. From 2014, he has been chairperson of National Democratic Alliance. Shah's quick rise on national front within less a decade places him ahead of Yogi in a possible race for prime ministerial berth. Yogi can claim credit for being a parliamentarian for around twice the time than Shah. Yogi may not have been appointed as UP chief minister in 2017 if Modi was not heading the national government. BJP's return in power in 2017 in UP after around 15 years rested primarily on Modi's political cards and weak strategies of BJP's rival parties. Though BJP won 312 seats, it secured only 39.67 per cent votes. Its key rivals SP and BSP won 47 and 19 seats, respectively. While 21.82 per cent votes favoured SP BSP got 22.23 per cent. In a number of seats, votes polled by BSP and SP exceeded votes BJP secured by over 20,000. This reality apparently prompted SP and BSP to align for the 2019 parliamentary elections.

While BJP retained its lead in 2019 and won 62 seats, nine less than it had secured in 2014, BSP won 10 seats, SPfive and Congress just one. BJP's performance in the coming polls cannot be de-linked from strategies exercised by its rivals. Covid-panic and economic grievances have pushed Yogi's religiousshows to the background in general. What is to be watched for is possible intra-party politicking within BJP which may create political problems for Yogi in UP and hamper his future plans. Resignation of UP Minister Swami Prasad Maurva from BJP to join SP is perhaps just a warning signal Yogi. It certainly provides ample reason for some party members to question his credentials and perhaps even provoke a few anti-Yogi sentiments. Irrespective of strategies exercised by rival parties, the political storm within the BJP camp is likely to be quite the testing ground for Yogi in UPpolls.

(The writer is a senior journalist. The views expressed

Is KCR trying his hand at national politics?



KONDUBHATLA

He led a statehood movement for more than 13 years and headed the Govt in the new State for seven. He is entitled to have national ambitions

fter Mamata Banerjee proved that Modi-Shah combination is beatable, leaders from different parts of the country have been trying their luck to play a role in national politics. Chief Minister of West Bengal and chief of Trinamool Congress visited Delhi and Mumbai, had talks with Sharad Pawar, the eternal campaigner and neversay-die politician. She admitted into TMC some Congress leaders in Goa which is going to polls along with UP, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Manipur. She is said to be planning to campaign for Samajur Party in UP. It is now the turn of K Chandrasekar Rao (KCR), Chief Minister of Telangana and founder of Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS).
The visit by Tejaswi Yadav, RJD chief

and opposition leader in Bihar Assembly, to Hyderabad on Tuesday and the telephonic talk KCR had with Lalu Prasad Yadav, former chief minister of Bihar, were well organized. Earlier, KCR visited Tamil Nadu on a pilgrimage and he concluded his tour only after meeting Chief Minister M K Stalin where both the leaders were supposed to have discussed national politics. Left leaders who had national conferences in Hyderabad last week made it a point to go to Pragati Bhavan, the residence of the chief minister, to have a discussion on national scenario.

This is the second time KCR is trying his hand at national politics. In 2018, both KCR and former Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu were on national stage playing different games. While KCR had hired a plane and visited UP, Maharastra and West Bengal to promote a third front excluding BJP and the Congress, Naidu did his best to build an alliance around the Congress. He went to Delhi to meet Rahul Gandhi whom he felicitated with a shawl. Naidu also travelled to Kolkata and Lucknow, besides Delhi. While Naidu's state, Andhdra Pradesh, has 25 Lok Sabha seats, KCR's has only 17. Numbers are not in their favour. However, being in power, both had money in 2018. They were richer than the politicians in North and East. They together reportedly helped Congress, TMC, JD(S) and SP financially in 2019

KCR's was a brief show. He withdrew when he found the going tough. Naidu stayed put till the elections were over. His would not be able to repeat 2014 performance and that non-BJP parties can form an alternative post-election alliance with Congress as the fulcrum had backfired. Naidu himself got three Lok Sabha seats and 23 Assembly seats out of 175 in 2019 while Modi had improved upon 2014. Since then, the TDP chief has been cooling his heels trying to make up with Modi. Now it is KCR's turn to guess afresh that the

Modi-Shah team is going to lose in 2024. He has been maintaining friendly relations with YS Jagan Mohan Reddy,



KCR IS THE ONLY LEADER FROM THE SOUTH TO HAVE PUBLICLY MADE MOVES TO BUILD AN ALTERNATIVE FRONT. WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP THE SO-CALLED THIRD OR FOURTH FRONT WOULD HAVE WITH THE CONGRESS AND WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO DIDI'S DREAM OF BEING AN ALTERNATIVE TO CONGRESS ARE SOME OF THE QUESTIONS TO WHICH ONLY TIME SHOULD ANSWER

Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. KCR can count on Jagan's support after elections. However, can a politician with just 17 Lok Sabha seats in his state hope to become a prime minister or a king-maker? Is it overconfi-

dence or outright gamble?

KCR, no doubt, is a crafty
politician. He played his cards
shrewdly so far. He promised Sonia Gandhi that he would make his party, TRS, a partner in alliance with Congress after the latter conceded his demand for a separate state of Telangana. The only other demand he put forward was that he should be made chief minister after 2014 elections. Congress had half-a-dozen hopefuls then. While Congress was the party that delivered Telangana, TRS was the one that achieved statehood. KCR's demand was not met and he fought the elections alone and was lucky enough

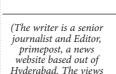
to win. The rest is history. A leader who led a statehood movement successfully for more than thirteen years and headed the more than seven years, is entitled to have national ambitions. More so with no leader of stature to match Modi's available either in the Congress or outside. His son, K Taraka Rama Rao (KTR), is ready to take over the reins to run the state administration. KCR is the only leader from the south to have publicly made moves to build an alternative front. What kind of relationship the so-called third or fourth front would have with the Congress and what would happen to Didi's dream of being an alternative to Congress are some of the questions to which only time should answer.

Unlike Lalu Prasad and Akhilesh, KCR has not been strident in his anti-BJP discourse. He was playing safe until recently. His party supported almost all the Bills introduced by the NDA government till the other day. He started criticizing farm laws just before they were withdrawn. KCR has been vacillating in his stand towards the BJP.

KCR knows his limitations. He is aware that he does not command numbers. He also can see that the days when lightweight politicians like VP Singh, Chandrasekhar, Deve Gowda and IK Gujral could become prime ministers are over. The opposition is waiting for a leader who can match Modi in stature and articulation. KCR can speak reasonably good English and Hindi/Hyderabadi and get on in North India like PV Narasimha al politics. In the meanwhile, he Rao, a polyglot, did. He can mobithe stature of Sharad Pawar or the prowess of Mamata Banerjee as a fighter. Sharad Pawar is lying low because of his own limitations chief of which is his age. Mamata is not acceptable to leaders like Lalu Prasad Yadav and she may not be able to mobilize funds. That is, perhaps, the reason why Lalu Prasad asked KCR to take up a leadership role.

By nature, KCR is not a democrat in the sense that he does not believe in consultations before or after taking decisions. It was the case even during the statehood movement. He does not believe in collective leadership, the quality which is essential for a leader at national level to build an alternative alliance from parties headed by egotistic and ambitious leaders. It required a lot of patience which KCR does not have.

An important factor that must have prompted KCR to start his second innings in national politics is the fact that his adversaries in Telangana are not of his stature. Bandi Sanjay, BJP chief, was a corporator before getting elected to Lok Sabha from Karimnagar in 2019. The TPCC president Revanth Reddy is also relatively junior who is facing problems from seniors in Congress. Instead of a street fight with noisy juniors, KCR must have thought it is better to take on Modi, win or lose, and have the satisfaction of trying his best to make a mark in nationcan satisfy his family members who are keen on KTR becoming chief minister. KTR is already an important minister and working president of TRS. His cousin, Harish Rao, Minister of Finance and Health, who is a senior and capable politician, is reportedly prepared to accept the younger politician's leadership. Can KCR take the risk of giving up the position of a chief minister for some uncertain position at national level at a future date? Will the date ever



expressed are personal.)

IT IS THE PEOPLE WHO WOULD CHOOSE THE NEXT CHIEF MINISTER OF THE STATE AND NOT THE HIGH COMMAND. —PUNJAB CONGRESS CHIEF **NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU**





PUNJAB NEEDS SERIOUS PEOPLE WHOSE POLITICS IS NOT SOCIAL ENGINEERING, ENTERTAINMENT, FREEBIES... WHO HAVE SOLUTIONS TO PUNJAB'S CHALLENGES.

-CONGRESS MP **MANISH TEWARI**

Dharam Sansad: Dangerous echo

The speeches pose a grave threat to the unity and integrity of our country and also endanger the lives of Muslim citizens

→he Supreme Court has taken up a PIL seeking probe against the hate speeches targeting Muslim community delivered on December 17-19 last year at the Haridwar Dharam Sansad and in Delhi by an organisation called Hindu Yuva Vahini.

A bench, headed by Chief Justice N.V. Ramana and comprising Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli will hear the plea filed by Qurban Ali and former Patna High Court judge Anjana Prakash, seeking directions for an independent, impartial and credible probe into the matter

by an SIT. The plea, filed through advocate Sumita Hazarika, said: "Hate speeches consisted of open calls for genocide of Muslims in order to achieve ethnic cleansing. It is pertinent



to note that the said speeches are not mere hate speeches but amount to an open call for murder of an entire community. The said speeches thus, pose a grave threat not just to the unity and integrity of our country but also endanger the lives of millions of Muslim citizens."

All right-thinking Indians condemned the hate speeches of seers especially the vitreous words uttered against Muslims. Prominent members of India's defence community have joined a growing chorus of people across the country in demanding legal action against organisers of a Hindu religious event after several speakers there reportedly issued calls for

killing Muslims. Admiral Arun Prakash, former chief of Indian Navy, and General Ved Prakash



Malik, former Chief of Army Staff, took to Twitter to slam and condemnthe event. They criticised it for creating fissures in the country and weakening "national security" at a time when the South Asian country is involved in tense situations on both its eastern frontier with China as well as its western border with Pakistan.

Such hate speeches are dangerous for the country when India and China have been involved in a military standoff at the eastern Ladakh border for nearly one-and-a-half years. The standoff remains unresolved in spite of 13 rounds of military commander-level talks and several rounds of various level discussions foreign ministers. The 14th round of military commander-level talk is being held any time soon to resolve the withdrawal of troops to its original positions of the Line of actual control (LAC).

The concerns from prominent individuals have surfaced as several videos of radical Hindu priest Yati Narsinghanand Giri, who was one of the lead speakers and organisers of the event, appeared online in the wake of the Haridwar gathering."Swords are not enough to kill the Muslims... They have stockpiled very advanced weapons... Our (Hindu) reli-

just by picking up arms", Giri said during a speech at the

event. Giri reiterated that only by having "the most advanced weapons in every Hindu household" and "by outnumbering Muslims in birth could the Hindu community be saved".

In an interview given to Sudarshan TV, Giri, the head priest of the Dasna Devi temple in Uttar Pradesh, didnot even spare Muslim politicians in Bharatiya Janata Party.He remarked that leaders like Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi and former minister Syed Shahnawaz Hussain "are more dangerous than even jihadis"."India is moving towards becoming an Islamic state. This must be reversed and the nation should move towards becoming a gion is not going to be saved Vedic-Sanathan (Hindu)

nation", Giri said in the interview. A five-member Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Uttarakhand police will now probe the alleged hate speeches made by Hindu seers against Muslims at the 'Dharma Sansad' held in Haridwar last

The move comes a day after the Muslim Seva Sangathan - an organisation working towards the betterment of the minority community in Dehradun - protested outside the Uttarakhand police headquarters, demanding the arrest of Hindu seers who had allegedly made controversial statements during the three-day event.Five seers have been booked so far in connection with the 'Dharma Sansad'. "Investigation is going on and the probe team is examining

whether charges made in the FIRs are arrestable or not. But these people are certainly accused and they will be charge-sheeted in court," Uttarakhand Director General of Police (DGP) Ashok Kumar said. However, no arrests have been made so far.

Meanwhile, Annapurna, one of the accused in the case, said "nothing wrong" was spoken at the Haridwar 'Dharma Sansad'. Even the charges made against us are not as per law, added she, a former IIM professor.

It is surprising that the central government has not uttered a single word against the hate speeches, which may be due to huge vote bank of seers. Now that the case is taken up in the apex court the outcome

will be awaited.

The writer is former Senior Professor, International Trade and Member, Vivekananda International Foundation. The views expressed are personal.)

Biden redoubling focus on testing amid shortages, confusion

¬he Biden administration is I redoubling its efforts to expand supply and accessibility of COVID-19 testing as it faces mounting criticism over long lines and supply shortages for testing nationwide and confusion about when to get tested amid the omicron surge.
The White House

announced Wednesday that a dedicated stream of 5 million rapid tests and 5 million labbased PCR tests will be made available to schools starting

this month to ease supply shortages and promote the safe reopening of schools. It said Dr. Tom Inglesby, director of the Johns Hopkins

Center for Health Security at the Bloomberg School of Public Health, will join the COVID-19 team to

oversee the enhanced testing push. The moves come just days before private insurers will be required to reimburse Americans for tests and the launch of a new federal website for Americans to order free tests to be shipped to their doors. The test supply push, though, will likely be too late for many Americans trying to safely navigate the omicronfuelled case surge, which is already showing signs of crest-

director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, on Wednesday offered guidance for when Americans should use tests which were in short supply as Americans travelled and saw family during the busy holiday season.

"Americans should take a test when they have symptoms that appear to be COVID-19," she said, including fever, cough, sore throat, respiratory symptoms and muscle aches.

She also said they should test after known exposure to the virus, generally five days after being exposed, or earlier as part of test-to-stay protocols in schools and workplaces.

"Certainly if you're going to gather with family, if you're going to a gathering where people are immunocompromised or where they're elderly or where you have people who might be unvaccinated or poorly protected from a vaccine that might be an opportunity you want to test," she added.

The school testing initiative announced Wednesday comes after nation's third-largest public school system, in Chicago, closed for days after an impasse between teachers and officials over reopening policies. The closure was a black eye for

reopening schools - and keeping them open - a priority. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona said students need to be in their classrooms and the announcement shows the administration's commitment to helping schools stay open.

"We're doing everything we can to make sure that our children have an opportunity to stay in school," Cardona said Wednesday on "CBS Mornings." "That's where they need to be, and we know we can do it safely." States are applying to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for tests, Cardona said, adding that he expected distribution to begin as early as next week.

'We recognise that schools are the hubs of the communiy" and they should be open for instruction, the secretary added, saying it is "vital for our

'We have been very clear, publicly and privately, that we want to see schools open, White House press secretary Jen Psaki said Monday. She cited massive amount of funding for schools as evidence of the administration ensuring "we were prepared and had resources needed to address whatever may come up in pan-

US Prez highlighting federal 'surge' to help weather Omicron

Washington: President ing to easing disruptions from the nationwide spike in cases federal government's efforts to "surge" military medical personnel to help overwhelmed medical facilities weather the spike in coronavirus cases and staff shortages due to the highly transmissible omicron vari-

Starting next week, 1,000 military medical personnel will begin arriving to help mitigate staffing crunches at hospitals across the country. Many facilities are struggling because their workers are in at-home quarantines due to the virus at the same time as a nationwide spike in COVID-19 cases.

The new deployments will be on top of other federal medical personnel who have already been sent to states to help with acute shortages.Biden planned to deliver remarks Thursday morning on the "surge response" to COVID-19, the White House said. The administration's focus is shiftthat is also contributing to grocery shortages and flight cancellations.

On Tuesday, Janet Woodcock, the acting head of the Food and Drug Administration, told Congress that the highly transmissible strain will infect "most people" and that the focus should turn to ensuring critical services can continue uninterrupted.

"I think it's hard to proces what's actually happening right now, which is: Most people are going to get COVID, all right?" she said. "What we need to do is make sure the hospitals can still function-transportation, other essential services are not disrupted while this happens.'

The White House said Biden would be joined by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, who recently recovered from his own case of COVID-19, and FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell.

as third dose effective against Omicron: Study

London: The AstraZeneca Vaxzevaria vaccine showed an increased antibody response to the Omicron variant of COVID-19 after a third booster dose, preliminary data released by the Anglo-Swedish biopharma major said on Thursday. In an ongoing safety and immunogenicity trial of the vaccine, a formulation developed by Oxford University and administered in India as Covishield, it was found that given as a third dose increased the body's immune response to Beta, Delta, Alpha and Gamma SARS-CoV-2

A separate analysis of samples from the trial showed increased antibody response to the Omicron variant. The results were observed among individuals previously vaccinated with either Vaxzevria or an mRNA vaccine. The company said it is submitting this additional data to health authorities around the world given the urgent need for third dose boosters.

AstraZeneca vax US discourages India from acquiring Russian S-400 missile defence systems: President Biden's nominee

Washington: The US has made clear to India that it is "discouraging" it from proceeding with its acquisition of S-400 missile defence systems from Russia but Washington will have to weigh "important geostrategic considerations' while taking a decision on growing calls for a presidential CAATSA waiver to New Delhi, President Joe Biden's nominee for Coordinator for Sanctions Policy has told lawmakers.

In October 2018, India signed a USD 5 billion deal with Russia to buy five units of the S-400 air defence missile systems, despite a warning from the then Trump administration that going ahead with the contract may invite US sanctions.

The Biden administration has not yet clarified whether it will impose sanctions on India under the provisions of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) for procuring the S-400 missile

systems. CAATSA is a tough ÚS law that was brought in 2017 and authorises the US administration to impose sanctions on countries that purchase major defence hardware from Russia. James O'Brien, President

Biden's nominee for the US

State Department's coordina-

tor for sanctions policy was asked at his confirmation hearing on Wednesday if the US experience with Turkey provided any warning or lessons on how to proceed with India. The US has already

imposed sanctions on Turkey under the CAATSA for the purchase of a batch of S-400 missile defence systems from

Following the US sanctions on Turkey over the procurement of S-400 missile systems, there were apprehensions that Washington may impose similar punitive measures on India. Russia has been one of India's key major suppliers of arms and ammu-

Pakistan Taliban confirms ex-spokesman's killing in Afghanistan

Peshawar: The Pakistani Taliban on Thursday confirmed the weekend killing of a former spokesman in neighbouring Afghanistan and vowed to avenge the murder.The outlawed Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, which is known as TTP, announced on Twitter death of man known as Mohammad Khurasani, which is an alias. His real name was Khalid Balti. The confirmation comes days after Pakistani security officials said the former spokesman of TTP was shot dead in Afghanistan's Nangarhar province. The TTP did not confirm the claim until Thursday. The current TTP spokesman, who also goes by name Mohammad Khurasani,

said on Twitter that Balti was killed on Jan. 9 while travelling. He said Balti's death was a great loss and his death would soon be avenged. Balti was commander of TTP and he served as group's spokesman from 2011 to 2015. That's when he was arrested in Afghanistan and was freed after Taliban seized power. Since then, the TTP has been emboldened.Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan is an umbrella group and is a separate organization from Afghanistan's Taliban. In November, Pakistan announced a month-long cease-fire with TTP. The group has been behind numerous attacks on security forces and civilians over last 14 years.

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Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C Address of the office Northern Railway, 3rd Floor, Annexe-1, DRM office New Delhi-110055 Tender uploading / closing date & time- 09.02.2022 Date & Time for upload the tender / closing of tender

See the Northern Railway website www.ireps.gov.in & Notice board at S&T branch, 3rd Floor, DRM office, State Entry Road, Nev

Tender No. 558-Sig-16-Tele-OT-943 Dated: 13.01.2022

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General Public is hereby informed that a person (depicted in the photo). Namely: Anil Kumar S/o Virender Singh R/o Vikram Pur, Bah, Agra, U.P. has been missing since 02.01.2022 from P-Block, Raghubir Nagar, Delhi. In this regard a DD No 59A dated 03.01.2022 has been lodged at Police Station Khyala, Delhi. His physical description is as under:-

Age: 30 Years, Height: 5', Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Built: Medium, Wearing: Red Colour Jacket & Blue Colour Pant

Any person having any information/ Clue about this missing person, may inform SHO, Khyala, Delhi at E-mail Idcic@cbi.gov.in or website: http://cbi.nic.in

P.S. Khyala, Delhi 011-24368638, 24368641 Fax No. 011-24368639

West Distt., Delhi Ph. No. 011-8750871132, 9911820101 DP/690/WD/2022

Appeal for Identification



DP/881/ED/2022

General Public is hereby informed that a male dead body Name: Unknown, S/o Unknown, R/o: Unknown, Age: About 30 years, Height: 5'6", Complexion: Shallow, Face: Oval Built: Medium, Wearing: Black half T-Shirt having with white streps, Locket in neck shape of heart (Silver Colour), Red Colour Cloth Bracelet and Rudraks type Bracelet in Right Arm and Hand, Blue Colour Jeans pant, without Sleeper and Shoes. was

found at Paper Market at CNG Pump, Gazipur, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 42-A, Dt. 11.01.2022 has been lodged in PS Gazipur, Delhi

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out information about this person but no clue has come to light so

Any, person having any information or clue about this person

P.S., Gazipur, Delhi Ph.: 011-22610068 8750870625

WFP director for Afghanistan warns of 'tsunami of hunger'

Afghanistan is facing a because of a shortage of funds that's needed to keep the supply of food intact as country teeters on the edge of economic run with more than half of the population struggling to eat this winter, a senior official with the United Nations World Food Programme said on Thursday.

In an interview with The Associated Press, WFP leader in Afghanistan Mary-Ellen McGroarty urged the international community to put humanitarian necessity above political discussions and avoid disaster by making sure that billions in aid keep reaching the Taliban-run country.

According to the UN humanitarian organisation, 22.8 million people face acute food shortages, including 8.7 million close to starvation."We going into 2022," said McGroarty during a stop in

"What we call all the humanitarian sector in Afghanistan needs 4.4 four billion dollars for the next 12 months to mount a comprehensive response. And for WFP, we need 2.6 billion to do the minimum we need to be doing in 2022." Afghanistan's aid-dependent economy was

Taliban seized power in mid-August amid a disorderly departure of US and NATÓ troops. The international community froze Afghanistan's assets abroad and halted funding, unwilling to work with a Taliban government given its reputation for brutality during its previous rule 20 years ago. Combined with the

COVID-19 crisis and a drought, the shortage of money has had catastrophic consequences amid a dramatic surge of inflation, with the price of food going up by over 50 percent in the last couple of McGroarty said she recent-

ly met with old farmers during a trip to the northeastern province of Badakhshan, who told her they have never been confronted to such an ordeal despite the experience of living through 19 governments.

"They have never before, had to stand in a line with their hands out for for humanitarian support," she said. "This is the first time ever for them, and they told me the hunger is worse than the conflict that they have lived through over five decades." McGroarty urged the international community to keep sending money to Afghanistan, insisting that funding can get into the country independently from the initially promised tolerance and inclusiveness regarding women and ethnic minorities. But so far, their actions including renewed restrictions for women and the appointment of an all-male government have left the international community and many donors unim-"We've been working for

years in Afghanistan, in contested areas, and the money comes directly to the agencies, McGroarty said. "We work with our partners, we work directly with the communities.'

McGroarty said the WFP managed to distribute food in key locations across the northeast and central highlands of the country in prevision of the winter months. But she said the winter

snows have already started to block some of country's major roads, making the need for aid even more urgent."Can you your young children? And you can also imagine not being able to keep those young children also warm?," McGroarty said.

"It's unimaginable suffering and the support is required today to avert some of that unimaginable suffering." McGroarty said Afghans now face the choice of either starving or leaving their country. "It's one step away from a catastro-

Israel probes death of detained 80-year-old Palestinian

AP JERUSALEM

 \mathbf{I} srael was investigating after an 80-year-old Palestinian with U.S. Citizenship died of a heart attack after being detained by Israeli soldiers in the occupied West Bank. The State Department said

it was in touch with the Israeli government to seek "clarification" about the incident, which occurred early Wednesday, and that it supports a "thorough investigation." Omar Asaad was detained

by Israeli forces while returning from a relative's home in his hometown of Jaljulia, near the West Bank city of Ramallah. He was brought to a hospital hours later, dead from a heart attack, according to the Palestinian Health

Jaljulia Mayor Fouad Qattum, citing witnesses, said vehicle and removed him by force shortly before dawn. He said they took Asaad, bound and blindfolded, to an abandoned building nearby.

Later, they detained a number of young men from the surrounding area in the same building. Qattum said the other detainees did not know Asaad was there because it was dark and he didn't make a

Strike paralyses Lebanon as economic conditions worsen

Beirut: Schools, universities and many shops were closed in Lebanon on Thursday as a general strike by public transportation and labour unions paralysed the crisis-hit Mideast nation. Protesters closed the coun-

try's major highways as well as roads inside cities and towns, starting at 5 a.M., to protest fuel prices that have increased at an alarming rate after the government lifted subsidies. Taxi and truck drivers used

their vehicles to block roads. In the capital of Beirut, many roads were blocked by giant trash bins and vehicles. The nationwide protests,

dubbed a "day of rage," were scheduled to last 12 hours but appear to have petered out by early afternoon. The number of protesters were small. The protest action comes

as the Lebanese pound has continued to tumble against the dollar. About 80% of people in the Lebanese pound lost more than 90% of its value in the past two years. Filling up a gasoline tank now costs more than the monthly minimum wage.

The ruling class, which has run Lebanon into the ground, has proved unwilling to reform and has done almost nothing to try to pull the country out of its meltdown, rooted in decades of corruption and mismanagement. "The clear

A truck driver holds a Lebanese flag as others drivers block a main highway

with their vehicles during a general strike by public transport and workers unions paralyzed Lebanon in protest to the country's deteriorating economic and financial conditions, in Beirut, Lebanon, Thursday, Jan. 13, 2022 (AP Photo/Bilal Hussein)

indifference of Lebanese policymakers to the suffering of the population amid one of the worst economic crises in modern times borders on the criminal," said Aya Majzoub, Lebanon researcher at Human Rights Watch.

In its World Report 2022 released Thursday, ĤRW said petent Lebanese authorities have deliberately plunged the country into one of the worst economic crises in modern times, demonstrating a disregard for the rights of the population."Majzoub called for the international community to use "every tool at its disposal to pressure Lebanese policymakers to put in place the reforms necessary to pull Lebanon out

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Short Notice inviting Quotation

The reputed firms are requested to submit sealed quotation for following work in Bihar Bhawan and Bihar Niwas Chankyapuri, Bihar sadan dwarka New Delhi for the year 2021-2022 Quotation will be submitted up to 21-01-2022 till 3:00 pm and opened on 21-01-2022 at 3:30 pm at the office of the Resident Engineer, Bihar Niwas Chankyapuri, New Delhi undersigned office has right to cancel quotation without any further information. Registration, GST, PAN No. and authorization of firm paper here enclosed. Details of items list can be obtained form the office of the Resident Engineer, Bihar Bhawan, New Delhi. The Earnest Money (NSC/ Term Deposit) should be deposited 5% of total contract value before issue of work order.

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1.	Addition alteration work of Female toilet in basement at
	Bihar Sadan new Delhi for the year 2021-22
2.	Addition alteration work of show case, book Shelve and display rack in prefunction on area at Bihar Sadan New Delhi for the year 2021-22
3.	Supply fitting and fixing extended kitchen at Bihar sadan

Dwarka new Delhi for the year 2021-22

Sd./-

Executive Engineer-Cum-Resident Engineer Bihar Bhawan, New Delhi

Polish Church says it's wrong to ask if abuse victim is gay

AP WARSAW, POLAND

Poland's Catholic bishops have strongly criticized a local diocese for asking a court to determine whether a man who was sexually abused as a child by a priest is gay, and whether the sexual contact may have consequently been pleasurable for him.

The victim, Janusz Szymik, who is now 48, was an altar boy when the abuse began in the 1980s. Szymik sued the diocese of Bielsko-Zywiec, in southern Poland, in a civil court last year. The priest, who has been

identified only as Rev. Jan W., admitted to the abuse. Szymik is now seeking 3 million zlotys (\$760,000) in compensation from the diocese. The Onet news portal ear-

lier this week disclosed the contents of documents it obtained that a lawyer for the church had submitted to the court. The documents show the

church wanting an expert "to check the plaintiff's sexual orientation" and to determine whether he "showed satisfaction with maintaining an intimate relationship with Rev. Jan W." or derived any "material benefits" from the sexual relationship with the cleric.Rev. Piotr Studnicki, the director of

a special office for the protection of children within the Polish Bishops' Conference, said in a statement issued on Wednesday that "reliable knowledge and human sensitivity" are necessary to any legal procedure.

"The issue of sexual orientation or the way a child reacts emotionally to an offense of sexual abuse cannot constitute an argument against the injured person and diminish the responsibility of the perpetrator," Studicki said.

"It must be clear to everyone that a child never bears responsibility for violence experienced." Szymik expressed surprise

about how the case has turned, noting that Bishop Roman Pindel of Bielsko-Zywiec had previously shown compassion toward him for the abuse he suffered as a child.

"Previously, he expressed pain and regret and asked for forgiveness, and now he wants to prove ... that I am a homosexual person, that pedophilia gave me pleasure, that everything that happened was voluntary, that I benefited from it," Szymik said in an interview on all-news station TVN24.Tomasz Terlikowski, a

Catholic journalist, comment-

ed that the diocese's letter to the court was "scandalous' and should be withdrawn, and that Bishop Pindel should

apologize to Szymik.

harmful to victims and are "sad proof" that the bishop does not even know the teaching of his own church. The development comes as

He said such statements are

Pope Francis has been trying to clean up a culture of abuse and cover-ups in the Polish church.

The Catholic Church was long the highest moral authority in Poland, having played an inspirational role during occupation and foreign rule and supporting the anti-communist Solidarity movement in the

But the recent reckoning of abuse has damaged its credibility. Even Poland's most famous Catholic, St. John Paul II, now has his legacy tarnished by his own failure to tackle abuse when he was pope.

One of the country's top church leaders, Archbishop Wojciech Polak, the primate of Poland, said recently that the church is seeing a "devastating" decline in religious practice among young Poles, arguing that the church hierarchy's failure to deal with clerical abuse is one reason for that.

Mcap of BSE-listed firms at all-time high of ₹278 lakh crore as markets continue winning momentum

Sensex rises pts 85; Nifty ends above 18,250

New Delhi: The market capitalisation of BSElisted companies reached another milestone on Thursday, rallying to a fresh all-time high of over ₹278.15 lakh crore, driven by an ongoing rally in equities.

Registering its fifth session of gain on Thursday, the 30-share BSE benchmark jumped 85.26 points or 0.14 per cent to settle at 61,235.30. In five days, the benchmark index has gained 1,633.46 points. The winning momentum has helped the market capitalisation of the BSE-listed companies reach an all-time high of ₹2,78,15,826.32 crore on Thursday. Investors' wealth also jumped by ₹7,00,934.44 crore in five days.

Tata Steel was the biggest gainer among the 30-share BSE frontline companies' pack with a jump of 6.40 per cent, followed by Sun Pharma,



L&T, M&M, Bajaj Finserv and PowerGrid. In the broader market, the BSE small-cap index jumped 0.49 per cent and mid-cap gained 0.38 per cent. "Market is continuing its upward trend with good buying witnessed across midcap and small-cap space. We expect this momentum to continue in coming days," said Rahul Sharma, co-owner of Equity 99.

SBI raises USD 300 mn of Regulation S Formosa bonds

Mumbai: State Bank of India (SBI) on Thursday said it has raised USD 300 million from Regulation S Formosa bonds offering a coupon of 2.49 per

Formosa bond is a bond issued in Taiwan.

SBI, through its London branch, raised USD 300 million in 5-year money, which was benchmarked against the 5year US Treasury. It was priced at a spread of 100 basis points (bps) over the benchmark, according to a statement.

The bonds will be listed on Taipei Exchange (TPEx), Singapore Exchange Securities Trading Ltd (SGX-ST) and India International Exchange IFSC Ltd (India INX), the statement said. The bank said this is the first public Formosa USD bond issued by an Indian scheduled commercial bank with a 15 per cent allocation to Taiwanese investors.

The lender added that the transaction received an overwhelming response and saw strong interest from investors

across geographies. A wide range of investors such as supranational agencies assets managers, private bankers and financial institutions have invested in the

In the Court of Sh. Shirish Aggarwal Administrative Civil Judge-cum-ARC (Central) Delhi- 110054.

Master Vardan Agarwal Vs. State & Ors. To Master Vardan Agarwal, Through Mrs. Preet Gupta (Legal

Guardian) W/o Mr. Pawan Kumar At: 1, Under Hill Road, Civil Lines, Delhi-54

FOR SUCCESSION CERTIFICATE UNDER INDIAN SUCCESSION ACT, 1925

Whereas in the above noted petition the applicant/petitioner has applied for Succession Certificate to the Hon'ble Court Under Section 372 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 in respect of the debt and securities amount of Rs. xxx. As per record to be standing in the name of Late Mrs. Sapna Agarwal deceased.

clock in the forenoon has been fixed for hearing or the application notice is hereby given to this concerned. Given under my hand and the sea

Whereas the 05.03.2022 at 10'd

of the court on this 04.01.2022



(Shirish Agarwal) ACJ/ARC Central, Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public at large, on behalf of our client, Mr. Suresh Chand Rathore S/o Mr. RamJi Lal R/o H.No.72/A,Shyam Nagar Near Chandiwala State, Okhla Industrial Estate S.O. South Delhi-110020. ("Owner") Mr. Suresh Chand Rathore was the owner of schedule property from **Mr. Vijender Kumar** by virtue of Sale Deed which was duly registered with the concerned Sub-Registrar-VI (C) Delhi, as Document No. 10255, in Add Book No.1, Volume No. 803, on pages 161-169, on 10.05.2006/23.06.2006 is stated to have been lost, an FIR dated 11.01.2022 (Police Station: Crime Branch, Delhi) bearing LR No. 34796/2022 was also lodged. (LOST SALE DEED DOCUMENTS). Public are warned not to deal with the Document and any person receiving or dealing with the said Document would do so at their own risk and responsibility (including criminal liability) and our client shall not be liable in any manner whatsoever for any loss incurred by such person (s) on account of any such unauthorized dealing, our client will proceed to take such action including applying to concerned authorities for issue of duly Certified Copies / Certified True Copies Duplicate Copies of the Document

Schedule Property Entire Ground Floor without Roof **Rights**, Built up Property No.-26, Pocket No-10, Sector-20, area measuring 48 sq.

for: Sachin Maheshwari & Associates (SMA) Sachin Maheshwari Advocate Saket Court, New Delhi

Equity-oriented funds drive MF assets to record high in 2021 at ₹37.7 lakh crore : Report

Mumbai: Driven by a surge in inflows into equity-oriented funds, assets under management (AUM) of mutual funds surged to a record high of ₹37.73 lakh crore in 2021, up 22 per cent from that in the previous year, says a report by Crisil.

Moreover, the net incremental inflow of Rs 6.70 lakh crore in 2021 is also a record over the previous peak of ₹4.80 lakh crore in 2017, and ₹ 4.5 lakh crore in 2020.

In percentage terms, the AUM rose as much as 22 per cent compared to 17 per cent in 2020, says the report which attributes the record numbers to the inflows into equity-oriented funds which hogged the lion's share in the year, unlike in the previous year when it saw

net outflows

According to the report, while net flows in the past two years -- when the markets were on a song after the pandemic induced bloodbath in the first half 2020--were similar at around ₹1.81 lakh crore each, the plot lines were starkly different with 2020 seeing sharp inflows into debt-oriented funds, and 2021 seeing equityoriented funds cornering the

bulk of inflows. To be sure, net inflows into debt-oriented funds in 2020 came despite the liquidity crisis, with as much as ₹1.94 lakh crore of outflows in March-- the highest since September 2018 with an outflow of ₹2.10 lakh crore following the IL&FS cri-

NORTHERN RAILWAY

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S. N.	Name of work with its location	App. Cost of the work (In Rs.)	Address of office from where the tender form can be purchased	Tender Docum- ent Fee (In Rs.)	Earnest Money to be deposited (In Rs.)	Date & Time for submission of tender & opening of tender	Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc.
1.	AMC of BYTE Intercom system working at Rail Bhawan, Baroda House and DRM office New Delhi for three years	Rs. 39,14,089.56 only.	Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C Northern Railway, 3rd Floor, Annexe-1, DRM office, New Delhi-110055.	Rs. Nil only.	Rs. 78,300 only.	Tender Uploading/Closing date & lime 09.02.2022, 15.00 hrs.	See the N.Rly. website www.ireps.gov.in & Notice Board at S&T Branch, 3rd Floor, Annexe-1, DRM office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055.

No.: 558-Sig/16/Tele/AMC/580/2021-22 Dated: 13.01.2022 Serving Customers with a Smile

PUBLIC NOTICE
Office of the City Magistrate/Marriage Office Dawes Rhutani e ner of Built up Prop erty No.129, are Davies Brutani owner of Sulit up Property No.129, area measuring 35 sq. yds, out of Khasra No.303, Situated in abadi of Lal Dora of Village Saidulajaib, Tehsil Saket (M.B. Road) New Delhi-110017 to be financed Capri Global Capital Ltd. The Original GPA dt. 25.09.1994 vide doc. No. 3060 pertaining to the aforesaid property has been lost and LAR NO. 37267/2022 has been

registered on 12.01.2022 with Delhi Police. If any person(s) have any objection(s) or claim in this property, then contact the undersigned widin 2005, from date of this notice on below address, failing which, it will be assumed that there are no claims or issues in

espect of the aforesaid property. Raghav Tiwari (Advocate) Ch. 830, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi - 110001 Mob.:+91-8076188328

PUBLIC NOTICE To he known to all that I, Mrs. Sheila Tah

Ramani W/o Sh. Gautam T. Ramani R/o Flat No.C-1A, Ground Floor, Gangotri Enclave Alaknanda, New Delhi-110019 owner of DDA SFS Flat No.C-1A, Ground Floor Gangotri Enclave, Alaknanda, New Delhi-110019 vide File No. F 52(204)82/ SFS/ALB /III has applied for conversion of the aforesaid flat from lease hold to free hold in DDA. The original document i.e Fifth & Final Demand Letter, Possession Letter, NOC Electricity & Water and Site Possession Slip etc., of the above said flat have been lost. An NCR to this effect has been lodged in Police

Any person (s) claiming any right, interest having any objection or found in possession of original document, contact with above named person at above address/phone No.9891166096 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform or write to Dv. Director (LAB) H or Director (H)-1, D Block 3rd Floor, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE is hereby given that Santra Devi who is in the process to avail the loan against the Land area measuring 3 Kanal 15 marfa (bearing property Id no. 175C9U179) out of Rectangle no 24, Killa no. 15/2(2-13), 27(1-2), Situated in the revenue estate of Village Mohammadpur Jharsa, Tehsil & Distt. Gurgoan Haryana owned by her vide sale deed having registration no.14663, dated 13/9/2012 executed by Mrs Pick Up Carrier(s) Unit of Sanya Road Line Pvt Ltd.

Ltd.

Whereas she has lost one of the original previous title deed ie. Sale Deed dated 3/10/01 in favour of M/s Pick Up Carrier(s) Unit of Sanya Road Line Pvt Ltd in lieu of that she has also lodged an FIR on dated 4/11/22. All person/s lodged an FIR on dated 4/11/22. All person/s 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 howsoever, 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 valved and/or abandoned and our client shall proceed with the disbursement of loan for purchase of the said Property and subsequent creation of mortgage in respect thereof. Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate) Shop No. 5&6, Pkt-E, CSC Mayur Vinar-II Delhi-91, Mob. 9810063351 having any claim against or in respect of the said

No. 3277/ST-CM(Marriage Registration)/2022
Date: 11 January, 2022
NOTICE
A notice of intended marriage has been received from Mr. Binny Varghese S/o Mr. P.V. Varghese R/o 57, Pratham Paradise, Near Somnath Nagar. Tarsali, Vadodara, Gujarat-390009 and Ms. Chhav Sharda D/o Mr. V.K. Sharda R/o 9D, Block-B-5. Dhawalgiri Apartment, Opposite Church, Sector-34. Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.) in the office of the undersigned, any person interested therein, may file objections to it on any day upto 08.02.2022 in the

office of the undersigned.

Deputy Collector/ I/C City Magistrate/
Marriage Officer Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.)

AST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice

E-tender Notice No.56 of 2021-22 (Open)-Engg/DOU On line (through e-tendering) for the following work is invited by DRM/Engg/DDU for and on behalf of the President of India from experienced and nancially as well as technically sound contractors including those enlisted with the Railway, CPWD. BSNL, MES, PWD and other public sector undertakings: 1. (A) Name of work with its location: Tender No.46-DDU-SRDEN-II-21-22 Provision of OFC cum microwave pment room at KSTA, RFJ, BHKH & PES in connection with Utility shifting in DFC alignment. (B) Advertised Value: Rs.54,77,082.92 (C) Earnest Money: Rs.1,09,600.00., 2. (A) Name of work with its location: Tender No.47-DDU-SRDEN-II-21-22 Shifting Utilities work in SEB-MPO section in connection with DFCCIL ignment under ADEN/GAYA under SR.DEN/II/DDU. (B) Advertised Value: Rs.7,80,23,171.98 (C) Earnest Money: Rs.5,40,100.00., 3. (A) Name of work with its location: Tender No.49-DDU-SRDEN-II-21-22 Shifting Utilities work in SEB-MPO section in connection with DECCIL nt under ADEN/DOS under SR.DEN/II/DDU. (B) Advertised Value: Rs.5,59,57,063.64 (C) Earnest Money: Rs.4.29.800.00 . 4. (A) Name of work with its location: Tender No.50-DDU-SRDEN-II-21-22 FOB extension work in SEB-MPO section in connection with DFCCIL alignment under ADEN/GAYA under SR.DEN/II/DDU (B) Advertised Value: Rs.7,20,04,643.37 (C) Earnest Money: Rs.5,10,000.00., 5. (A) Name of work with its location: Tender No.51-DDU-SRDEN-8-21-22 FOB extension work in SEB-MPO section in connection with DFCCIL ignment under ADEN/DOS under SR.DEN/II/DDU (B) Advertised Value: Rs.4,80,00,752.69 (C) Earnest Money: Rs.3,90,000.00., 6. (A) Name of work with its location: Tender No.52-DDU-SRDEN-II-21-22 Shifting of existing signaling system at KSTA, RFJ, BHKH & PES in connection with Utility shifting in DFC alignment. (B) Advertised Value: Rs 2,35,77,194.48 (C) Closing Date & time of submission of e-01.02.2022, Up-to 12:00 hrs. (8) Website particulars of e-tendering: www.ireps.gov.in Divisional Railway Manager

ECR, Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhaya Division PR/01493/DDU/ENGG/T/21-22/64

Rupee inches higher by 3 paise to close at 73.90 against US dollar

Mumbai: The rupee inched higher by 3 paise to close at 73.90 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, as muted domestic equities and weak macroeconomic data weighed on investor sentiments. Forex traders said elevated crude oil prices also affected the local unit.

At the interbank forex market, the rupee opened at 73.91 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 73.84 and a low of 73.97. It finally settled at 73.90, a rise of 3 paise over its previous close.

In the previous session, the rupee had settled almost flat at 73.93 against the US dollar. On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex ended 85.26 points or 0.14 per cent higher at 61,235.30, while the broader NSE Nifty advanced 45.45 points or 0.25 per cent to

Gold climbs ₹119; silver jumps ₹745

New Delhi: Gold price in the national Capital on Thursday jumped ₹119 to ₹ 46,919 per 10 grams, reflecting a rally in international precious metal prices, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal settled at ₹46,800 per 10 gram.

Silver also moved up by ₹745 to ₹60,777 per kg from ₹60,032 per kg in the previous

In the international market, gold was trading with gains at USD 1,827 per ounce and silver was flat at USD 23.15 per ounce.

"Gold prices traded firm with spot gold prices at COMEX trading at USD 1,827 per ounce on Thursday,' HDFC Securities Senior Analyst (Commodities) Tapan Patel said.

LIC IPO to hit markets by March; draft papers to be filed with Sebi by this month-end

New Delhi: The Government will launch the mega public offer of LIC by March and file draft papers with market regulator Sebi by the end of this month, an official said. Finance Minister Nirmala

Sitharaman had last week reviewed the progress of the initial public offering (IPO) of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) in a meeting with top officials of the ministry. The official said the

September 2021 quarter financials of LIC are getting finalised as well as fund bifurcation is in "We are hopeful of filing

investment.

the DRHP (draft red-herring prospectus) with Sebi by month-end or early-February.

One thing is for sure that IPO will come before the end of the current fiscal," the official told PTI. LIC IPO is crucial for meeting the ₹1.75-lakh crore disinvestment target set for the current financial year ended March 2022. So far this fiscal, ₹9,330 crore has been mopped up through PSU dis-

The Government in September last year appointed 10 merchant bankers, including Goldman Sachs (India) Securities Pvt Ltd, Citigroup Global Markets India Pvt Ltd and Nomura Financial Advisory and Securities (India) Pvt Ltd to manage the mega initial public offering of country's largest insurer LIC. *PTI*

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-I, DELHI 4th Floor, Jeevan Tara Building, Parliament Street, New Delhi- 110001.

OA No./428/2020 HDFC Bank Ltd., (Applicant) Versus M/s Aastha Jewellers & An

OA NO.4201020 PIDEC Bank Ltd., (Applicant) versus wis Asstria Jeweliers & Afr. (Defendants)

To, 1. M/s Aastha Jewellers (Borrower) Through its partners 2526/7, DTC Chamber, Beadon Pura, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110018 Defendant 1. 2. Mr. Shyam Sunder (Partner & Guarantor) BE-134 Third Floor, Near New ERASc hool, Hari Nagar BE Block, West Delhi-110064 Defendant 2. Whereas the above-named applicant has instituted a case for recovery of Rs. 9,17,17,140.33/-(Rupees Nine Crore Seventeen Lakhs Seventeen Thousand One Hundred Forty and Paisa Thirty Three Only) against you and whereas it has been shown to the satisfaction of the Tribunal that it is not possible to serve you in ordinary way. Therefore, this notice is given by advertisement directing you to make appearance before Ld. Registrar on 01.02.2022 at 10.30 A.M. (for further details kindly visit DRT website www.etribuna.gov.in Phone Number: 0111-23748473). Take notice that in

directing you to make appearance before Ld. Registrar on 01.02.2022 at 10.30 A.M. (for further details kindly visit DRT website www.etribuna.gov.in Phone Number: 011-23748473). Take notice that in case of your failure to appear on the above mentioned day before this Tribunal, the case will be head and decided in your absence.

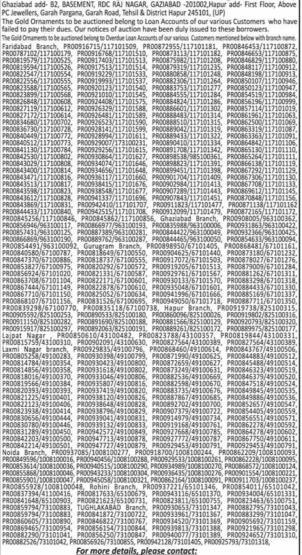
Due to ongoing Pandemic Situation, all the matters will be taken up through Video Conferencing and for that purpose: -(i) All the Advocates/Litigants shall download the "Cisco Webex" application / Software; (ii) "Meeting ID" and "Password" for the next date of hearing qua cases to be taken by 'Registrar/Recovery Officer-II and Recovery Officer-II shall be available one day prior to the next date at DRT Offical Portal is. "drt.gov.in" under the Public Notice Head. (iii) In any exigency qua that, the Advocates/ Litigants can contact the concerned official at Ph. No. 011-23748473. Given under my hone number for further enquiry Mr. Amit K.Dar, Ld. Registrar, DRT-I, New Delhi, Ph. No: 011-23748473. Email: drt1delhi-dfs@nic.in By order of this Tribunal, For Registrar

SBFC Finance Pvt. Ltd.

Address Unit No. 103 First Floor C&B Square, Sangam Complex, 127, Andheri-Kurla Road, Village Chakala, Andheri (East), Mumbai 400059 | Telephone: +91 22 67875300 Fax: +91 22 67875334 | www.sbfc.com|

(Erstwhile Small Business Fincredit India Pvt. Ltd.) Corporate Identity Number: U67190MH2008PTC178270 PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the Public that Auction of pledged Gold Ornaments will be conducted by SBFC Finance Pvt. Ltd. on **21st January' 2022 or thereafter** at 10 AM at 0-7, 1st Floor, 'above Look Saloon Lajpat Nagar- 2, New Delhi-110024, Faridabad branch D-2, First Floor, N.I.T., Near 1-2 Chowk , Faridabad Haryana-121001 and Gurugram branch First Floor, Property No. 342/9, Subhash Nagar, 1 st Floor,New Railway Road,Gurugram-122001, Noida Branch add- Plot No. 5, Ground Floor, Opposite White Castle Hotel, Main Dadri Road, Salarpur, Bhangel,Sector 101, Dist. Gautam Budh Nagar, Noida 201304 (UP), Ghaziabad add- B2, BASEMENT, RDC RAI NAGAR, GAZIABAD -201002,Hapur add- First Floor, Above



SBFC Finance Pvt. Ltd.

Contact Number(s): Lajpat Nagar 1800-102-8012 / 011- 40305228 / 207, Faridabad 01294314725/4104450 and Gurgaon Branch 0124-4276037, Ghaziabad branch - 8826084221, Hapur branch - 9555688622

(SBFC Finance Pvt. Ltd.reserves the right to alter the

number of accounts to be auctioned &/ postpone / cancel the auction without any prior notice

Need to make our growth much more equitable: **Niti VC Kumar**

Mumbai: The country needs much more 'equitable' growth as inequality could lead to tensions in society, Niti Aayog Vice-Chairman Rajiv Kumar said on Thursday.

Kumar further said the country's democracy will not permit the kind of Kshaped growth it has seen in the past, where different sections of the population have been growing at different paces. 'Within India, growing inequality will

sooner rather than later create tensions and problems in our society which we will not be able to bear. We need to find ways now to make our growth much more equitable, Kumar said at an event organised by the Bombay Chamber of Commerce and Industry

The equitable growth should be the one which can empower people and give them the right opportunity to excel, he emphasised. Kumar said there is an expectation that the economy will grow at 9.2 per cent this fiscal, 8.5 or 8.7 per cent in FY2023 and 7.5 per cent after that, making it one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

The question we need to ask is will that be good enough to meet the aspiration of our young population, to meet their ambition...This is not enough," he said.

The challenge, he said, is to break through growth barriers soon.

It is not simple but also not impossible. We need to have consistent, rapid and double-digit growth for the next two or three decades which will help us use our demographic dividend and also help us prevent our demographic dividend from turning into a waste and becoming difficult to handle," he pointed out.

However, Kumar added that the growth which the country wants to achieve should not be at the cost of the environment.

'We have to complete our economic transition in a manner that is green transition. It is a huge challenge again because very often in the past this has been seen as a trade-off between growth and environment, but we can't see it as a trade-off. We have to find ways and means to make it happen together," he said.

According to Kumar, the private sector investment will be the driver of growth in the country going ahead.

RBI Guv-headed FSDC sub-committee reviews economic situation

Mumbai: The FSDC sub-committee headed by Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Thursday reviewed the economic situation in the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic and resolved to keep a close watch on the unfolding developments with a view to ensure financial stability. The meeting of the Financial Stability and

Development Council (FSDC) Sub-Committee (FSDC-SC) was held via video conferencing and attended by all financial sector regulators including SEBI, IRDAI, PFRDA and IBBI. "The members resolved to maintain a close watch on the unfolding developments and act proactively to ensure that financial institutions and financial markets remain resilient amidst the challenges posed by the resurgence of the pandemic," the RBI said in a release.

The sub-committee reviewed the major developments in the global and domestic economy as well as in various segments of the financial system and discussed the assessments of members about the scenario emerging from the third wave of the pandemic. Among others, it discussed various inter-regulatory issues and matters relating to the use of Aadhaar-based e-KYC and Aadhaar Enabled Payment System by reg-

It also reviewed the activities of various technical groups under its purview and the functioning of State Level Coordination Committees (SLCCs) in various states and Union Territories. The meeting was attended T V Somanathan,

Finance Secretary and Secretary, Department of Expenditure; Ajay Seth, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs; Tarun Bajaj, Secretary, Department of Revenue; Rajesh Verma, Secretary, Ministry of Corporate Affairs; Ajay Prakash Sawhney, Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and Shashank Saksena, Secretary, Financial Stability and Development Council. Other members of the Sub-Committee, including Ajay Tyagi, Chairman, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and Supratim Bandyopadhyay, Chairman, Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), also attended the meeting.

Besides, RBI deputy governors Michael Debabrata

Patra and T Rabi Sankar; and executive directors O P Mall, J K Dash and Rohit Jain participated in the meeting. Vandita Kaul, Additional Secretary represented the Department of Financial Services; T Alamelu, Whole Time Member, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) and Navrang Saini, Chairman (Additional Charge), Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) attended the meeting on behalf of their respective insti-

ROTOGRAPHICS (INDIA) LIMITED

CIN: L74899DL1976PLC008036

Regd. Office: Unit No 8, Ground Floor, Pocket M, Sarita Vihar, New Delhi 110076 Telephone: 011-47366600 E-mail: info@rotoindia.co.in Website: www.rotoindia.co.in

EXTRACT OF UNAUDITED STANDALONE FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR QUARTER & NINE MONTHS

ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021			(In Lakhs)
	Quarter Ended	Nine Month Ended	Quarter Ended
Particulars	31.12.2021	31.12.2021	31.12.2020
	Un-audited	Un-audited	Un-audited
Total Income from Operations(Net)	5.11	5.11	0.63
Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax,	2.23	(1.64)	(1.81)
Exceptional and /or Extraordinary items)			
Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before Tax,	2.23	(1.64)	(1.81)
(after Exceptional and /or Extraordinary items)			
Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after	2.23	(1.64)	(1.81)
Exceptional and /or Extraordinary items)			
Total Comprehensive Income for the period			
[Comprising profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax)	2.23	(1.64)	(1.81)
and other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]			
Equity Share Capital	360.13	360.13	360.13
Earning Per Share(of Rs. 10/- each)			
Basic and diluted (not annualised)	0.06	(0.05)	(0.05)

The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly financial Results filed with Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of SEBI (LODR) Regultions 2015. The full format of Quarterly financial Results are available on the stock exchange website www.bseindia.com and Company's Website at www.rotoindia.co.in.

The financial results have been prepared in accordance with Indian Accounting Standard (IND AS) notified under the Companies (Indian Accounting Standards) Rules, 2015 as amended by the Companies (Indian Accounting Standards)

(Amendments) Rules, 2016.
The above unaudited Financial Results were reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the board of Directors a

their meeting held on 13.01.2022. For Rotographics (India) Limited

A ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh Delhi-110005 PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET

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 mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Ltd. will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" as per the brief particulars given hereunder; Amount Reserve Date and Date & Details of the

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s) /Co- Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Outstanding	Price Earnest Money Deposit	Time of Property Inspection	Time of Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Somya Jain (Borrower) LBNOD00002007549	C-3/125, Tower- C3, 12th Floor, Aravali Heights, Sector 24, Dharuhera, Rewari, Gurgaon, area- 1555 Sq.Ft.	Rs. 71,02,820/- as on December 24, 2021.	Rs. 31,00, 000/- Rs.3,10, 000/-	January 18, 2022 From 12 Noon to 3:00 PM	February 05, 2022 From 11:00 AM Onwards
2.	Dharmendra Kumar (Borrower)/ Sumita Singh (Co Borrowers) LBNOD00002029333 C-4/121, Tower- C4, 12th Floo Aravali Heights, Sector 24, Dharuhera, Rewari, Gurgaon, area- 1548 Sq.Ft.		Rs. 68,12,485/- as on December 24, 2021.	Rs. 31,00, 000/- Rs.3,10, 000/-	January 18, 2022 From 12 Noon to 3:00 PM	February 05, 2022 From 11:30 AM Onwards
3.	Dharmendra Kumar (Borrower)/ Sumita Singh (Co Borrowers) LBNOD00002030018	D-5/134, Tower- D5, 13th Floor, Aravali Heights, Sector 24, Dharuhera, Rewari, Gurgaon, area- 1207 Sq. Ft.	Rs. 60,90,428/- as on December 24, 2021.	Rs. 25,00, 000/- Rs.2,50, 000/-	January 18, 2022 From 12 Noon to 3:00 PM	February 05, 2022 From 12:00 Noo Onwards
4.	Mange Ram Jain (Borrower)/ Anamika Jain (Co Borrowers) LBNOD00002011506	D-2/134, Tower- D2, 13th Floor, Aravali Heights, Sector 24, Dharuhera, Rewari, Gurgaon, Area- 1207 Sq. Ft.	Rs. 54,15,438/- as on December 24, 2021.	Rs. 25,00, 000/- Rs.2,50, 000/-	January 18, 2022 From 12 Noon to 3:00 PM	February 05, 2022 From 12:30 PM Onwards
5.	Mange Ram Jain (Borrower)/ Anamika Jain (Co Borrowers) LBNOD00002029715	D-2/131, Tower- D2, 13th Floor, Aravali Heights, Sector 24, Dharuhera, Rewari, Gurgaon, Area- 1207 Sq. Ft.	Rs. 52,77,616/- as on December 24, 2021.	Rs. 25,00, 000/- Rs.2,50, 000/-	January 18, 2022 From 12 Noon to 3:00 PM	February 05, 2022 From 1:00 PM Onwards

M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited. The Mortgagors/ noticee are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till February 04, 2022 before 05:00 P.M else these secured assets will be sold as per above

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh Delhi-110005 and thereafter they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before February 04. 2022 before 05:00 P.M along with scan image of Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, in case prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh. Delhi-110005 on or before February 04, 2022 before 05:00 P.M. Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalized/Scheduled Bank in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited" payable at Delhi For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the auction or submission of

tenders, kindly contact ICICI Bank Limited on 8657476284 or M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited or 9710029933/9810029926/01244233933 Please note that Marketing agencies 1. M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited. 2. Augeo Asset Management Pvt Ltd. have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property.

Date: January 14, 2022 Place: Delhi/ NCR Authorized Officer

[See proviso to rule 8(6)] Notice for sale of immovable assets





PEOPLE OF TOMORROW

The vegan all-day dining cafe, a passion project, is a space for environmentally-conscious brands to display their products, says Sameer Bawa

n June 2021, when celebrity Chef Daniel Humm started serving a strictly plant based menu in his award winning, three michelin star restaurant, Eleven Madison Park, in New York, it raised a few eyebrows. The menu got mixed reviews but the chef was convinced that it was the way forward and the menu was more luxurious than ever

While veganism as a practise might be quite evolved in the West, I have started noticing that a lot of restaurants back home in Delhi have also started incorporating vegan preparations in their menus which optically seems a bit surprising, considering that the major population of India has always been vegetarian. A couple of days ago, I got the opportunity to try out, People Of Tomorrow, a vegan all-day dining cafe located in the Dhan Mill compound.

"Upon being educated about the negative impacts of the meat and dairy industry on the environment, I realised the importance of veganism and the lack of food options for those wanting to adopt this lifestyle. I knew I had to delve into this project, making veganism accessible," says founder Ritv Kapoor, a vegan convert for the last four years.

The rustic, casual and vibrant cafe

serves reconstructed soul food with a wide array of small plates, salads, platters, a live taco counter and much

We started with the *Signature mezze* platter comprising two bean falafel, baba ghanoush, beetroot hummus, muhammara, tabbouleh and pita. As they say, well begun is half done! Really







for the muhammara which was almost a perfect blend of red peppers, walnuts and pomegranate molasses. I requested for an iced tea on the side but they do have nice options for coffee lovers as well.

We also requested for a Go-Green beans salad which complimented the mezze platter beautifully. Seasonal green beans decorated with a kaffir lime sambhar and garnished with almond slivers and chilli soy. The beans had the perfect crunch and sambhar provided the requisite contrast that the dish warranted. Just brilliant!

Next up was the Puff-lo broccoli, a dish which intrigued me the most. A broccoli preparation glazed with cream cheese, buffalo sauce and white onion soubise. A very comforting dish, it had a lovely and creamy aftertaste with a hint

We sampled the Smoke - don't choke arti pizza, a charcoal fettucini and a pumpkin ravioli next. The pizza topped with smoked artichoke and almond with a drizzle of balsamic was light and fluffy. I was told that they rest the pizza dough for 24 hours.

All the pastas at People of Tomorrow are from the artisanal pasta brand, Casarecce.in. The fettucini was served *al dente* with some seasonal mushrooms and drizzled with some portobello powder. It was very nice.

Their take on the pumpkin ravioli, though, was a slight dampener for me. It could have been served at a warmer temperature. Nice touch of sprinkling it with hazelnuts and capers but if you are expecting a North Italian classic, then you might be a bit disappointed.

They gave the finishing touches to the meal with the Textures of chocolate. As the name suggests, different preparations and textures of chocolate were served on a platter with contrasting flavour profiles. Can't go wrong with chocolate, can you?

In a nutshell, it was a very nice dining experience. I wholeheartedly support the endeavour and the 'sustainability' message behind the brand, along with the food expression of the chef. While People of tomorrow is passion project which, in its own way, wants to help preserve future generations, it is also a space for environmentally-conscious brands to display their products. Vegan food might be propagated at the heart of the brand, but I personally feel that it also shares a perspective which encourages a super healthy and sustainable lifestyle. I would not be surprised if over the next few years, the F&B industry in India embraces vegan food and we have more such concepts mushrooming across the country.

(The author is a food critic and

Chomping under cabanas

From the decks of Aerocity, One8Commune has spread its roots of delicacy to Mall Road as Книзнви Кіяті defines her experience



aunched by Virat Kohli in Aerocity Delhi Llong back, the Indian skipper decided to open a new branch of One8Commune at Mall Road, North Delhi, and it speaks of ultimate

It was drizzling slightly, on a winter evening and I was cold and parched. So, entering the grounds rendered to me a different form of relief, besides the evident warmth and style the place reflected. The new branch showcased a large open

space, with a combination of grey and beige furniture, which was, and hear me out, a repose for the eyes that were used to the turquoise/teal and pink pastel everywhere! It featured a luxurious terrace seating and

I was ready for the Al-fresco dining experience. In the background, pop music made me groove as one of the servers, Swain, helped me with deciding, for I'm not good at picking from a plethora of good meals, especial-I started with their famous Gin cocktail

twist 2. It had a smoky-ish taste, was rose flavoured, specifically like a khatta roafsa, but immediately calmed the mind. I could taste grapefruit and rosemary. The Chicken nachos encompassed sauteed

chicken chunks served cold. The chicken was

brilliantly cooked with mustard sauce only augmenting the taste. Next up, the Paneer tikka with mint hari

chatni was served. The gravy was warm and just right but the paneer felt slightly rubbery. One of the glories of the one8 brand that

I had heard of was the fine line of culinary dishes that Chef Pawan creates. The Black and fiery chicken along with the Mushroom googly dimsums were too popular to be ignored. However, since spicy food and I don't go along well, I chose just the dimsums. The name was unique. But Kohli being the owner, it sorta made sense with the cricket metaphors.

The truffle oil dimsums had assorted mushrooms which I paired with gin. The combination turned out to be better than I had imagined.

I was excited for One8's Classic mac n cheese which quickly became one of the best I had had. The mozzarella cheese, and Parmsan cheddar cheese made it soft and creamy — very American. Yet, the crust was crispy, and indulged in goodness of oregano, became lip smacking.

Towards the end, I tried the Sriracha chicken taco which gave a tangy taste, I'm guessing, because of the siracha sauce. The od connoiseur.) shredded chicken was juicy, slightly spicy and of the lanes of Central Delhi





the covering was soft. It was one of the best and I highly recommend taco with Passion session, vodka with green apple. They had added a huge screen across the

errace, which suited the ambience well. Finally came the One8 Commune signature chicken, which was basically Korean fried chicken on an extravagant spread of cheese

and heavenly in every bite. Chef Sanjit Kumar had praised the Khau galli soya boti kebab, Garlic butter prawn, Grilled fish and Bamboo cashew nut tofu but since I was content and full, it went straight

to my future food drive agendas. Abhinay, the corporate CDC for the brand, who handled the European part of the menu, explained the secret behind their delicious *Butter garlic prawns*, "Our rendition of the *Butter garlic prawns* has a bit of olives, charry topato at a second of the se

cherry-tomato, star anise, and a lot of herbs." The Civil Lines branch also has a rooftop set up with cabanas, a separate chic bar and a well-lit live kitchen, serving dimsums, sushis,

and pizzas. It made for the perfect place to relax and have good food with splendid views

PONGAL TIKKIS WHAT YOU NEED

- Oats pongal (cooked as per packet instructions): 1 cup
- Boiled potato: 1
- Bread crumbs: 1 cup
- Chilli powder: 1 tsp
- Cumin powder: 1 tsp Coriander powder: 1 tsp
- Turmeric powder: 1 tsp
- Chilli flakes: 1 tsp
- Garam masala: 1 tsp
- Salt
- Chopped onion: 1
- Grated ginger: 1 tsp • Chopped green chilli: 1
- Oil for frying **METHOD**
- mix them well. Make small tikkis out of the dough.
- Heat a pan and add oil. Shallow fry the tikkis on both sides.

In a bowl, add all the ingredients and

Serve hot with ketchup.

Courtesy: Pavitra K, lead, new product development, True Elements

QUINOA CRUSTED COTTAGE CHEESE WITH CHILLY PINEAPPLE MARMALADE

WHAT YOU NEED

- Cottage cheese: 300 gm
- Quinoa roasted: 50 gm Sumac spice: 10 gm
- Garlic powder: 15 gm
- Green chilly: 5 gm
- Salt: 5 gm
- Pepper powder: 2 gm
- Rosewater: 2 drops
- Rose syrup: 5 ml
- Sunflower oil: 10-20 ml
- For chilly pineapple marmalade: • Pineapple puree: 300 gm
- Ginger: 25 gm
- Sugar: 100 gm
- Pineapple juice: 100 ml • Deghi mirch powder: 10 gm
- Lemon slices: 4
- Lemon juice: 5 ml

• Cashew nuts: 100 ml

Take a pan and roast wheat

flour in ghee for 20 to 25

minutes on low flame till it

attains light brown colour.

let it cool down.

Shift it to a small bowl and

METHOD

METHOD

For pineapple chilly marmalade:

- In a clean vessel, add pineapple puree, sugar, pineapple juice, grated ginger and lemon juice. Cook till half reduced on slow flame.
- Upon attaining gel like consistency, add chilli powder and let it cool in sterilised glass jar.

For cottage cheese:

- Cut cottage cheese into cubes.
- Marinate them using sumac spice, garlic pwd, finely chopped green chilly,
- rosewater, rose syrup, salt, pepper and
- Separately, on a nonstick pan roast quinoa grains on slow flame until it gets nutty and crunchy.
- Marinated cottage cheese could be either grilled or pan seared.
- Now drench the individual pieces of cottage cheese in quinoa and arrange them nicely on a platter.
- Serve it them hot with chilly pineapple marmalade.

Courtesy: Godrej Vikhorli Cucina



- jaggery melts, slow down the
 - flame and boil it on low flame till it becomes thick. Switch off the flame and let it cool
- Slightly roast sesame seeds and add them in melted jaggery along with crushed almonds and cashew nuts.
- Mix them well in roasted flour till it becomes a soft dough.
- Take a small portion of mixture and roll between your palms to give it round ball shape
- Make sure the mixture should not turn completely cool otherwise you will not be able to bind mixture into laddoos
- Courtesy: Mukesh Kumar, executive sous chef, DoubleTree by Hilton Gurugram Baani Square

LISTING

RETURN OF SUPER SWEETY AT THE CLARIDGES

Lohri is one of the mst celebrated festivals in India and bears a message that is universal in every sense. It has a lot to offer — great food, a taste of tradition, dance and dhol. It's a way to spread joy marking the end of the chilly winter season and welcoming the first Rabi harvest.

The Claridges, New Delhi brings you authentic, popular Lohri recipes by top chefs to celebrate the popular folk festival at Dhaba, restaurant serving Northern Frontier and delicacies from Punjab. Head Chef Mahavir Singh and renowned guest Chef Sweety Singh have curated a special menu for the occasion.

Chef Sweety Singh has dug deep into authentic Punjabi flavours to come up



with a special a la carte menu, showcasing a range of regional preparations consisting of signature dishes. His ability to experiment while keeping within the boundaries of traditional Indian food will earn him accolades amongst the Delhites during Lohri!

When: Till January 17 Where: Dhaba, The Claridges, New Delhi



GET YOUR FAVOURITE WINTER TEA-TIME COMBO FROM **SAMOSA PARTY**

Samosa Party is known for its cleverly conceptualised scrumptious samosas with interesting fillings right from Corn Cheese, Mozzarella pizza, Peri Peri, Mutton keema, Pickley paneer, BBQ chicken to Egg samosas. Choose from their exciting range of

freshly fried cocktail samosas, party packs and chai samosa combos to enjoy with family and friends. Don't forget to order the freshly brewed flask of your favourite chai; be it adrak, lemon, masala, or elaichi chai. With Samosa Party, you can now throw

the perfect party every day AM and PM. **Order** on Swiggy or Zomato Where: Gurgaon and Manesar When: 9 am-10 pm

RAISE A CHOCOLATE TOAST AT SMOOR, GURGAON, BAANI SQUARE

Celebrate everyday by giving it a perfect ending with exotic desserts. SMOOR, Gurgaon, Baani Square offers you a perfect setting to celebrate with your loved ones with Couverture chocolate. Complete your each meal with specially crafted chocolates according to your preference by SMOOR like pecan and coffee, cashew and cury, true bar, hot chocolate mocha, macarons, cookies and many more. Take your loved ones on the unforgettable chocolate journey and explore the new flavours created by SMOOR to make your day. Where: SMOOR, Gurgaon, Baani Square Order at: www.smoor.in

Price: ₹150/- onwards



GUR AUR ATTE KE LADDO WHAT YOU NEED Jaggery: 1000 gm • Wheat flour: 500 gm • Desi ghee: 500 gm Sesame seeds: 200 gm Almonds: 100 gm

- In the same pan, add jaggery and water and melt it on high flame. When the

MADRID BEATS BARCELONA FOR 100TH TIME, REACHES CUP FINAL

Barcelona put on a good fight as an underdog, but in the end it was Real Madrid celebrating again after a thrilling "clásico" between the Spanish powerhouses in Saudi Arabia.

Federico Valverde scored in extra time to give Real Madrid a 3-2 win over Barcelona on Wednesday for its 100th victory over its storied rival and a spot in the final of the Spanish Super Cup.

Barcelona twice equalized in regular time but couldn't recover after Valverde scored from close range on a breakaway eight minutes into extra time to give Madrid its fifth straight win over the Catalan club in all competitions.

Defending Super Cup champion Athletic Bilbao will face Spanish league champion Atlético Madrid in the other semifinal Thursday.

"We competed well," Barcelona defender Gerard Piqué said.

"It's not the result we wanted but we are a step closer to winning. I'm very proud of our team. We

have to leave with our heads up after the way we played against a Real Madrid team that is having a very

The Spanish Super Cup is being played in Saudi Arabia again after the coronavirus pandemic transferred last year's edition back to Spain. The competition was moved to Saudi Arabia — and expanded from two to four teams in a "Final Four" format — as part of a deal reportedly worth 30 million euros

(\$34 million) a year until 2029.

The changes drew criticism from human rights activists and complaints from fans who preformed the competition staved in ferred the competition stayed in Spain. Among those complaining was Athletic midfielder Raúl García, who said this week it made "no sense" to play the games away from

It was Madrid's 100th win over Barcelona in 248 competitive matches against the rival. Barcelona has 96 wins, though none since

"I have to admit that Barcelona played well," Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said. "It was an even match. We

were efficient on the counterat-It was a mostly even match but Madrid looked the more dangerous

counterattacks led Vinícius Júnior

the lead in the 25th minute after Busquets near the midfield line and Benzema stole the ball from and Benzema. The duo gave Madrid Barcelona midfielder Sergio the area and beat goalkeeper Marc-

fed Vinícius, who made a run into

Barcelona equalized with a fluke goal near the end of the half. Madrid defender Éder Militão tried to clear a ball from inside the area but his shot bounced off Barcelona

striker Luuk de Jong and then off the post before going over the line. Benzema hit the post in the 69th, then a couple of minutes later put Madrid ahead again from close range off the rebound of a deflection by Ter Stegen following a cross by Dani Carvajal. Ter Stegen had stopped another Benzema shot just moments earlier.

Ansu Fati, who replaced De Jong in the 66th, leveled the match again in the 83rd with a header off well-placed cross by Jordi Alba.

Valverde, who replaced Luka Modric in the 83rd, scored the winner in extra time after a fast counterattack by Madrid, converting a cross by Rodrygo from the right flank with Barcelona's defense heavily outmanned.

Madrid arrived as as one of the hottest teams in Spain and was the favorite over a Barcelona side still rebuilding after the loss of Lionel Messi to Paris Saint-Germain. The points in the Spanish league with a game in hand.

It was the first clásico for Xavi Hernández as Barcelona coach. Ronald Koeman was still at the helm when the Catalan club lost 2-1 to Madrid at the Camp Nou in the first clásico of the season in the league last October.

Ferran Torres made his Barcelona debut after being signed from Manchester City. Torres and young midfielder Pedri González arrived in Saudi Arabia later than their teammates because they tested positive for the coronavirus. Torres, who was substituted at halftime, hadn't played since getting injured with Spain's national team in October. Madrid was without defender David Alaba because of an

Madrid made it to the "Final Four" after finishing second to Atlético in the league last season. Barcelona qualified as the Copa del Rey champion, which it won over Only about 30,000 fans were

allowed at the 62,000-capacity King Fahd International Stadium because of the coronavirus pandemic.



Sindhu advances, Malvika knocks idol Saina out of India Open

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

wo-time Olympic medallist **▲** shuttler PV Sindhu and HS Prannoy advanced to the quarterfinals but the promising Malvika Bansod ended her idol Sania Nehwal's campaign at the Yonex-Sunrise India Open here on Thursday.

Former champion and 2012 Olympic bronze medallist Saina suffered a 17-21 9-21 straight game loss to her 20-year-old compatriot Malvika.

Malvika, ranked 111th, took 34 minutes to see off the former world number 1.

"It was my first meeting with Saina Nehwal. She has been my idol since I started playing badminton. So playing against her was a dream come true and that

... A Super 500 tournament, it was a big achievement for me, one of the biggest wins of my career so far," Malvika said after her win. Coming back from knee and groin injuries, Saina, who had won her first round match on Tuesday, was happy with the her movement on the court but said she had a lot of catching up to do on the fitness front. "Today I was moving on

the court but my fitness is still not where it should be. So I came here to see were I stand. My body is good but fitness level I need to work on," Saina said, adding, that she Malvika is "very good" in rallies and has a bright

Earlier, the top seed Sindhu had no problem dispatching fellow India Ira Sharma 21-10 21-10. She will meet compatriot Ashmita Chaliha, who got the better of french shuttler Yaelle Hoyaux 21-17 21-14, in the quarterfinal. Malvika will next take on fellow Indian Aakarshi Kashyap in the quarterfinals. Aakarshi had defeated com-

patriot Keyura Mopatin 21-10 21-10 in another women's singles second round match. Prannoy received a walkover as Manjunath withdrew from the tournament after testing positive for COVID-19.

The men's top seed Kidambi Srikanth, doubles player Ashwini Ponnappa, Ritika Rahul Thkar, Treesa Jolly, Simran Aman Singh and Khushi Gupta are the other players who had to withdraw from the tournament due to the positive COVID-19 results, which led to several

Srikanth, six other players withdrawn after testing positive for COVID-19

The India Open tournament was on Thursday rocked by the COVID-19 pandemic with as many as seven Indian shuttlers, including reigning world championship silver medallist Kidambi Srikanth, withdrawing from the event after testing positive for the virus.

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) announced this in the wee hours, before the Badminton Association of India (BAI) confirmed the names. Besides Srikanth, the other players affected by the virus are Ashwini Ponnappa, Ritika Rahul Thkar, Treesa Jolly, Mithun Manjunath, Simran Aman Singh and Khushi Gupta.

"The players returned a positive result to a mandatory RT-PCR test conducted on

Tuesday. Doubles partners deemed close contact of the seven players have also been withdrawn from the tournament," theworld governing body said in a statement.
"The players will not be

replaced in the main draw and their opponents will be given a walkover to the next round."

Initially, the BWF didn't reveal the names of the seven players. Earlier, B Sai Praneeth, the 2019 world championship bronze medallist, double specialists Manu Attri and Dhruv Rawat had tested positive for the virus ahead of their departure for the national capital and had pulled out before the start of the tournament. The entire England badminton contingent had also withdrawn ahead of the Super 500 event after the country's doubles specialist Sean Vendy and coach Nathan



Robertson tested positive for the virus.

Organised by the BAI, the 2022 edition of İndia Open is being held behind closed doors at the Indira Gandhi Stadium's

KD Jadhav Indoor Hall.

As per the COVID-19 protocols, all the participating players are being tested everyday at the hotel and outside the stadium. Two-time Olympic

medallist P V Sindhu, World Championships silver and bronze medallists Kidambi Srikanth and Lakshya Sen, London Games bronze winner Saina Nehwal are among the Indian players who have reached the second round of the tournament. Among top international stars, world champion Loh Kean Yew, three-time men's doubles world champion Mohammad Ahsan, and Thailand's Busanan Ongbamrungphan are competing in the tournament, which is being hosted for the first time in three years following the cancellation of the last two editions due to the pan-

Delhi reported 27,561 COVID-19 cases, the secondhighest single-day rise since the pandemic began, and 40 deaths

Khalin Joshi leads Singapore International, Sandhu lies third

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

Khalin Joshi, the last Indian golfer to win on the Asian Tour, made a strong bid for a second title as he overcame strong winds to claim the firstround lead with a five-underpar 67 at the Singapore International here on Thursday.

Joshi, who won the 2018 Panasonic Open for his maiden Asian Tour success, leads Englishman William Harrold (69) by two shots in the USD 1 million event at the Tan Merah course. It could have been a one-

two for India as Ajeetesh Sandhu was 4-under through 13 holes but dropped shots on 14th and 16th before picking a birdie on 18th.

8 MORE BOXERS **TEST POSITIVE**

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $E_{\text{positive for COVID-19 in}}^{\text{ight more boxers tested}}$ the ongoing men's national camp at NIS, Patiala on number of cases to 26 but all those infected are complaining of "relatively mild symptoms"

After 18 campers, 12 boxers and six support staff members returned positive for the virus on Wednesday, eight more were added to the tally after a fresh round of testing. The total number of infected boxers now stands at 20. "Two main boxers Sumit and Rohit also have tested positive.

Two Indian coaches lock horns as Goa look to pile more misery on NEUFC



PTI ■ BAMBOLIM

 $T^{wo\ Indian\ head\ coaches\ will}_{\ lock\ horns\ in\ the\ ISL\ for\ the}$ first time when FC Goa take on lowly NorthEast United FC here on

Únder Derek Pereira, Goa won their last game against Chennaiyin FC after coming out with a point against Kerala Blasters before that. The Gaurs are ninth in the table

Novak Djokovic now knows he'll face fellow Serbian

Miomir Kecmanovic in the first

round of his Australian Open

title defense, if he's allowed to

inated attention until the moment the draw was conducted Thursday, after a post-

ponement of 75 minutes, to

determine the brackets for the

men's and women's singles

draws at the first major tennis

The Australian immigration

minister was still considering

whether to deport the nine-time

and defending Australian Open

champion, who is not vaccinat-

ed against COVID-19.

He was still in limbo after it.

tournament of 2022.

Djokovic's visa status dom-

AP MELBOURNE

with 12 points from 10 games and Pereira would hope to start the second leg on the front foot.

"I am happy that Indian coaches are getting an opportunity to If you give them a bit more

opportunity and exposure they will flourish more and can prove themselves in the highest levels," Pereira

a key figure and since returning from a two-match suspension, the

"The table does not reflect the quality we have. The league is unpredictable but our focus right now is on the next match rather than focusing long term. However, with the process we have in place, I am sure we can finish in the top positions," Pereira added.

For Khalid Jamil-coached NorthEast, who are sitting a rung below Goa at 10th place, a loss to Jamshedpur FC saw them without a win in the last three games.

Jamil can take heart from the fact that Deshorn Brown has found his scoring boots.

Brown scored a brace in NorthEast United's 3-2 defeat against Jamshedpur.

He has now scored five goals in his last two matches for the club. NorthEast beat Goa 2-1 the first

time the two sides met this season Jamil was not short of praise for his compatriot Pereira. "Credit to Derrick, once he has come in, the team has looked good. They have played some good matches and have adapted well to the new for

It will be a good challenge for For Goa, Jorge Ortiz has been our team," Jamil said



to disclose list of members

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court Thursday refused to stay, I for now, an order of the Central Information Commission (CIC) directing Hockey India to disclose certain information, including list of its members and employee salaries under the Right to Information (RTI) Act. Justice Rekha Palli observed that Hockey India, which is a National Sports Federation (NSF) and a public authority, cannot shy away from disclosing such information even when the salaries of judges are also known to everyone. "Prima facie I really don't see what is wrong with the CIC order.

You are a public authority, you can't shy away from disclosing salaries of employees, no matter how high or low it is. When our salaries are known to everybody then what is the problem in salaries of your employees. You are a public authority which is getting so much of aid, benefits and funds," the judge said, adding that she was not inclined to stay the CIC order at this stage. The central government also supported the December 13, 2021 order of the CIC saying it was in consonance with the National Sports Code and the guidelines of the Centre.

After delay, Indian team arrives for AFC Asian Cup



PTI MUMBAI

The Indian football team arrived here for the ▲ AFC Women's Asian Cup on Thursday, hours after its scheduled flight from its training base Kochi got delayed.

Amid the concerns caused by the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese Taipei became the first team to arrive here for the continental tournament.

The delay in their flight from Kochi, the Indian team's base since its return from the tournament-cum-exposure tour of Brazil, also led to the postponement of the host nation's scheduled media session on Thursday evening.

Looking forward to the tournament, India head coach Thomas Dennerby said, "This is the moment we've been preparing for over the past six months. We've had over 200 sessions, a number of matches against quality opponents across four countries, and now it's time to implement all the things that we have been working on.'

viously coached the Swedish and the Nigerian national teams, revealed that a pep talk with the players before departure to Mumbai, has helped put everyone in the correct mindset. "We had a small meet with the players and

we explained to them how important the coming few weeks are in their lives. I think this has really struck a few chords, and you can now see the determination in their eyes," he said. 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 It has also been learnt that all the teams playing in Pune will arrive in Mumbai and then com-

mute to Pune by road. "We are expecting the first team to be in Pune by 15th, which is Korea Republic. The teams (playing in Pune) will stay in two plush hotels in the city," a source in the know of devel-

Djokovic's bid for a men's

record 21st major title

could mean a quarter-

final against No. 7-

rankeď Matteo

Berrettini and

Djokovic in Australian Open draw despite visa uncertainty Top-ranked Djokovic had semifinal against Rafael Nadal or third-seeded Alexander Zverev.



record when he lost the U.S. Open final to Daniil Medvedev last year. Medvedev, who also ended Djokovic's run at a calendar-year Grand Slam with that win in New York, is on the opposite end of the draw as the No. 2 seed in Australia. A finalist here last year, he could meet local favorite Nick Kyrgios in the second round, and also No. 5 Andrey Rublev, No. 9 Felix Auger-Aliassime, John Isner in his quarter of the draw. He's seeded to meet No. 4 Stefanos Tsitsipas in the semis. On the women's side, top-ranked Ash Barty and defending champion Naomi Osaka ended up in the same section of the draw, meaning two of the best players in the tournament could meet in a

fourth-round match that could

missing a chance for the all-time

have the feeling of a final. After that, No. 5 Maria Sakkari or No. 9 Ons Jabeur could be waiting in the quarter-finals. Osaka, who has been ranked as high as No. 1, slid down the list because of her lack of matches in 2021 and is seeded 13th. French Open champion Barbora Krejcikova and No. 8 Paula Badosa are in the same half of the draw, along with 2020 champion Sofia Kenin, who has

In the other half of the draw, No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka has a first-round meeting against wild-card entry Storm Sanders and is seeded to WTA Finals winner Garbine Muguruza in

a tough opener against fellow American Madison Keys and could meet No. 18 Coco Gauff

in the third round.

PANT SCORES

ishabh Pant scored one of his finest Rhundreds in most adverse of circumstance but another shoddy batting show left India with only 211 runs to defend on the third day of the third and final cricket Test against South Africa, here Thursday.

Pant's (100 not out off 139 balls) fourth Test hundred constituted for more than 50 percent of India's second innings total of 198 with Virat Kohli's 29 off 143 balls being the second highest individual score.

The umpires called for tea break at the fall of final Indian wicket in the extended second session. This was the first Test match in 145-

year-history where all 20 batters of one team were caught. The day belonged to Pant as he came just an over before lunch. scored a hundred which is as good as one would ever see and what stood out was

his shot selection, which was immacu-

He didn't do anything that was 'un-Pant' like as there was a rasping square cut off a rising one from Kagiso Rabada (3/53). There was the audacious down the track cover drive off Duanne Olivier and that six over long-on off Keshav Maharaj

These are all shots that one associates with the dashing keeper-batter but what was exemplary was his use of discretion as to what kind of deliveries he would attack.

In between defending the good balls, he drove Maharaj out of the attack with a one-handed slog sweep and a six over long-off. When Olivier dug one short at his pace, it was pulled for six as

he hit six fours and four sixes in all. Skipper Virat Kohli's presence dur-

ing a 94-run stand definitely helped that he had that guiding light in the middle as he went about his job.

Once Pant had unsettled the line and length of the Proteas pace unit, Dean Elgar opened the field allowing them to rotate the strike but once Kohli perished outside the off-stump, it was only Pant who had to take the burden.

The other highlight was his batting with the tail, taking a single off either the fourth or fifth delivery shielding the Number 9, 10 and 11 as much as possi-

If Pant's learning from his mistake was one good aspect, same can't be said about Cheteshwar Pujara (9) and Ajinkya Rahane (1) as they have now put their careers in jeopardy.

Pujara was again cramped for room

on the leg side and the tickle off the gloves

terrific one which kicked from length and took his gloves and Dean Elgar at first slip caught it after keeper Kyle Verreynne had managed to tip it up with his gloves.

double figures.

was brilliantly taken by Keegan Petersen at leg slip, diving to his right and snapping it up inches ahead of the ground.
In case of Rahane, Rabada bowled a

Eight Indian batters failed to get into

Group C fixtures in ICC U-19 World Cup reworked

 $A^{\text{fghanistan's late arrival into}}_{\text{the Caribbean has forced}}$ the ICC to "rework" the fixtures in Group C for the 2022 U-19 World Ĉup, to be held in the West Indies from Friday.

"After successfully obtaining the necessary visas for travel, Afghanistan will arrive in the West Indies and undergo their required quarantine period," the ICC said in a statement.

The changes in the schedule were approved by the Event Technical Committee which



comprises Chris Tetley, ICC Head of Events (Chair); Ben

Manager; Fawwaz Baksh, Tournament Director; Roland Leaver, ICC Senior Event Holder, WICB Representative;

Alan Wilkins and Russel

"We are delighted that the

Afghanistan squad have received the necessary visas and will be able to travel to participate in the ICC U19 Men's Cricket World Cup 2022," Tetley said.

"We have reworked the fixtures for group C to ensure that all matches can take place within the allocated time frame and would like to thank the participating Members for their flexibility in finding a solution," he added.

To ensure all fixtures could be completed, four out of the six Group C matches in Trinidad and Tobago have been rescheduled as follows:

January 15 - Zimbabwe v PNG -- Queens Park Oval. Rescheduled from January 20. January 17 - Pakistan v

Zimbabwe -- Diego Martin Sporting Complex. Rescheduled January 22.

January 18 - Afghanistan v PNG -- Diego Martin Sporting Complex. Unchanged. January 20 - Pakistan v Afghanistan -Brian Lara Cricket Ground. Unchanged. January 22 Pakistan v PNG -- Queens Park Oval. Rescheduled from January 15

Joe Root considering entering IPL auction



PTI ■ HOBART

 $E_{\rm rel}$ ngland's Test captain Joe Root has revealed that he is considering entering the upcoming IPL auction, four years after going unsold in the auction for the lucrative T20

Considered one of the modern greats of the game, Root is yet to play in the IPL after going unsold in the 2018 auc-

The 31-year-old batter, however, said he would look to play in the tournament only if it does not distract him from his Test career.

"Time is ticking but I have a lot to weigh up," Root said, according to ESPNcricinfo.Com.

"Will it have a negative impact on me playing Test crick-et? If I don't think so then I will put myself in the auction. But I will never do anything that will detract from playing Test cricket for England. It's so important to make sure that is the priority for me and other players as well."

Root had expressed his desire to play in the IPL ear-lier too even though he had decided against entering the

The mega-auction ahead of the upcoming season is scheduled to be held on February 12 and 13 in Bengaluru. On Wednesday, Australian pacer Mitchell Starc said

he was also contemplating making a comeback to the IPL after a lengthy hiatus despite a hectic schedule that includes touring the subcontinent and the T20 World Cup title defence at home later this year. Starc, who last played in the IPL in 2015, said he has-

n't made the decision yet but entering his name for the league's mega auction, the nominations for which close on Friday, is "certainly on the table." Starc clinched a contract worth Rs 9.4 crore with

Kolkata Knight Riders in 2018 but had to be released

Despite being one of the most valuable T20 bowlers, the left-arm pacer has featured in just two seasons of the IPL due to injury and workload management. In the 27 matches that he played for Royal Challengers

Bangalore in 2014 and 2015, Starc snared 34 wickets at an economy rate of 7.16 and an impressive strike rate of 17.

DIP/Shabdarth/D/0185/21-22



I wish everyone a Happy and Joyful Pongal. May God Bless us with a fabulous year ahead.

> -Arvind Kejriwal Chief Minister, Delhi



दिल्ली सरकार