

## OPINION 6

TRIBALS AND THEIR  
DIVINITY CONCEPT

## WORLD 8

JOINT EFFORTS ONLY WAY  
TO FIGHT PANDEMIC:XI

## MONEY 9

INDIA'S OVERALL ECONOMIC  
ACTIVITY REMAINS STRONG:RBI

NEW DELHI, TUESDAY JANUARY 18, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3



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DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADACovid vaccination for  
12-14 yrs from MarchDrive to vaccinate  
15-18 yrs with both  
doses to accomplish  
by Feb end, 3.45 cr  
kids given first shot

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India may begin inoculating children in the 12-14 age group against Covid-19 in March by when the 15-18 population is likely to get fully vaccinated, said Dr NK Arora, chairman of the Covid-19 working group of National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization (NTAGI), on Monday.

Of the estimated 7.4 crore (7,40,57,000) population in the 15-18 age bracket, over 3.45 crore have received the first dose of Covaxin so far, and their second dose is due in 28 days, he said.

"Adolescents in this age group have been actively participating in the inoculation process, and going by this pace of vaccination, the rest of the beneficiaries in the 15-18 age group are likely to be covered with the first dose by January-



Workers make face masks and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits inside a manufacturing unit in Ahmedabad, Monday. PTI

end and subsequently their second dose is expected to be done by February-end," he said, adding, there is an estimated 7.5 crore population in the 12-14 age group.

The Government has begun vaccination for teenagers between 15 and 18 years of age from January 3, 2022.

Continued on Page 2

## Govt bans Azithromycin, Favipiravir, Ivermectin for Covid

**New Delhi:** The Union Health Ministry and ICMR have jointly released revised clinical guidance for the management of adult Covid-19 patients according to which drugs Azithromycin, Favipiravir, and Ivermectin have been banned for symptomatic management of mild infection. These medicines were being blatantly used by many doctors resulting in serious side effects in Covid patients. The guidelines came days after a group of doctors wrote to the Government expressing concern over the unwarranted testing, medication, and hospitalisation.

2 Indians among 3 killed in  
Abu Dhabi 'drone' attackIranian-backed  
Houthis claim  
responsibility

AP ■ DUBAI

A suspected drone attack by Yemen's Houthi rebels targeting a key oil facility in Abu Dhabi killed three people and sparked a separate fire at Abu Dhabi's international airport on Monday, police said.

Police in the United Arab Emirates identified the dead as two Indian nationals and one Pakistani. It did not identify the wounded, who police said suffered minor to moderate injuries at an industrial area where Abu Dhabi's state-owned energy company runs a pipeline network and an oil tanker storage facility.

Three transport tankers caught fire at the facility, while another fire was sparked at an extension of Abu Dhabi International Airport.

Police said that while an investigation was underway, preliminary findings indicated there were small flying objects, possibly belonging to drones, that fell in the two areas and may have caused the explosion and fire. They said there was no significant damage from the incidents, without offering further details.

Meanwhile, Yemen's



In a satellite photo by Planet Labs PBC, Abu Dhabi International Airport is seen Dec 8, 2021

AP

Houthi rebels claimed they were behind an attack targeting the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Monday, without immediately elaborating. The Iranian-backed Houthis have claimed several attacks that Emirati officials later denied took place.

The incident comes as Yemen's years long war rages on and as an Emirati-flagged vessel was recently captured by the Houthis. Although the UAE has largely withdrawn its own forces from the conflict tearing apart the Arab world's poorest nation, it is still actively engaged in Yemen and supports local militias there fighting the Houthis.

The UAE has been at war in Yemen since early 2015, and was a key member of the Saudi-led coalition that

launched attacks against the Houthis after the group overran the capital of Yemen and ousted the internationally backed government from power.

The Houthis have come under pressure in recent weeks and are suffering heavy losses as Yemeni forces, allied and backed by the UAE, have pushed back the rebels in key southern and central provinces of the country, dashing Houthi efforts to complete their control of the entire northern half of Yemen.

Yemen's government-aligned forces reclaimed the entire southern province of Shabwa from the Houthis earlier this month and made advances in nearby Marib province.

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India's growth in 25  
years will be clean,  
green, sustainable,  
reliable: Modi

**New Delhi/Davos:** Asserting that India is making its policies today while focussing on requirements for not just the present but also for the next 25 years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said this period of growth would be "green and clean" as well as "sustainable and reliable".

In a special address at the World Economic Forum's online Davos Agenda 2022 summit, Modi said India has set goals of high growth as well as saturation of welfare and wellness for the next 25 years.

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## CAPSULE

'RDX TIMER FOUND IN  
IED IN GHAZIPUR MKT'

**New Delhi:** The NSG has informed the Delhi Police that the IED recovered recently from the Ghazipur flower market had a timer device attached to it and had ammonium nitrate and RDX as its components, official sources said on Monday.

SC: TAKE CARE OF  
ZOROASTRIAN BELIEF

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Centre that it may consider tweaking the protocols for the burial of dead bodies of Covid-19 victims in a way that essential tenets of the Zoroastrian belief are also taken care of.

EC defers Punjab polls to  
Feb 20 for Ravidas jayantiParties had urged  
EC to put off Feb  
14 election date as  
Guru anniversary  
falls on Feb 16

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Assembly polls in all 117 constituencies of Punjab have been rescheduled and will be held on February 20. The single-phase polls were earlier slated for February 14. The polls have been deferred by six days in view of the birth anniversary of Guru Ravidas, which will be observed on February 16.

The Election Commission's decision comes in the wake of demand by political parties seeking deferment of polls because thousands of voters could go to Varanasi for Guru Ravidas Jayanti on February 16. Ravidass community constitutes a major vote bank in Punjab politics. A well-known temple dedicated to Guru Ravidass is located in Varanasi.

In a statement, the EC said, "After consideration of all facts made available, Election

Commission has announced 2022 General Elections to the Legislative Assembly of State of Punjab on January 8, 2022 under which notification for the election is to be issued on January 21 and poll is to take place on February 14."

In view of Ravidas Jayanti, Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi had urged the EC to defer the polls by six days. Other parties, including the BJP, the Punjab Lok Congress, the AAP, and the BSP too made similar requests.

As per the new schedule, the date of notification will be on January 25, while the last date of nomination will be February 2. The applications will be scrutinised on February 2, while the last date of withdrawal of application is February 4. Counting would be held on the same day as before — March 10.

"Commission has received several representations from State Government, political parties and other organisations drawing attention regarding movement of a large number of devotees from Punjab to Varanasi for participation in Sri Guru Ravidas Ji Jayanti celebrations, which is observed



on February 16. They have also brought to the notice that a large number of devotees start moving for Varanasi around a week before the day of celebration and keeping the poll day on February 14 will deprive a large number of electors from voting.

In view of this, they have requested to shift the poll date few days after February 16, 2022," it added.

In his letter to the EC, Channi, a Dalit leader, said some representatives of Punjab's Scheduled Castes have demanded that the polls be scheduled in such a way that they are able to visit Banaras, Guru Ravidas's birthplace, during February 10-16 and also participate in the polls.

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Akhilesh is worse than  
BJP for Muslims, vote  
for Cong: Bareilvi Cleric

PREETAM SRIVASTAVA ■ LUCKNOW

**N**oted Muslim cleric Maulana Tauqir Raza Khan, who is also Ittehad-e-Millat Council (IMC) Bareilly president, on Monday called the Congress as true "secular" and claimed that Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav is more dangerous for Muslims than the BJP.

Khan, who called the Muslim Parliament of Religions in Bareilly, made above comments while addressing the media here at UPCC head-quarter giving his full support to the Congress in elections for all the five States, including Uttar Pradesh. National Convener of Congress Minority Department Azam Baig and State Congress president Ajay Kumar Lallu were present.

Khan, who belongs to Ala Hazrat of Bareilvi sect, said that it is wrong to think that Muslims have left the Congress.

"The reins of the State cannot be handed over to Akhilesh Yadav as he is irresponsible and worse than the BJP for Muslims. We asked Akhilesh Yadav to rectify the mistakes made by his Government in 2012, but we found him irresponsible," he asserted while appealing to the Muslims to strengthen the hands of the Congress.

Instead of Yadavism and Jatavism, humanism is necessary for the State, Khan said.

"I discussed the problems of Muslim society with the leaders of all the political parties involved in the elections and asked them to reflect on these problems in their manifesto and in the party meetings. But apart from the Congress, no political party thought it appropriate to talk openly on these problems. After meeting Priyanka Gandhi I realised that the future of this country and the State, communal harmony and constitution can be safe in their hands," claimed Khan.

Continued on Page 2

Balyan meets  
Naresh Tikait,  
fuels speculation

DEEPAK UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

**I**n a bid to reach out to farmers of west Uttar Pradesh, Union Minister of State and Muzaffarnagar MP Sanjeev Balyan on Monday held a surprise meeting with the national president of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) Naresh Tikait.

Balyan, who is busy campaigning, visited Naresh Tikait's house in Sisauli fuelling political speculation.

The first and second phase of elections on February 10 and February 14 are mostly in western UP, where farmers and Jats have a dominant say in deciding the outcome.

It is conventionally held that performance in the western UP sets the trend for the rest of the State Assembly elections.

It is understood that Union Home Minister Amit Shah may also meet Jat leaders during his visit to Uttar Pradesh. The meeting between Balyan and Tikait in this context assumes significance.

Balyan could not be contacted for his comments on the issue. Both Naresh Tikait and Balyan belong to Muzaffarnagar and also come from the same Khap. It is being said that Naresh Tikait had an operation a few days ago and Balyan had gone to his house only to enquire about his health.

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Delhi's 1st electric  
bus flagged off

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot during an event to flag off Delhi Transport Corporation's first electric bus on Monday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

**H**eralding a "new era" for transportation, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday flagged off city's first electric bus. "We are beginning with a new era for the transportation system in Delhi. This is a major step towards pollution control," said the Delhi CM during the inauguration.

According to the Delhi Government, these buses will be environment friendly as

they would emit zero percent smoke and run fully on electricity. These 12-metre-low floor AC, E-buses will have CCTV cameras, panic buttons to ensure women's safety as well as pink seats. Besides having GPS and live-tracking, these buses will have kneeling ramps for differently-abled people. By April this year, 300 electric buses will ply on Delhi roads.

The CM further tweeted, "Congratulations to all Delhiites."

Continued on Page 2

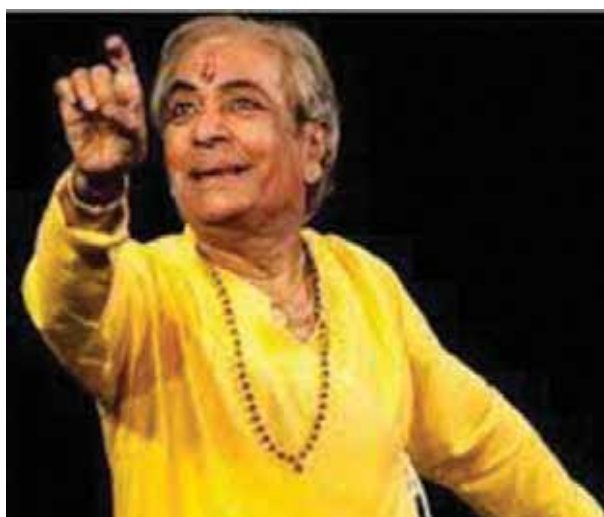
## Birju Maharaj bids adieu to world

**New Delhi:** Legendary Kathak exponent Birju Maharaj, who took the traditional Indian dance form to the world, died at his home here in the early hours of Monday, his granddaughter said. He would have been 84 next month.

Maharaj-ji, as he was popularly known, died surrounded by his family and disciples. They were playing 'antakshari' after dinner when he suddenly took ill, Ragini Maharaj told PTI.

Birju Maharaj, one of India's best known and most loved artistes, was from Lucknow's Kalka-Bindadin Gharana. He is survived by five children, three daughters and two sons, and five grandchildren.

He had been suffering



from a kidney ailment and was under dialysis treatment

for the last month due to high diabetes. He probably died of

a cardiac arrest, his granddaughter said.

"He was with us when this happened. He had his dinner and we were playing 'antakshari' because he loved old music. He was lying down... and suddenly his breathing became uneven. We think it was cardiac arrest as he was also a heart patient."

"This happened between 12.15 and 12.30 am. It must have been just a minute or so. We rushed to the hospital but unfortunately, we could not save him. He died before reaching the hospital," Ragini said.

Ragini, a Kathak dancer herself, said the only solace for the family is that he did not suffer too much in his last moments.

"Two of his disciples and

his two granddaughters, my younger sister Yasyashashwini and me, were with him when this happened. He was laughing and smiling in his last moments," she said.

Condolences poured in as news of the death of the Kathak maestro, who would have been 84 on February 4, came in.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said his death is an "irreparable loss" to the entire art world.

"Deeply saddened by the demise of Pandit Birju Maharaj ji, who gave Indian dance a special recognition world over. His passing is an irreparable loss to the entire art world. My condolences to his family and fans in this hour of grief," the Prime Minister said.

Continued on Page 2

75 jets in biggest R-Day fly past  
in 75th year of Independence

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

**T**he Republic Day parade at the Rajpath this year will see the biggest fly past ever with 75 aircraft taking part in it to mark the 75th Independence year. The latest induction, Rafale fighter jets, along with aircraft from the three Services, will enthrall the audience.

Giving details of the planned celebrations, IAF spokesperson Wing Commander Indranil Nandi said here on Monday the fly past will be the "grandest and largest" to mark the "Azadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav". The fly past will conclude with several Jaguar fighter aircraft flying in the "Amrit" formation to



commemorate the 75 years of Independence.

"The fly past this year will be the grandest and largest with 75 aircraft from IAF, Army and Navy flying during the Republic Day parade. This is in line with the Azadi Ka Amrut

Mahotsav celebrations," he said.

The fly past will include Tangail formation — a tribute to the Tangail airdrop operations in 1971 War — will have one Dakota and two Dornier flying in Vic formation.

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# 100% Govt school students get 1st Covid dose in TN

76% students in total in 15-18 age group vaccinated in State: Minister

**Chennai:** The Government has completed 100 per cent, the first dose of vaccination against Covid for State-run school students of 15-18 years of age, Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma Subramanian said here on Monday.

As far as government schools in Tamil Nadu are concerned, the vaccination for students in the 15 to 18 age group was inaugurated by Chief Minister M K Stalin here on January 3, the Minister said.

Since that drive was launched in Tamil Nadu on the very same day it was rolled out by the Centre, the government has now completed inoculation for teenage students 100 per cent as regards state-run schools, the Minister told reporters.

In private schools and other institutions like the poly-



technic colleges, students of that age group are being vaccinated continuously, he noted. In total, 76 per cent students in the 15-18 age bracket have been vaccinated in Tamil Nadu (first dose) and it is a matter of big satisfaction, he said.

The 50th mega vaccination camps would be held in 50,000 locations across the state on January 22 and people should utilise it, he appealed. **PTI**

# Maha Covid cases drop by 10K

Over 31K Covid-19 cases, including 122 Omicron infections, reported in 24 hrs

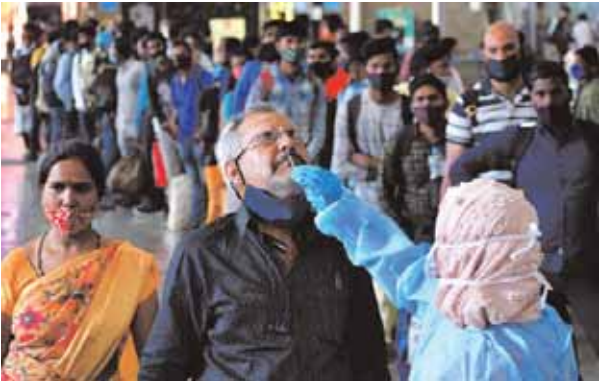
T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a relief to the health authorities in Maharashtra, the daily Covid-19 infections dropped further by more than 10,000 cases to touch a tally of 31,111 cases on Monday, even as 122 Omicron cases were recorded, taking the total number of Covid-19 variant cases recorded in the State to 1860.

A day after Maharashtra registered 41,327, the daily infections dropped to 31,111 taking the total number of cases recorded from 72,11,810 cases to 72,42,921 cases. As many as 24 Covid-19 deaths were reported from various parts of the state.

In Mumbai, the daily Covid-19 infections dropped significantly by 1939 cases – from 7,895 cases on Sunday to 6,956 cases on Monday. With the latest tally of fresh cases, the total Covid-19 cases in Mumbai crossed the 10 lakh mark from 9,99,862 cases to 10,05,818 cases.

As 29,092 Covid-19 patients were discharged from the hospitals across the state after full recovery, the total number of people discharged from the hospitals since the second week of March 2020 increased from 68,00,900 to 68,29,992. The recovery rate in the state stood static at 94.3 per



A BMC health worker collects swab sample of an outstation passenger for Covid-19 test, at CSMT railway station in Mumbai on Monday **PTI**

cent. The number of “active cases” in the state increased from 2,65,346 to 2,67,334. The fatality rate in the state dropped from 1.96 per cent to 1.95 per cent.

Of the total recorded cases, Mumbai accounts for 50,757 active cases, while there are 63,199 active cases in Thane. There are 60,686 active cases in Pune, followed by Raigad (15,820), Palghar (10,240), Nagpur (11177) Nashik (10,414), Satara (5283), Ahmednagar (4738) and Aurangabad (3528).

Of the 7,21,24,824 samples sent to various laboratories across the state so far, 72,42,921 have tested positive (10.04 per

cent) for COVID-19 until Monday.

Currently, 22,64,217 people are in home quarantine while 2994 people are in institutional quarantine.

Meanwhile, Maharashtra recorded 122 Omicron cases taking the total number of cases in the state to 1,860.

The following is the break-up of a total 1860 Omicron case+s recorded in the state so far, Mumbai: 656, PMC-5882, Pimpri-Chinchwad—114, Nagpur—116, Sangli—59, Mira Bhayandar-52, Thane—50, Pune rural—46, Kolhapur and Aurangabad—19 each, Panvel—19, Satara—14, Navi Mumbai-13, Osmanabad and Akola—11 each, Kalyan Dombivli —7,

Buldhana and Vasai-Virar- 6 each, Bhiwandi-Nizampur --5, Ahmednagar --4, Nanded, Ulhasnagar, Jalna, Gondia, Nashik and Latur--3 each, Gadchiroli, Nandurbar and Solapur—2 each and Jalna, Wardha and Bhandara—one each.

Of the total cases 959 patients have been discharged after a negative RT-PCR test.

In a related development, the authorities said the total number of passengers who arrived at Mumbai, Pune and Nagpur airports since December 1 was 2,89,893 (44,494 from At-risk countries and rest 2,45,399 are from other countries), while passengers whose RT-PC tests have been done are 90861 (44,494 are from high-risk countries and 46,367 are from other countries). Similarly, RT-PCR positive and samples sent for genomic sequencing was 1,187 (548 are from at-risk countries and 639 are from other countries).

Additionally, field surveillance of all international passengers who have arrived since 1st November is underway.

“Through airport and field surveillance, 4,986 samples have been sent for genomic sequencing. The results of 67 are awaited so far,” the daily health bulletin said.

# 2 Indians among 3 killed in Abu Dhabi ‘drone’...

From Page 1

They were aided by the UAE-backed Giants Brigades and had help from Saudi airstrikes. The airport fire in Abu Dhabi was described by police as “minor” and took place at an extension of the international airport that is still under construction. For years, the airport home to Etihad Airways has been building its new Midfield Terminal, but it was not clear if that was where the fire took place.

Etihad Airways said “precautionary measures resulted in a short disruption for a small number of flights” and that airport operations have returned to normal. Abu Dhabi Airports did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The other blast struck three petroleum transport tankers near a complex for the Abu Dhabi National Oil Co. In the Musaffah industrial area.

The company describes it as a pipeline and terminal facility located some 22 km (13 miles) from the centre of the city of Abu Dhabi, where 36 storage tanks also supply transport trucks carrying fuel. It is also a short distance from Al-Dhafra Air Base, a military installation that hosts US and French forces.

The location of the ADNOC facility where the tankers caught fire is approximately 1,800 km (1,100 miles) northeast of Saada, the Houthis’ stronghold in Yemen.

While Emirati troops have been killed in the war in Yemen, the conflict so far has not directly affected daily life in the wider UAE, a country with a vast foreign workforce that is also home to Dubai, a glitzy city of sky scrapers and five-star hotels.

The incident comes as South Korea’s President Moon Jae-in is visiting the UAE.

During a meeting with Emirati Prime Minister and Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum on Sunday, the two countries reportedly reached a preliminary deal valued at some \$3.5 billion sell mid-range South Korean surface-to-air missiles to the UAE.

At an event attended by the South Korean president earlier in the day, Emirati Energy Minister Suhail Mazrouei declined to comment on the explosion at ADNOC’s facility, saying only that police would provide updates on their investigation.

The Houthis have used bomb-laden drones to launch crude and imprecise attacks aimed at Saudi Arabia and the UAE over the course of the six-year-long war. The group has also launched missiles at Saudi airports, oil facilities and pipelines, and used booby-

trapped boats for attacks on key shipping routes.

Though there have been civilian deaths in Saudi Arabia from some of these attacks, the overwhelming number of civilian deaths in the conflict have been in Yemen. The war has killed 130,000 people in Yemen — both civilians and fighters — and has exacerbated hunger and famine across the impoverished country.

Torbjorn Soltvedt, an analyst at the risk intelligence company Verisk Maplecroft, noted that while the Houthis have claimed responsibility for an attack on the UAE, Iraqi-based militias have also threatened the Emiratis with attacks.

“Today’s attack comes only days after Iran-backed groups threatened to strike against Abu Dhabi in response to alleged Emirati interference in Iraqi politics,” he said.

He said the attack highlights the missile and drone threat faced by the UAE and the region’s other main oil producers. He said unless Gulf Arab states find a solution to diffuse regional tensions “they will remain vulnerable to attacks”. (AP)

## Covid vaccination for 12-14 yrs from March...

From Page 1

Data shows that children are as susceptible to catching infection as adults are. The vaccine protects against severe disease.

“These older teenagers are quite socially active and so are

at a higher risk of catching the virus as compared to younger kids. By vaccinating them, we are not only safeguarding them but also stopping the chain of transmission to a great extent,” said Dr Praveen Kumar, associate professor, pediatrics, Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi.

Presently Bharat Biotech’s Covaxin, an inactivated virus vaccine, is being used to inoculate children.

“It’s a time-tested technol-

ogy which is both safe and efficacious,” says Dr Manju Puri, consultant gynecologist, Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi.

“These vaccines have been in use for about a year now. No major side effects have been reported. In fact, we were so confident about their safety that we even gave them to pregnant women and lactating mothers,” she said.

However, doctors add that children, like adults, may expe-

rience mild side effects of the vaccine such as pain at the vaccine site, fatigue, mild fever, for a few days.

On the overall vaccination status of the country, a senior official from the Union Health Ministry said that with the administration of more than 39 lakh Doses (39,46,348) vaccine doses in the last 24 hours, India’s Covid-19 vaccination coverage has exceeded 157.20 crore (1,57,20,41,825) as per reports till 7 am on Monday.

## Delhi’s...

From Page 1

The first electric bus has started running on the roads of Delhi from today. 300 electric buses will soon be added to DTC’s fleet. You should also contribute to this war against pollution by switching your vehicle to electric.”

At the same time, Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot took to Twitter to say, “Congratulations Delhi! It is a moment of immense joy for all of us. Today the first electric bus of DTC was dedicated to the public by Chief Minister Shri Arvind Kejriwal. Along with promoting environment-friendly transport, we are committed to providing world-class smooth transport service to the people of Delhi.”

These state-of-the-art buses are 100 percent electric with zero tailpipe emissions. They are among the 300 electric buses that will be inducted under DTC. The total fleet of 300 buses will run from Mundela Kalan (100 buses), Rajghat (50) and Rohini Sector

37 (150 buses). These buses have kneeling ramps for differently-abled passengers and special pink seats for women passengers. These buses are equipped with CCTV cameras, connected to a 2way Central Command and Control Centre (CCC) at Kashmere Gate, 10 panic buttons in each bus, and a hooter. The first electric bus will ply on route no. E-44 starting from DTC’s Indraprastha Depot via ITO, AGCR, Tilak Marg, Mandi House, Barakhamba Road, Connaught Place, Janpath, Rajesh Pilot Marg, Prithvi Raj Road, Aurobindo Marg, AIIMS, Ring Road, South Extension, Ashram, Bhogal, Jangpura, India Gate, High Court, Pragati Maidan and will be terminated at IP Depot. This service will be available from 05:30 AM to 08:20 PM from Indraprastha Depot. Interestingly, the Delhi government’s entire bus fleet is available on Google Maps, allowing Delhi residents to plan their journeys and track the buses at any time. Delhi Government’s One Delhi app can be used to book tickets in less than a minute.

# Birju Maharaj bids adieu...

From Page 1

Finance Minister Nirmla Sitharaman described the artist as a “legend of performing arts”.

Fondly called Pandit-ji or Maharaj-ji by his disciples and legions of followers, he had said the younger generation has many more opportunities to learn than in his time. In his last interview with PTI in December, Birju Maharaj had said the future of Kathak, one of the most graceful classical dance forms, was bright in India with the new generation taking the tradition forward. “Artists who passionately work towards carrying the tradition forward are the right torchbearers of an art form and its legacy. It takes a lot of work and dedication to stay true to a mighty tradition such as classical dance,” the Padma Vibhushan awardee had said. Brajmohan Maharaj or Birju Maharaj was a descendant of the Maharaj family of Kathak dancers. He trained under his father and guru Achhan Maharaj and uncles Shambhu Maharaj and Lachhu Maharaj.

Singer Durga Jasraj, daughter of the late Pandit Jasraj, called Birju Maharaj’s death “a monumental loss to Indian performing arts”. “Legendary Pt Birju Maharaj ji’s departure has left us poorer, shattered. Pray Maharaj ji’s soul rests in rhythmic peace. Deepest condolences to his family, disciples and fans across the world. Om Shanti,” she wrote on Twitter. Composer Adnan Sami said, “We have lost an unparalleled institution in the field of the performing arts. He has influenced many generations through his genius.” **PTI**

# PWP leader Narayan Patil passes away

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Veteran Peasants & Workers Party (PWP) leader, former Minister and a four-time legislator Narayan Dnyandeo Patil passed away in his home town of Kolhapur in Western Maharashtra on Monday, in the wake of a brain haemorrhage that he suffered recently.

Prof Patil, who was brother-in-law of NCP chief Sharad Pawar, had been battling for life after a brain haemorrhage. He breathed his last at a private hospital in the early hours of Monday.

He had also been infected by Covid-19 from which he had recovered fully despite his advanced age.

He was 93 and is survived by his wife Saroj - who is the sister of Sharad Pawar and Pratap Pawar.

A champion of the cause of farmers, peasants, mill-workers, casual labourers and down-trodden, Prof. Patil had served as Maharashtra Member of Legislative Council for four terms.

Patil was a Cooperation minister from 1978-1990 in the Progressive Democratic Front government headed by Pawar when he became Chief Minister for the first time, as the PWP was an ally.

Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshiyari and several senior political leaders including Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, ministers Jayant Patil, Nawab Malik, Ashok Chavan and Balasaheb Thorat and leader of the Opposition Devendra Fadnis of the BJP mourned

the death of Prof Patil,

Despite close family connections with the powerful Pawar clan, Prof. Patil maintained his independent identity. A high respected leader, he never compromised on his principles and charted his own path with political convictions, said a close colleague, Dr. Vaishali Patil.

Born on July 15, 1929 in a peasant family in the small Dhavali village in Sangli, Patil completed his matriculation and then joined the Rajaram College in Kolhapur for his graduation.

After doing his MA in Economics from Willington College in Sangli, he acquired a LLB degree from Pune University. He later worked as a professor at Chhatrapati Shivaji College, Satara, and then became the Principal of KBP College in Islampur, Sangli.

While serving the Shivaji University Kolhapur (SUK), Prof. Patil served as a Dean and Senate Member.

Long before he pursued his academic career, in 1948, Patil had joined the PWP, to which he belonged till the end, became a MLC for four terms, served as the General Secretary and later as Convenor (1999-2002) of the Democratic Front Government of Congress-Nationalist Congress Party which ruled the state for 15 years from 1999-2014.

An excellent orator and able legislator, Prof. Patil was appointed head of the legal committee of the Maharashtra government to examine the border dispute with Karnataka in mid-2000s.

# IIT-Bombay’s PG student jumps off 7th floor, suicide note says ‘no one to blame’

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A 26-year-old IIT-Bombay post-graduate on Monday committed suicide by jumping from the 7th floor terrace of his hostel at Powai in north-east Mumbai. Identifying the deceased student as Darshan Malviya from Madhya Pradesh, the police said that he leaped down from the terrace at 4.30 am and that he had been suffering from depression for a long time and was under treatment.

In a suicide note left in his fourth-floor hostel room, the deceased student said nobody should be blamed for his act.

After hearing a loud thud, a security guard on duty ran to the spot and found Malviya lying there in a pool of blood.

The authorities rushed Malaviya immediately to Brihanmumbai Municipal

Corporation-run Rajawadi Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Preliminary investigations have revealed that Malviya was suffering from depression prior to getting admission in IIT-B in mid-2021 and had been under treatment from in-house doctors as also doctors outside the campus.

“In his recovered suicide note, the deceased student has stated he had depression & was under treatment, he didn’t hold anyone responsible; further probe is under way,” a Mumbai police spokesperson said.

“A very unfortunate incident took place at IIT Bombay today morning and we have lost a second year masters student. We mourn the death of our student. We await his parents who are on their way to Mumbai,” an IIT-B spokesperson said.

# India’s growth in 25 years will be clean, green, sustainable, reliable: Modi...

From Page 1

He also said India is fighting another COVID-19 wave with full alertness and caution while also maintaining economic growth. Modi said India is focused on reforms in the right direction and the global economic experts have praised India’s decisions.

“We will fulfil all the expectations that the entire world has from us,” he said. **PTI**

## 75 jets...

From Page 1

There will also be Meghna formation of 1 Chinook and four Mi-17s. The fly past will begin with “Dhwaj” formation with four Mi-17 aircraft, followed by “Rudra” and “Rahat” formations with 4 and 5 Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) respectively. Among the other aircraft that will display their might at the parade are Rafale, Indian Navy’s MiG-29K, P-8I surveillance aircraft and Jaguar fighter jets.

The Navy’s P 8 I long range maritime reconnaissance aircraft that were deployed in Ladakh and earlier in Doklam to pick up Chinese activities will also be part of the fly

past. The P8I will fly with the Navy’s two MiG 29K aircraft in a formation called Varuna.

In keeping with the theme of “Azadi ka Amrit Mohatsav”, the spectacular fly past will include fighter jets, combat helicopters and transport aircraft representing all three forces. The event will include 39 fighter jets, 28 helicopters and eight transport aircraft of the IAF, Army and Navy flying in various formations. The Rafale will be seen in three formations. The Vinash formation will have five Rafale jets, Baaz formation will have one Rafale, flanked by two Jaguars, two Su-30s and two MiG 29s. The fly past will take place in two phases - the first before the parade and the second after the marching contingents have gone past Rajpath.



# Clarify stand on marital rape criminalisation: HC to Centre

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday asked the Centre to clarify its position in principle on the issue of criminalising marital rape after the Government sought time to formulate and place its “considered stand”.

Justice Rajiv Shukdhakar, who is heading the bench dealing with a batch of petitions challenging the legality of the marital rape exception in the Indian Penal Code (IPC), said that the Centre has to say “yes or no” as in issues such as the present one, deliberation does not end.

“In a matter like this, they (Centre) have to in principle say yes or no because if they don’t, however much they may deliberate, it is not going to come to an end,” the judge said. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said that it will not be appropriate to place before the court a “less discussed and consulted stand” and time was needed to undertake the process of consultation.

“I don’t mind that (consultation) but they have to take a decision which way they are going... there are some matters, for whatever reasons, I think the court ultimately decides one way or the other and that’s how it gets resolved. You take your time,” Justice Shukdhakar observed. “Yes and no is the end product of consultation,” responded the solicitor general who also submitted that “nothing



imminent was going to happen within a couple of weeks”.

“We have to formulate our stand and place our considered stand for your lordship and considering that this a 2015 matter if your lordship can grant us a reasonable time. This might need a little consultation etc,” the solicitor general said. The bench, which also comprised Justice C Hari Shankar, said that it would continue to hear other lawyers appearing in the case which would give time to the Centre.

“You come back. We will decide how much time to give you then,” the bench told the solicitor general. The Centre, on January 13, had told the high court that it was considering a “constructive approach” to the issue of criminalising marital rape and has sought suggestions from several stakeholders and authorities on comprehensive amendments to

the criminal law.

Central government standing counsel Monika Arora had told the bench that the Centre was undertaking a comprehensive task of amending the criminal law which includes section 375 (rape) of the IPC.

In its additional affidavit filed by the Under Secretary in Ministry of Home Affairs, the Centre had asserted that it is “already seized of the matter” and that the marital rape exception could not be struck down only at the instance of the petitioners as the principles of natural justice required a “larger hearing of all stakeholders”.

The bench is hearing PILs filed by NGOs RIT Foundation, All India Democratic Women’s Association, a man and a woman seeking striking down of the exception granted to husbands under the Indian rape law.

# SC directs Supertech to enter into contract within week with firm to demolish 40 storey twin-towers

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday directed real estate major Supertech Ltd to execute a contract within a week with a company to demolish its twin 40-storey towers in its Emerald Court project in Noida.

The NOIDA authority informed the bench that it has finalised the company Edifice Engineering for demolishing the twin towers in consultation with the Central Building Research Institute (CBRI) Roorkee.

The top court also directed Supertech Ltd to make the refund payments to the home buyers without prejudice to their rights and contentions. A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and Surya Kant told senior advocate Parag Tripathi, appearing for Supertech Ltd., “The contract (with a demolishing agency) shall be executed no later within a period of one week from today”.

The bench noted in its order, “Advocate Ravindra Kumar, appearing on behalf of Noida states that the agency which is to carry out the work of demolition has been finalised in consultation with CBRI. Parag Tripathi, senior counsel, appearing on behalf of Supertech Ltd. States that there are no objections to



the agency, which has been finalised and the developer would be applying for all necessary NOCs within a period of one week. The application for NOCs shall also be marked to NOIDA authorities”.

The top court refused to give more time to Supertech Ltd for entering into a contract with Edifice despite the repeated insistence of Tripathi saying that the No Objection Certificates (NOCs) can be obtained subsequently. Tripathi submitted that the court can give one week for applying for NOC and Supertech will enter into the contract within two weeks.

“I have already placed EOI which has

terms of the contract. I just need the NOC, which the agency wants. It is the agency which has said that you please get the NOC. I have no difficulty in entering into contract”, he said.

The bench said, “No, you don’t need two weeks to enter into a contract. You apply for the NOCs in the week thereafter. All authorities will grant you NOCs, it’s a direct order from the Supreme Court. We will list it after two weeks for compliance”. At the outset, advocate Ravindra Kumar, appearing for Noida told the bench that subsequent to the last hearing, it has finalised an agency which is Edifice Engineering.

“The CBRI has informed us and thereafter we wrote a letter to Supertech Ltd to finalise it. Now, Supertech has been informed by CBRI on January 14”, it said.

Tripathi submitted, “We have finalised the agency and placed the Expression of Interest (EOI) but there are certain NOCs which are required and we are applying for it with a copy to NOIDA authority. Because it is possible that their intervention will be needed for instance for storing of explosives etc. So we will be applying for it with a copy to NOIDA authority and to the concerned state authority”.

Kumar said that the difficulty is that they have to sign a contract with the company (Edifice) because the time period will come into play, which will commence from the date of the contract.

Tripathi intervened and said that as far as the contract is concerned, the agency says that as soon as there are NOCs, they will do it, and hence Supertech is applying for NOCs. Senior advocate S Ganesh, also appearing for Supertech said that they have sent the details of making the refund to the amicus curiae Gaurav Agarwal but he said that there is some difference in the calculations. **PTI**

# Timer, ammonium nitrate, RDX found in IED found in Ghazipur market, says NSG

New Delhi: The NSG has informed the Delhi Police that the IED recovered recently from the Ghazipur flower market had a timer device attached to it and had ammonium nitrate and RDX as its components, official sources said on Monday.

The federal counter-terrorist commando force had sent experts from its National Bomb Data Centre (NBDC) based in Haryana’s Manesar to defuse the improvised explosive device that was recovered here on January 14.

The sources said a final post-blast investigation report has been submitted to the Delhi Police and it states that the IED contained ammonium nitrate, RDX, a 9-volt battery, iron pieces that could act as shrapnel during an explosion and

had a timer device attached to it. The RDX was used as the core explosive in the IED but it did not blow off due to a “glitch” in the circuit, they said quoting the investigation report. The force had defused the about 3-kg IED that was kept inside an iron box and was concealed in a black backpack.

A pit was dug at the “phool mandi” or the flower market campus and the IED was blown under a “controlled explosion” procedure by the NSG personnel.

The incident has been taken very seriously by the Delhi Police and other security agencies as it came just days before the January 26 Republic Day celebrations, for which the security apparatus in the national capital is on a high-alert. **PTI**

# City logs 12,527 cases, 24 deaths

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

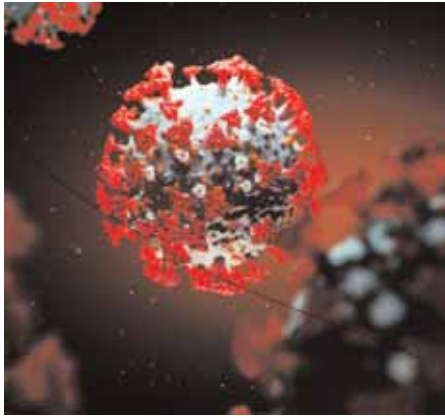
Delhi on Monday reported 12,527 fresh cases of Covid-19 and 24 deaths in the last 24 hours. Interestingly, as per senior health officials, there was 31.4 percent significant drop in the daily Covid -19 cases, while it is important to mention here that daily testing also reported down to 44,762, according to Covid -19 health bulletin.

Health Minister Satyendar Jain said, “cases are on a downward trend in Delhi; sincerely hope the decline continues,” “no prescription is required to get tested if one is showing Corona symptoms”.

Jain, briefing the media on vaccination, said 35,000 people who are above 60 years of age, 32,000 healthcare workers and 60,000 frontline workers jabbed with the booster dose. Total, 1 lakh 27 thousand people have been jabbed with booster doses so far in Delhi,” he added.

Adding furthermore, the (AAP) Minister said that two crore and 85 lakh vaccine have been administered in Delhi. Out of all eligible people, 100 percent have received their first dose, around 80 percent have received their second dose.

Meanwhile, On Monday, 48,088 doses administered to 15 to 18 years youngsters. In Central Delhi 2,176, East Delhi 3,521, New Delhi



1,961, North Delhi 6,007, North East Delhi 3,298, North West Delhi 9,114, Shahdara 2,564, South Delhi 4,236, South East Delhi 3,567, South West Delhi 6,282 and West 5,362 doses administered.

Total 18,669 precautionary dose also administered to health care workers, frontline workers and senior citizens in Delhi.

Meanwhile Jain congratulated healthcare workers and frontline workers on completing a year-long vaccination drive. He also urged everyone to abide by the Corona regulations and take all necessary precautions.

# 2,500 cops tested positive since Jan 1

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Following the spike in Covid-19 cases, about 2,500 Delhi Police personnel tested positive for the novel coronavirus infection since January 1. Among them, 767 personnel of the force have recovered till date.

According to the latest data shared by police, since January 1, about 2,500 Delhi Police personnel from all ranks and units of the force tested positive for Covid-19 till date.

Chinmoy Biswal, the Additional Commissioner of Police, Crime and the spokesperson of Delhi Police had tested positive for the virus and has recovered and resumed work, said police official. “Many of them are recovering well and resuming their duties on daily basis,” the official added.

“About 2,500 personnel have tested positive for Coronavirus since January 1 till date.

Out of which, 767 infect-



ed personnel of the force have recovered and rejoined their work,” said Biswal.

Meanwhile, a special camp is being organised for police personnel of all ranks to administer booster doses to the eligible beneficiaries. The strength of the Delhi Police force is over 80,000, police said.

According to an order issued earlier, all police personnel and their eligible family members who have not been vaccinated, may be motivated to complete the vaccination process.

“Those who have not been vaccinated due to medical reasons may be encouraged to seek medical opinion again for the vaccination,” the order had said.

All police personnel may be motivated to take precaution dose of Covid vaccine and install and use of ‘Aarogya Setu’ mobile application mandatorily.

Self-monitoring practice to be adopted by police personnel and any kind of illness may be reported without fail, to daily health monitoring officer, the order had added.

# Delhi Police arrests 3 men for visa fraud

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has arrested two agents and a passenger for allegedly arranging fake visas for the passenger on the pretext of sending him abroad.

The accused identified as Joginder Singh (53) and Surjeet Singh (53), also the agents and residents of Haryana used to work in rural areas of Kaithal and Kurukshetra where they arranged visa and passport by unfair means.

Third accused - passenger Kuldeep Singh, (33) is a farmer by profession who procured fake visa and other documents from the agents was also arrested in the case, police said.

According to Sanjay Tyagi, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), IGI airport, the incident came to light on January 9 this year after a complaint was received at IGI Airport police station alleging that in the intervening night of January 8 and 9, while he was performing duty in the departure wing of Immigration, a passenger named Kuldeep Singh approached for immigration clearance to depart to Dubai, UAE.

“During clearance and scrutiny of travel documents, a fake Canadian visa was found affixed on a page of his passport and it did not have any security features as the original Canadian visa. Hence, a case was registered and investigation was taken up,” said the DCP. “When the passenger was interrogated, he revealed that he procured his Canadian fake visa and other documents by an agent named Joginder Singh for a payment of Rs 16,00,000,” said the DCP.

“He also disclosed that the agent Joginder came with the passenger on January 8 at IGI Airport and was roaming in and around the airport area. During the course of investigation, Kuldeep Singh was arrested,” said the DCP.

“Through its sources and electronic surveillance, our team obtained information that alleged agent Joginder Singh was using a Whatsapp number to be in touch with the passengers’ family. Due to prompt response our team was able to arrest this accused agent within four hours of the registration of case from IGI Airport,” said the DCP.

“When Joginder Singh was questioned, he told police during interrogation that he along with his associate Surjeet and other agent arranged the fake Canadian visa for the passenger,” said the DCP.

“After obtaining seven days police remand of agent Joginder Singh from the court here, a raid was conducted in Kaithal and Kurukshetra in Haryana and with the help of local intelligence and electronic surveillance another accused agent Surjeet Singh was arrested within two days of registration of case,” said the DCP. Police said that further efforts are being made to apprehend the other agents of their syndicate.

# Govt forms 7-member panel to look into utilisation of grants by 12 DU colleges it funds

New Delhi: The Delhi Government on Monday constituted a seven-member committee to look into the utilisation and management of funds of the 12 Delhi University colleges funded by the Aam Aadmi Party dispensation, according to an official order.

This comes even as the Delhi Government and the administration of the 12 colleges remain locked in a tussle over release of grants.

The committee has been directed to submit its report within 15 days i.e by February 2, the order said. Delhi Higher Education Minister Manish Sisodia constituted the committee to “inquire into the position of funds, sources of funds, utilization of funds and management of funds in respect of 12 Delhi government fully funded colleges of University of Delhi”, the order said. The committee will be chaired by professor Balaram Pani, Dean of Colleges, Delhi University and comprises Vikas Gupta, Registrar of the University.

Other members include principals of Keshav Mahavidyalaya, Maharshi Valmiki

College of Education and Maharaja Agrasen College along with Chairpersons of Governing bodies of Acharya Narendra Dev College and Deen Dayal Upadhyaya College.

The order also said Anil Kumar Sharma, Deputy Director, Higher Education, will be member secretary “to effectively coordinate the meetings”.

The Delhi University Teachers’ Association (DUTA) had recently carried out a one-day strike to protest against the non-release of funds by the City Government.

Rajesh Jha, Member of the teachers’ body Academics For Action and Development said that the funds of these colleges must be released without any delay. “Time to time, different agencies do the audit of these colleges. Hence, this committee shouldn’t be used to delay the release of funds. The terms of reference clearly shows that the Delhi Govt is eyeing the development fund of the colleges, which is collected from the students. This is a move towards privatisation, which we will not accept,” he added. **PTI**

# 4 Delhi parks, including Lodhi Garden, set to get makeover

New Delhi: The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) will develop four of its major gardens — Nehru Park, Lodhi Garden, Talkatora Garden and Sanjay Jheel — into world-class facilities with smart lighting, upgraded nursery and walking tracks, among other things, officials said on Monday.

“NDMC takes pride in its gardens and intends to now further develop them in a manner befitting their location. It is proposed in this year’s budget to get all the designs finalised by engaging a consultant under NDMC Smart City Projects for four major gardens. The consultant for the project would be appointed,” NDMC vice chairman Satish Upadhyay said. Smart irrigation through drip and sprinklers, manicured lawns, enhanced lighting in parks through smart lighting, improved walking tracks, aesthetic boundary wall railing in uniform pattern, upgraded bonsai and bamboo garden, provision for bird feeding and drinking water facility will be among the facilities made available at the parks.

Upadhyay said some of these tasks are already being implemented on a pilot basis at Nehru Park.

“NDMC is developing a cycle track around Nehru Park for fitness freaks. After the 2.7 km ‘Synthetic Rubber Track’ at Nehru Park received encouraging feedback from visitors, a similar track will be laid on a 2 km stretch at Sanjay Jheel-Laxmi Bai Nagar.

“The idea is to give visitors a better walking experience,” he said. **PTI**

# HC asks Govt, L-G to reply to plea alleging graft by Delhi BJP chief

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Monday sought response of the Delhi Government and Lieutenant Governor on a plea alleging unauthorised construction and encroachment on public land by Delhi BJP chief and municipal councilor of North Delhi Municipal Corporation.

A bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Jyoti Singh issued notice to the Delhi government, Lieutenant Governor, North MCD, Delhi BJP Chief Adesh Gupta, who is a councilor of West Patel Nagar constituency, and Chief Executive officer of BSES Yamuna on the petition.

The court granted time to the respondents to file a response to the petition and listed the plea for further hearing on February 18. The PIL alleged that the councilor has failed to act in accordance with the norms of integrity and conduct which ought to be followed by public functionaries and abused his position to obtain favour for himself or

others.

Petitioner and advocate Hemant Choudhary claimed in the plea that the councilor was involved in the unauthorised illegal construction over public land adjacent to municipal corporation school opposite to his residence at West Patel Nagar here to construct a personal office. The petitioner sought court’s direction to the LG and Delhi government for conducting immediate inquire upon the councillor as he has allegedly earned crores of

rupees in corruption collected from builder mafia and spent huge amount in properties and construction work by misusing his power and position and also sought to the direction the North MCD for removal of the encroachment. The plea also sought the direction to the CEO of BSES Yamuna for immediate removal of electricity connections installed at the alleged encroachment in the form of unauthorised illegal construction over the municipal corporation’s land. **PTI**

## PICTALK



People sit around a small fire to warm themselves on a cold winter morning, at Udyog Vihar in Gurugram on Monday

PTI



# CRPF seeks personnel’s regular health screening

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Concerned with unexpected and sudden cardiac deaths of relatively young serving personnel especially those deployed in extreme cold climes and attributable to sedentary lifestyle and stress, the CRPF medical wing have sought regular screening of such personnel and take measures to reduce stress to minimise such casualties.

The probable causes for sudden cardiac deaths identified are sedentary lifestyle/lack of exercise, faulty food habits (high salt content: over 5 gm per day and oily food in diet), addictions like smoking and alcohol consumption, stress (workplace./family-related) besides associated comorbidities like hypertension, Diabetes Mellitus among others, reads the advisory.

In addition, strong family history of coronary artery disease or sudden cardiac death has also been listed as a cause of such fatalities in CRPF ranks.

Brief or prolonged exposure to cold, both affect the cardiovascular system and exercise in cold weather further increases stress on the heart and arteries, according to the advisory.

Various international studies have shown strong association of cardiovascular disease and mortality increases when the ambient temperature is cold and during cold spells.

Various cardiac/cardiovascular events like stroke, intracerebral hemorrhage, heart fail-



ure occur in winter months. Cold air usually causes a slight increase in heart rate in the range of 5-10 beats per minute. All these may contribute to cardiac events like sudden cardiac deaths in otherwise normal personnel who do not have any prior symptoms of heart disease like angina chest pain and the like.

Preventive measures like regular screening of personnel with blood pressure measurement, special attention towards personnel who have modifiable risk factors like smoking, alcohol addiction or having strong family history of sudden cardiac deaths, obesity and hypertension, said.

As directed earlier, the Medical Directorate of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) has further advised the personnel especially the high risk ones to always carry Disprin tablets (300 mg) and Sorbitrate tablets (5 mg).

The Medical Directorate further advised that the Unit

Medical Officer should brief the troops that these tablets should be taken immediately on feeling of left sided chest pain radiating to the left upper limb or shoulder/scapula/jaw with severe sweating. Such personnel should be immediately shifted to Unit hospital or nearest government hospital for further treatment.

Insiders in the paramilitary said as many as 10 percent of the personnel are Low Medical Category (LMC) or unfit with health conditions like obesity and cardiac diseases among others.

This is reflective of the growing indiscipline in the ranks as they avoid regular exercise, a prerequisite for maintaining fitness in any uniformed service. The problem is further compounded by the provision of ration money to the tune of Rs 3,636 per personnel per month ensuring a rich diet but the lack of exercise leads to health complications,” an official said.

## CSIR likely to approach ECI to use its UV-C tech to limit Covid spread

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Government’s premier research body, CSIR may soon approach the Election Commission of India (ECI) to use its UV-C technology for mitigation of airborne transmission of SARS-CoV-2 during indoor meetings with limited capacity for the ensuing Assembly polls in five poll-bound States in the wake of ban on physical rallies and roadshows.

This was informed by Union Minister of Science & Technology Dr Jitendra Singh at an event after releasing the CSIR Guidelines on Disinfection Technologies for Mitigation of SARS-CoV-2 Transmission.

The CSIR-CSIO’s (Central Scientific Instruments Organisation) newly developed disinfection technology is being installed to combat pandemic in railway coaches, AC buses, closed spaces and even the Parliament House, pointed out the Minister adding that it is totally effective for mitigation of airborne transmission of SARS-CoV-2 and will also remain relevant in post-Covid era.

The technology will soon be open for general roll-out for use by common masses, he said.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the technology has been developed according to the requirements for deactivation of SARS and COV-2 virus contained in an aerosol with necessary ventilation measures, necessary safety and user guidelines and tested Bio-safety standards etc.



UV-C deactivates viruses, bacteria, fungus and other bio-aerosols etc. with appropriate dosages using 254nm UV light.

He said, UV-C air duct disinfection system can be used in auditoriums, large conference rooms, class-rooms, malls etc. which provides a relatively safer environment for indoor activities in the current pandemic.

The Minister commented on the legacy of CSIR in scientific pursuit and urged the scientists to highlight the role played by the organisation in different segments of the day-to-day life of the common man. Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) Manoj Joshi said on the occasion that CPWD will work along with CSIR for wider dissemination and adoption of UV-C air duct disinfection systems in Government and private buildings.

A.K Malhotra, Executive Director, Railway Board informed that the UV-C Disinfection Technology has been successfully tested for one month in Railways coaches from Bandra to Chandigarh covering a distance of 1000 kilometers. He said RDSO (Research Designs and Standards Organisation), Lucknow has recommended the use of this technology in all Railways coaches in a phased manner.

# No one can be forced to get vaccinated: Govt to SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry in an affidavit told the Supreme Court that Covid-19 inoculation guidelines issued do not envisage forcible vaccination without obtaining the consent of an individual.

The affidavit filed on Sunday said that India’s vaccination programme is the largest in the world and as on January 11, 2022, a total of 1,52,95,43,602 doses have been administered. It said that 90.84 per cent of the eligible adult population has received their first dose of the vaccine and 61 per cent has received their second dose as well.

"It is submitted that the direction and guidelines released by the Government of India and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare do not envisage any forcible vaccination without obtaining consent of the concerned individual. "It is submitted that vaccination for COVID-19 is of larger public interest in view of the ongoing pandemic situation," the affidavit filed by the

Health Ministry said.

The Ministry said that "it is duly advised, advertised and communicated through various print and social media platforms that all citizens should get vaccinated and systems and processes have been designed to facilitate the same....However, no person can be forced to be vaccinated against their wishes," it said.

"Furthermore, a total of 23,768 doses have been administered to disabled persons who have voluntarily chosen to be identified as such by using their Unique Disability ID Card/Disability Certificate for registration at the time of their vaccination," it said.

On the issue of exempting persons with disabilities from producing vaccination certificates, the Centre told the apex court that it has not issued any SOP that makes it mandatory to carry the vaccination certificate for any purpose. The Centre said this in its affidavit filed in response to a plea by NGO Evara Foundation seeking door-to-door, priority COVID-19 vaccination for per-

sons with disabilities.

On the issue of door-to-door vaccination, the affidavit submitted that guidance has been provided to states and union territories to undertake meticulous, need-based planning so that Near to Home Vaccine Centres (NHCVCs) strategy is undertaken at block or urban area level and identification of NHCVC sites done according to guidelines. The location of NHCVCs is to be done by district/urban task forces so as to ensure maximum reach of services to the eligible population, it said.

The Health Ministry stressed on the need for continuing the use of face masks or face covers, and said the "Har Ghar Dastak Abhiyan" was being followed for door-to-door vaccination of eligible beneficiaries, including persons with disabilities. It also apprised the apex court that such persons not having ID cards are also eligible for vaccination since the CoWIN website provides the facility for creation of special vaccination sessions for this purpose.

"It is submitted that the

## India records slight fall in new Covid infections

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India’s Covid-19 infections at 2,58,089 in the past 24 hours was slightly lower than Sunday, but the death numbers at 385 were higher, as per the Union Health Ministry data. Registering an increase of 6.02 per cent in a day, Omicron cases in India have gone up to 8,209.

Active Covid-19 cases now stand at 16,56,341, while the recovery rate is 94.27 per cent.

The number of active Covid-19 cases has increased to 16,56,341, the highest in around 230 days, while the death toll has climbed to 4,86,451 with 385 daily fatalities, the data updated at 8 am stated. The active cases account for 4.43 percent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate has decreased to 94.27 percent, the ministry said.

An increase of 1,05,964 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

span of 24 hours.

"India’s Omicron tally has risen to 8,209. The cases have been detected across 29 states and union territories, out of which 3,109 have recovered or migrated," said a senior official from the Ministry.

Maharashtra, one of the worst-hit states by the Covid pandemic, recorded 41,327 new coronavirus infections, 1,135 less than the day before, and 29 deaths. The overall caseload now stands at 72,11,810 and the death toll at 1,41,808. Eight new Omicron cases have been reported in the state, raising the tally of such infections to 1,738.

Delhi on Sunday reported 18,286 COVID-19 cases and 28 deaths, while the positivity rate dropped to 27.87 per cent from 30.64 per cent a day ago, according to health department data. State Health Minister Satyendar Jain has said that the city is conducting three times more diagnostic

tests than the number recommended by the ICMR.

Active coronavirus cases in Andhra Pradesh crossed the 30,000 mark to reach 30,182 on Monday as 4,108 fresh positives were added in the state. In the 24 hours ending 9 am today, 22,882 samples were tested, which turned a positivity rate of about 19 per cent, a four per cent rise over Sunday.

Kerala on Monday recorded 22,946 new Covid-19 cases with a test positivity rate of 33.07 per cent. The state also reported 18 related deaths. The state currently has 1,21,458 active cases.

The new fatalities include 158 from Kerala and 36 from West Bengal. Of the total deaths reported so far in the country, 1,41,808 are from Maharashtra, 50,832 from Kerala, 38,431 from Karnataka, 36,989 from Tamil Nadu, 25,363 from Delhi, 22,963 from Uttar Pradesh and 20,088 from West Bengal.

## Severe cold conditions continue in Punjab, Delhi, UP, HP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Severe cold day conditions continued in Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi NCR on Monday. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said the cold day to severe cold day conditions over Northwest and Central India will continue during the next 24 hours and gradually abate thereafter.

Meanwhile, fresh snowfall in some parts of Kashmir led to a dip in the maximum temperatures but overnight cloud cover has resulted in higher than expected minimum temperatures across the valley.

The IMD said cold wave conditions over Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan during the next two days. It may abate only after that. Fresh active Western Disturbance will affect Northwest India from Jan 21.

For Delhi, the cold day conditions continued for the



fifth consecutive day on Monday. On Monday, the maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to settle around 17°C and 8°C, respectively. The respite is mainly due to the back-to-back western disturbances (WDs) forecast to affect the Western Himalayan Region from Tuesday onwards. As per

IMD, a fresh WD is likely to affect Western Himalayan Region from January 18 onwards, followed by another one from Friday, January 21.

Dr RK Jenamani, senior IMD scientist, said, "The condition of fog has improved in Delhi, Punjab and Haryana today. There will be light rain-

CoWIN public interface is available in 11 regional languages in addition to English. It is also submitted that open files of awareness materials

have been shared with the states for translation, publication and dissemination in any language/accessible format," the affidavit said.

## E-cigarette users who test positive are more likely to experience Covid symptoms

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Users of electronic cigarettes who get afflicted with Covid-19 have a higher frequency of experiencing Covid symptoms such as nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, and loss of the sense of smell or taste, compared to non-vapers, according to new research from Mayo Clinic.

The study, published in the Journal of Primary Care & Community Health, found that symptoms also include headaches, muscle aches and pain and chest pain.

The study said that people who vape and also smoked tobacco, and tested positive for Covid, complained of laboured breathing and had more frequent emergency department visits than those who did not vape.

"The study was designed to compare the frequency of common Covid-19 symptoms, such as loss of taste or smell, headache, muscle aches and chest tightness in Covid patients who vaped, compared with those who were not vapers," said David McFadden, from Mayo Clinic.

The team interviewed more than 280 Covid-positive vapers and compared them with 1,445 Covid-positive people of the same age and gender, and who don't vape.

All of these common Covid symptoms were reported more frequently among people who vape, the researchers said.

Use of e-cigarettes has grown significantly over the past decade, especially among high school students and young adults, though the short- and long-term health effects of e-cigarettes are unknown.

"There are a lot of studies that have shown that e-cigarette use may be associated with inflammation in the lungs and also may cause



severe lung injury in certain users, causing a condition called e-cigarette or vaping use-associated lung injury," said Robert Vassallo, a Mayo Clinic pulmonologist and critical care specialist.

"Our research was not designed to test whether e-cigarette use increases the risk of acquiring Covid infection, but it clearly indicates that symptom burden in patients with Covid-19 who vape is greater than in those who do not vape," he added.

The increased inflammation of lung tissue promoted by Covid-19 infection and the inflammation induced by vaping may worsen the likelihood of systemic inflammation, with an associated increase in symptoms such as fever, myalgias, fatigue and headache, the study noted.

"During a pandemic with a highly transmissible respiratory pathogen like SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes Covid-19), it is highly advisable to reduce or stop vaping and e-cigarette use, and minimise the potential for increased symptoms and lung injury," Vassallo said.

Yet another study which tested more than 4,300 young people for the coronavirus found that those who vaped regularly were five to seven times more likely to test positive. There is evidence that vaping harms the lungs, which might increase the risk of coronavirus infection or a more serious case of Covid-19.


Notice Inviting e-Tender

No. SSA/Esstt/EPB/I&II/2021-22/470/2021/8526    Date: 17.01.2022

Mission Director, Axiom Sarba Siksha Abhiyan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam (Samagra Shiksha) invites tender from reputed exercise book manufacturers through e-Tendering process for the supply of Evaluation and Practice Books for class –I & II (Four Line and Square Line).

To participate in this tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves.

The Bidder who have downloaded the tenders schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axiom Sarba Siksha Abhiyan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.



Sd/-Mission Director  
SSA, Assam  
Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

Janasanyog/CF/2908/21

## DISQUALIFICATION OF MUKUL ROY

### SC hopes WB Assembly Speaker will decide plea within two weeks

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday expressed hope that the West Bengal Assembly Speaker will decide within two weeks a plea seeking disqualification of Mukul Roy, who defected to the TMC from the BJP after the state polls.

A bench comprising Justices L Nageswara Rao and B V Nagarathna adjourned the matter to the second week of February

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for the Assembly Speaker, urged the bench to post the matter for hearing in the third week of

February as it would be impractical to put a tight deadline.

The apex court, however, adjourned the petition for hearing to the second week of February, and said that it expects a decision by that time.

"We will give them two weeks. List it for the second week of February. In the meanwhile please ensure it is completed, we are not saying that in the order," the bench observed.

The apex court was hearing two separate appeals filed by West Bengal Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee and its

Secretary and the Returning Officer against the Calcutta High Court's order.

The high court had asked Banerjee to take a decision on the petition for disqualification of Roy as a member of the House by October 7.

BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari, leader of the Opposition, on June 17 had filed the petition before the Speaker seeking Roy's disqualification. *PTI*



## SC bench irked over disruptions during online hearings due to use of mobile phones by lawyers

New Delhi: A Supreme Court bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) N V Ramana on Monday expressed unhappiness over repeated disruptions during virtual hearings due to the use of mobile phones by several advocates, and said it may have to ban participation through mobiles.

A bench comprising the CJI and justices A S Bopanna

and Hima Kohli was unhappy over the fact that it had to adjourn the hearings in as many as 10 cases listed on Monday due to disruptions in either audio or visual or both from advocates' end during the proceedings.

"Lawyers are appearing using their mobile phones and are not visible. We may have to ban this mobile business. Mr counsel, you are now practising in the Supreme Court and appear regularly. Can't you afford to have a desktop to argue," the bench observed in one of the cases.

During the hearing of another case, the bench took note of poor internet connectivity at the lawyer's end and

said, "We have no energy to hear cases like this. Please devise a system by which we can hear you. Ten matters are over like this and we are shouting." The top court has been hearing cases through video-conferencing since March 2020 due to the pandemic and has been relaxing or tightening the conditions from time to time keeping in mind the changing pandemic situation.

The apex court, on January 2, took note of a sudden spike in the number of COVID-19 cases in the country and decided to hear all matters in virtual mode and from January 7, the benches are sitting at the residential offices of the judges. *PTI*



# Netaji’s legacy partly exploited: Daughter

Subhas Chandra Bose’s daughter expresses shock over R-Day ‘Bengal tableau row’

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A day after Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for reconsidering his decision to exclude Bengal’s tableau on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in the Republic Day parade, the legendary freedom fighter’s daughter Anita Pfaff too expressed her concern at how her father’s legacy was only ‘partly exploited’ for political reasons.

Pfaff told an Indian news agency “I have heard about it. I don’t know under what circumstances it happened and why the tableau was not included. There might be some reasons. We can’t imagine that the Republic Day function in the year when my father would have turned 125 is being held and his tableau was not includ-

ed, it seems very strange.” Expressing her astonishment about how celebrations on Netaji was opened with much fanfare last year only to get a subdued response in 2022 she said “and last year, the opening of the anniversary year was celebrated in a bigger way, of all places in Kolkata, (it) had something to do with election and election prospects in Bengal. The fact that nothing happened this year....certainly the issue is not as important as last year.”

Pfaff’s comment came almost in tandem with a second request from none other than senior BJP leader and former Meghalaya Governor Tathagato Roy who too urged the Prime Minister to reconsider his decision.

Roy a former Bengal BJP president wrote in tweet “we have appealed to the Prime Minister to allow the tableau of

West Bengal to participate in the Republic Day celebrations. The tableau focuses on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Netaji’s organization, the INA, which undermined the confidence of the British. That’s why the British forced him to leave the country so soon.”

The Chief Minister earlier wrote to the Prime Minister expressing her “profound shock and hurt” by the “abrupt” rejection of the proposed tableau.

She wrote, “the tableau was commemorating the contributions of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and his INA on his 125th birth anniversary and was carrying the portraits of some of the most illustrious sons and daughters of the country --- Ishwar Chandra V i d y a s a g a r , Rabindranath Tagore, Swami Vivekananda, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das, Sri

Aurobindo, Matangini Hazra, Nazrul, Birsa Munda and many patriots.”She urged the Prime Minster to “reconsider” his decision so as to pay a befitting respect and homage to the freedom fighters of the country.

Subsequently the Trinamool Congress too attacked the BJP Government even as its portal wrote “Ridiculous how the BJP India led Central Government repeatedly & systematically insults our history, culture and pride. By rejecting Netaji’s tableau, they have once again laid bare their hypocrisy. ‘absolutely unpardonable’.

Roy’s tweet was taken as a shot in the arm by the TMC leadership with one of its MPs Shantanu Sen wondering how “the BJP on the one hand tells the country to remember Netaji’s contribution as the

pioneer of Indian freedom struggle and on the other it throws out a tableau containing a theme basically on this great freedom fighter.”

The Congress too hit out at the BJP Government and wrote a letter to include the tableau in the Republic Day parade. In a letter written to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Congress Lok Sabha Leader and Bengal Pradesh Congress president Adhir Chowdhury said, “This is an insult to the people of West Bengal, our cultural heritage and our great hero Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Netaji is not only the pride of West Bengal, but the entire nation.” Meanwhile, the Bengal BJP evaded response on the issue saying thePrime Minister “the supreme administrator of the country. When thematter is in his eyes, he will be the one to say it best.”

# Akhilesh offers SP ticket to Gorakhpur BJP MLA

Sitting MLA Radha Mohan Aggarwal was insulted most in BJP Govt: SP chief

**Lucknow:** With the BJP deciding to field UP CM Yogi Adityanath from his home turf Gorakhpur (Urban) Assembly seat in the February polls, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav on Monday sought to woo the sitting BJP MLA Radha Mohan Aggarwal, offering him his party ticket for the seat.

Asked about BJP’s Gorakhpur (Urban) MLA Aggarwal, the Samajwadi Party chief told reporters here, “If you (reporters) can establish contact with him and speak to him, the ticket will be announced and he will get the ticket.”

Yadav was speaking to reporters at his party headquarters here on the occasion of ‘Ann Sankalp Divas’.

Agarwal has been the MLA from Gorakhpur Urban seat since 2002.

“I remember the oath-taking ceremony of Chief Minister (Yogi Adityanath). I had seen Radha Mohan Aggarwal on the occasion. He was not able to find a seat and had to keep standing. He has been insulted the most in the BJP government,” Yadav said.

On a question about BJP’s disgruntled MLAs, Yadav had earlier asserted, “We cannot give seats to everyone. The BJP can distribute its tickets. We cannot take anyone (into the SP) now.”

But, as soon as, Agarwal’s name was mentioned, he said he would give him the ticket.

Dismissing speculation about his younger brother’s wife Aparna Yadav

joining the BJP, Akhilesh Yadav said, “The BJP is more concerned about my family than me. Are you asking the question after being inspired by the BJP?”

Aparna Yadav had contested the 2017 UP assembly elections on an SP ticket from Lucknow Cantonment but lost to BJP’s Rita Bahuguna Joshi.

On a question on Azad Samaj Party chief Chandrashekhar Ravan, the SP chief said, “I had said the SP had given respect to the people of the alliance and had also sacrificed to cement the alliance. At this point of time, whatever sacrifices have to be made should be made.”

“The SP is making sacrifices. As far as Chandrashekhar (Ravan) is concerned, I had given him seats. If he wants to help as a brother, he can do so,” Yadav added.

“Chandrashekhar had initially

accepted two seats, but he said later that his organisation could not agree on it. In this scenario why should the SP be blamed?” he asked.

“That is why I am saying people are hatching conspiracies. Do not level allegations if someone has said anything. Several conspiracies are being hatched for the UP elections and they will be hatched in future as well,” Yadav said.

On January 15, the Azad Samaj Party had said, “We thought this is a new Samajwadi Party and there will be some change in it. We can speak about social justice. We wanted unity of the Bahujan and we were banking on him (Akhilesh Yadav) but yesterday we felt that our hopes have been shattered. I feel that Akhilesh ji does not need us. All the best to him. We will fight our own polls.” Uttar Pradesh goes to assembly polls in seven phases between February 10 and March 7.

**PTI**

# Fate of late stalwarts’ wards to be keenly watched in UP polls

**Lucknow:** With several political stalwarts of Uttar Pradesh no longer on the scene, it will be keenly watched how their children lead at the hustings this time without their formidable presence.

Be it former Chief Minister Kalyan Singh, Rashtriya Lok Dal’s Ajit Singh, BJP leader Lalji Tandon or Samajwadi Party leaders Amar Singh and Beni Prasad Verma, all of them have commanded the State’s politics over several decades and will be missed in the high-stakes Assembly polls to be held between February 10 and March 7.

All of them died in the last two years.

Samajwadi Party patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav too has largely stayed away from the hurly-burly of electoral politics due to ill health and is rarely seen in public.

“Actions and words of these stalwarts had political meaning and were keenly watched by rivals to formulate their strategy. But this time these stalwarts will not be there in the poll battle physically and will be missed by the electorate in Uttar Pradesh. Now it will be for the generation next to prove themselves in their absence,” political analyst J P Shukla said.

These leaders could sway people and communities and rearrange political alignments.

BJP leader and Hindutva poster boy Kalyan Singh, who passed away on August 21, 2021, managed to unite non-Yadav OBC castes for his party in the state.

He had a good presence and acceptance in western Uttar Pradesh and his “blessings” ensured victory of his grandson Sandeep Singh in the last assembly election in 2017 from Atrauli seat in Aligarh

district.

Kalyan Singh’s son Rajveer Singh is a BJP MP from Etah seat.

The defining moment of Kalyan Singh’s life was the fall of Babri mosque in 1992 and his quitting as chief minister owning its moral responsibility. His death is termed a big loss to the BJP.

“Kalyanji was one of the senior most leaders of the party. Obviously his absence will be felt in the election. But the party is there with his family and has already declared ticket for his grandson Sandeep and his victory is certain,” a BJP spokesperson said.

In the RLD, it will be the first election Jayant Chaudhary will be leading his party without his father and former Union minister Ajit Singh, who died on May 6, 2020.

Though Ajit Singh tasted defeat in the 2014 and 2019 parliamentary elections, his hold over the Jats in the western region of the state was admired even by his rivals.

“The people of West UP have respect for Ajit Singh ji. This time they will pay him tribute by establishing the leadership of Jayant Chaudhary and ensure that the next government is formed with SP. There is a wave for RLD in the region,” RLD national secretary Anil Dubey told PTI.

The RLD has forged an alliance with the Samajwadi Party this time.

Former Bihar governor Lalji Tandon, once considered close to former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and a prominent BJP face in Lucknow, too will be missed this election. He died on July 21, 2020 and his son Ashutosh Tandon, who is a minister in the Yogi Adityanath govern-

ment, will have to contest the election in his absence.

In the Samajwadi Party, the baton has now moved to Akhilesh Yadav, the son of Mulayam Singh Yadav.

Due to health concerns, Mulayam Singh Yadav is practically indisposed.

“Netaji (Mulayam) comes to meet us at party office frequently and guide us. With his training and guidance, the party is going to form the next government under the leadership of Akhileshji,” SP MLC Rajpal Kashyap said. The party will also miss its leaders Amar Singh and Beni Prasad Verma. Singh died on August 1, 2020, while Verma passed away on March 27 that year.

When the Samajwadi Party went through a bitter power struggle before the 2017 assembly polls, Amar Singh had sided with Akhilesh Yadav’s uncle Shivpal Yadav and the fight went to the Election Commission. Ultimately, Akhilesh Yadav won the battle and the party symbol.

Beni Prasad Verma left the SP in 2009 but rejoined it in 2016 and was made a member of the Rajya Sabha. His son Rakesh Verma is in active politics and is a prospective SP candidate from Barabanki. Another stalwart and known face of Raebareli, Akhilesh Singh, died on August 20, 2019.

In his absence, his daughter Aditi Singh is carrying forward his political legacy. Aditi Singh, who left the Congress to join BJP, represents Raebareli Sadar in the assembly now.

A five-time MLA, Akhilesh Singh was considered as the “Robin Hood of Rae Bareli” and was popular among a large number of its residents.

**PTI**

# HC denies bail to Maha BJP MLA & Narayan Rane’s son

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Monday refused to grant an anticipatory bail to Maharashtra BJP MLA and Union Minister Narayan Rane’s son Nitesh Rane in an alleged attempt to murder case.

After hearing pre-arrest bail pleas made by Nitesh Rane and others, A single bench of HC justice C.V. Bhadang also refused relief to another accused Sandesh alias Gotya Sawant, while he granted bail to co-accused Manish Dalvi. Dalvi’s name does not figure in the complaint filed in the case.

Nitesh has been charged with Sections 307 (attpmt to murder), 120- B (conspiracy) read with 34 (common intention) of the IPC.

Nitesh has been named as the key conspirator behind an attempt to murder Shiv Sena leader Santosh Manohar Parab, who was knocked down from behind by a car on December 18,2021, while he was returning home by a motorcycle at Kankavali in Sindhudurg district which is Rane’s political bastion.

The prosecution’s case that a conspiracy was hatched in which one Sachin Satpute was entrusted “to assault and

criminally intimidate the complainant/injured”. Satpute (A6) with the help of Dhiraj Jadhao who is bodyguard of Sachin Satpute) and accused Sneha Chavan, Dnyaneshwar @ Mauli who were part of the conspiracy. Both Nitesh and Gotya Sawant are alleged to have hatched the conspiracy to make an attempt o the life of Parab.

Among other things, the Prosecution opposed the anticipatory bail being granted to Nitesh and Gotya Sawant on the ground that there were all five cases against Applicant number one ( Nitesh) and 26 cases against Applicant No 2. The Prosecution also told the court Nitesh was arrested by the Kankvali police under Section 353, 332, 342, 324, 147, 143, 148, 149, 323, 504, 506, 109 and 120-B of IPC and Section 3 of the Damage to Public Property Act.

On his part, Nitesh’s senior counsel Niteen Pradhan requested the court to extend his clients protection from arrest for another week to enable them to decide on future course of action..

However, Special Public Prosecutor Sudeep Pasbola told the court that there was no interim protection either before

the Sessions Judge or before this Court operating in favour of the Applicants.

However, the Investigating Officer had made a statement that no coercive or precipitative steps shall be taken against the Applicants, during the pendency of the application before this Court.The Special Public Prosecutor also assured the high court after taking specific instructions, the Investigating Officer’s assurance would continue till January 27.

Meanwhile, while granting bail to co-accused Manish Dalvi, the high court directed him to remain present at the Kankavli police station on January 20, 21 and 22, 2021 between 11 am and 1 pm, and thereafter “as and when called by the Investigating Officer”. The high court directed Dalvi to surrender his passport, if any, before the Investigating officer and not to leave Sindhudurg District without prior intimation to the investigating officer until further orders. The court also asked him to co-operate with the investigating agency and not to make any attempt to directly or indirectly contact or influence the witnesses. or to tamper with the prosecution evidence.



Full moon on ‘Paush Purnima’ in Prayagraj on Monday

**PTI**

# Snow in Valley lowers temp

**Srinagar:** Fresh snowfall in some parts of Kashmir led to a dip in the maximum temperatures but overnight cloud cover has resulted in higher than expected minimum temperatures across the valley, officials said on Monday.

Light to moderate snowfall was reported from many places in north Kashmir, including Lolab, Kupwara, Sopore and Baramulla, they said.

Some parts of Srinagar witnessed sleet – a mixture of snow and rain -- very briefly, they added.

The precipitation has resulted in the mercury falling during the day. However, overnight cloud cover ensured that the temperature settled

around the freezing point in most parts of Kashmir last night, they said.

The mercury in Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, settled at a low of 1 degree Celsius – over two notches up from the previous night’s minus 1.2 degrees Celsius, officials said.

Gulmarg, the famous ski resort in Baramulla district of north Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 4.6 degrees Celsius – up 2.4 degrees from the previous night.Pahalgam in south Kashmir Anantnag district, which serves as the base camp for the annual Amarnath yatra, recorded a low of minus 3.6 degrees Celsius – two degrees up from the previous night,

**PTI**

they said.

According to officials, Qazigund, the gateway town to the valley, recorded a minimum of minus 1 degree Celsius, while the nearby south Kashmir town of Kokernag recorded a low of minus 2 degrees Celsius.

The mercury in Kupwara in north Kashmir settled at a low of 0.5 degrees Celsius.

The meteorological office said under the influence of a feeble western disturbance, the weather is most likely to remain generally cloudy with possibility of very light to light rain/snow in the plains till Wednesday and light to moderate snowfall over the higher reaches.

**PTI**

## COVID BULLETIN

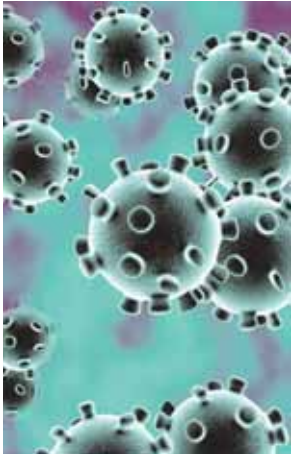
# Over 14K cases, 36 deaths logged in Bengal in 24 hours

**Kolkata:**West Bengal’s Covid-19 tally climbed to 18,97,699 on Sunday with 14,938 fresh cases, while 36 more fatalities pushed the death toll to 20,088, a health department bulletin said. The State had registered 19,064 new infections and 39 deaths on Saturday.

Its positivity rate stood at 27.73 per cent, the bulletin said. Kolkata registered the highest number of fresh fatalities at 12, followed by five in neighbouring North 24 Parganas district and four in Howrah. The state capital logged 3,893 single-day cases.

West Bengal now has 1,60,305 active cases, and 17,17,306 people have recovered from the disease, including 9,973 since Saturday.

The state has tested over 2.23 crore samples so far, taking into account 53,876 such



clinical examinations in the past 24 hours, down from 64,572 samples the previous day, the bulletin added.

Meanwhile, the Trinamool Congress and the BJP earlier in the day engaged in a war of

words over COVID-19 vaccination, with the former accusing the saffron party of discrimination with non-BJP ruled states.

“Modi ji (PM Narendra Modi) is providing the full quota of vaccines to some states, but not meeting the requirements of states like Bengal,” TMC Secretary General Partha Chatterjee told reporters.

“During the second wave, we had to procure a sizeable amount of vaccines on our own,” he added.

Reacting to the remarks, BJP state spokesman Samik Bhattacharya said the TMC government does not have a proper policy to tackle with the virus, and “due to its procrastination, many in the state are awaiting the first and second doses”.

**PTI**

# Covid surges as Kerala sees 22,946 fresh infections in a day

**Thiruvananthapuram:** The number of daily Covid-19 cases continued to rise sharply in Kerala with the state reporting 22,946 fresh infections on Monday taking the total case-load to 53,92,652, a health bulletin said.The state Health Department said the growth rate of new virus cases has shot up by 182 per cent compared to the number of cases reported in the previous week (January 10 and 16).

The toll in the state touched 50,904 with 72 virus-related deaths, it said. Among the new deaths, 18 were recorded over the last few days and 54 designated as COVID-19 deaths after receiving appeals based on the new guidelines of the Centre and the directions of the Supreme Court.“Currently,

there are 1,21,458 active COVID-19 cases in the state out of which only 3.7 per cent require hospitalisation,” the state government said in a press release.

Among the districts, Thiruvananthapuram recorded 5,863 cases, the highest in the state, followed by Ernakulam with 4,100 cases and Kozhikode with 2,043 cases.

The state had tested 69,373 samples in the last 24 hours. Out of those found infected, 181 reached the state from outside while 22,179 contracted the disease from their contacts. The source of infection of 442 is yet to be traced.Meanwhile, 5,280 persons recuperated from the disease on Monday taking the total recoveries in the state to 52,28,710.

**PTI**



Health workers prepare a Covid-19 ward at a hospital in view of rising cases of the virus, in Thane on Monday

**PTI**



## Shadowboxing

A section of population feels that the jab drive violates human rights and personal freedom

Strangely, the exit of Novak Djokovic from Australia saw more anti-vaxxers getting angry than tennis fans. An anti-lockdown and anti-vaccine group quickly surfaced in Australia wondering if the tennis great was the “beacon of hope” to lead the fight against vaccination. Such segments of population exist across the world today. To them, it is not a question of an unvaccinated person posing a risk to oneself and family and friends and colleagues. Refusal to vaccinate is for them a political issue, largely the right-wing variety. Western anti-vaxxers link their hesitation to growing distrust in Government institutions and policies. People’s frustration has generally mounted since 2020 because of lockdowns and restrictions turning their routines topsy-turvy. Their frustration often extends to vaccination campaigns to control the transmission of the Coronavirus. It is also true, however, that absence of scientific rigour in a few past cases of inoculation has made some Europeans wary of public health programmes. The pro-Djokovic camp in Turkey is an anti-vaccination party that fears vaccination guidelines violate human rights and personal freedom. A party in Austria is gaining popularity for a similar stand. In the United States, the Republicans are against vaccination, in contrast to the Democrats. Some countries like Russia, vexed with the anti-vaccination politics, want to bring in a QR code system to prevent the unvaccinated from accessing public places. France has a Government divided on the issue. President Emmanuel Macron raised a storm by making public his displeasure against the anti-vaxxers.

But his Sports Minister strangely said he would allow an unvaccinated Djokovic to play in the French Open. The vaccination drive is now stuck in a political row. India is not unaffected by the global movement.

The opinion is sharply divided on Djokovic’s stand. The Indian Government, for the first time, clarified its stand when it told the Supreme Court that “no person can be forced to be vaccinated against their wishes”. It will also not make it mandatory to carry vaccination certificates for any purpose. The statement comes in the wake of some States and private businesses wanting to disincentivise people refusing to get vaccinated. To be sure, the unvaccinated are a risk to themselves and others. But one should notice a fundamental difference between the anti-vaxxers in India and the west. The Indians in this group are vaccine-hesitant, not anti-vaccination as such. They are not, as of date, part of a political movement like in Europe. Concerns of safety, side effects, rushed vaccine approvals, quick human trials and scientific scepticism are some of the factors that hold them from taking the vaccine. Hesitancy has reduced where their concerns have been redressed. The sudden onslaught of the highly transmissible Omicron variant made them quickly change their mind about vaccination. The priority is a trust-building national campaign to personally reach out to the unvaccinated. Prefer reason over a rule.



Locals look on as workers clear water hyacinth from the Powai lake, in Mumbai

PTI

## A curious move

If Punjab poll date can be deferred, why not delay this entire round owing to Omicron?

At the outset, let it be made very clear that this write-up seeks to cast no aspersions on the intent of the Election Commission of India, which is an autonomous body established by the Constitution. If anything, it only tries to assess whether the deferment of the Punjab Assembly election date is a case of double standards or even misplaced priority. The point is pertinent because all the major political parties in the fray in Punjab had in one voice demanded that the election date be put off in view of the Guru Ravi Das Jayanti celebrations, which would be celebrated on February 16. They said a large number of people were expected to move from Punjab to Varanasi for participating in the celebrations. The Election Commission acquiesced and has postponed the date to February 20. Now, the development spawns a couple of related questions. One, aren’t the parties clearly in a game of upmanship here to woo the electorate by showing how much they care for the latter’s religious sentiments? And, isn’t the poll panel looking like it is playing into their



hands rather than diligently fulfilling its constitutional mandate?

Two, is the issue of celebrating Guru Ravi Das Jayanti, or any other religious or community-based festival for that matter, is of bigger importance than the collective health and well-being of our nation’s people? Because, admit it or choose to ignore it at your own peril, the truth of the matter as bright as daylight is that the Omicron-led third wave of the pandemic is well and truly upon us. Highly transmissible as this COVID-19 variant is, our population is contracting it left, right and centre, as is evident by the skyrocketing number of the people contracted thus far. Also, by the parties’ own admission, lakhs of devotees would travel from Punjab to Varanasi for participating in the celebrations. Isn’t it a logical corollary and real and present risk that they could transmit the highly infectious virus to other, unaffected people on their two-way journey? And if the decision has come about for considerations other than a prominent sect’s religious sentiments, then why not extend the same yardstick to the other four States too that are going to polls in February and March? After all, by any measure, safety and good health for all citizens take precedence any day over a region- and religion-specific demand, isn’t it?

# Tribals and their divinity concept

Contrary to perception, tribals in India have a belief system which is no less profound and spiritual than other religions practised in the country

Former Union Minister for Tribal Affairs, Kishore Chandra Deo, had in the last week of December 2021 said: “Tribals are not born into any religion and are treated as indigenous entities. Therefore, when certain sections of the Scheduled Tribes choose to practice any religion — say, Christianity or Buddhism in the Northeast, or Islam in places like Lakshadweep, or Hindu, Sikh or any other religion — it is never a case of religious conversion because, since the tribals are not born into a religion, there can’t be a case of them converting to a religion.” This, incidentally, is the opinion of an important politician who also belongs to the tribal community; this was said in the context of the Karnataka Anti-Conversion Bill.

LM Shrikant, the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, had pointed out on February 21, 1952, in a note that tribals in India have three common features: a) Tribal origin; b) Primitive way of life and habitation in remote and less accessible areas; and, c) general backwardness in all respects. He discovered after extensive travel all over India how the tribals lived in semi-slavish conditions, amidst abysmal poverty. He also noted the harm caused by the Criminal Tribes Act of 1926. In various reports, no one has ever mentioned that tribals lack a ‘belief system’ or religion.

Now, let us examine whether the tribals have a “religion” as described by Kishore Chandra Deo. The concept of dharma is different from religion, as we all know. Even to assume that tribals have no religion is historically wrong. Here, I have just picked a few examples from the Santal segment of the tribal population. Surely, this is true of other tribal societies, too.

All human beings are born without a ‘belief system’ or religion is true but they embrace the practices, rituals and the overall religio-cultural traits from their parents and the immediate neighbourhood. Like picking up the mother tongue, it happens effortlessly and without any tutoring. One can assert that trib-



als in India have a belief system which is no less profound and spiritual than other religions/dharma that are practised in India. As Suniti Kumar Chatterjee had pointed out: “All the Austric tribes in India had just a little oral literature, handed down from generation to generation, consisting of their mythological and semi-mythological legends and traditions, and some folk poetry, partly relating to their religious ceremonies (*‘The Cultural Heritage of India’*; Vol 5, p.670).” Chatterjee had further observed: “In Bengal, there is a sizeable Santal population following its own traditional religion, which is in a way akin to Puranic Hinduism. Being within the orbit of Brahmanism, the Santals have been very largely influenced by Hindu notions (p.671).”

Chatterjee also complimented Ramdas Majhi Tudu for his *Kherawal-Vamsa* (or *Dharam-puthi* or ‘The Sacred Book of the Kherawal race’) which contains the traditions of his people “and their religious and social culture” (p.672). He has also referred to Sadhu Ramchand Murmu Thakur, described as a “religious reformer and teacher of the Santal philosophy of religion” (p.673). There is no

“THE ORIGINAL ‘BELIEF SYSTEM’ OF HUMANKIND HAS REVOLVED AROUND NATURE WORSHIP — THE RIVERS, MOON, SUN, MOUNTAINS, TREES AND ANCESTOR WORSHIP. ALL THESE ARE IMPORTANT INGREDIENTS IN THE TRIBALS’ PERCEPTION OF THE DIVINE

dearth of examples to show how the tribals were never devoid of religion.

The original ‘belief system’ of humankind has revolved around nature worship — the Sun, the Moon, rivers, mountains, trees and ancestor worship. All these are important ingredients in the tribals’ perception of the Divine. Unfortunately, the conventional view of religion is based on a division of humanity into “believers” and “non-believers” where the conquest of “the other” is the *sine qua non*. The belief systems manifest in the Sanatan Dharma, paganism, animism and Shintoism across the continents are what the tribals in India consider sacred.

As Iravati Karve had pointed out, the “cultural compromise” that goes on in India was made possible because it was helped by “polytheism and its logical concomitant — an attitude of tolerance towards other gods, other creeds and other customs”. All scholars who have studied India’s tribal society — like Nirmal Bose, Ghurye and Kumar Suresh Singh — have also expressed similar views. James Cowan, writing on the aborigines of Australia, had observed that they “represent

the conscience of us all as they recognise and acknowledge at all times the metaphysical origins of the human spirit”.

We end this short essay with an anecdote. This was in 1902 at the Belur Math, where Santal labourers used to come for work. Swami Vivekananda liked their company immensely. Not only did he give them meals, he also took care that it was without salt. It happened because he had been told by them that they don’t take food that has salt in it or has been touched by others. Swamiji observed: “You are Narayans, God manifest. Today, I have offered food to Narayan.” After the Santals had retired for rest after the meal, Swamiji told his disciples that he found the Santals to be a “veritable embodiment of God” (*‘The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda’*, Vol 7, p.244-245). Perhaps this incident would prove once again how the tribals are to be judged regarding their ‘belief system’ and, that too, by one of the greatest Indians of all times and a true Hindu.

(The writer is an academic and historian. A former Member of ICSSR, he is currently Member, the Indian Council of Historical Research. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### PT BIRJU MAHARAJ WILL BE MISSED

Sir — Padma Vibhushan awardee and legendary Kathak dancer Brij Mohan Nath Mishra, alias Pandit Birju Maharaj (83), died at his home in Delhi. Though he was best known as a Kathak dancer, he was also a singer par excellence, having commanded over *thumri*, *dadra*, *bhajan* and *ghazal*. He composed and sang for two sequences in Satyajit Ray’s *Shatranj Ke Khiladi* and also choreographed for *Devdas*, received the Filmfare Award for Best Choreography for *Mohe Rang Do Lal* from *Bajirao Mastani*, and was noticed for *Gadar*, *Vishwaroopam* and *Dedh Ishqiya*. The versatile Kathak legend was also a superb drummer, playing nearly all drums with ease and precision; he was especially fond of playing the *tabla* and *baal*, besides being a poet and painter.

As per media, Panditji was also a master storyteller; he interlaced his performances with incidents from his life, narrated to captivate the audience. It will be great if some of his disciples carry forward his legacy beyond the heights he himself achieved. Such a great humble personality, Birju Maharaj never ran behind fame and that is the reason everyone has a lot of respect for him. We have lost one of India’s biggest traditional dancers of our era. May your soul achieve solace! Heartfelt condolences to his family, fans and disciples.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

### BAD NEWS FROM CHINA

Sir — Sir — The companies are bracing for another round of potentially debilitating supply chain disruptions as China, home to about one-third of global manufacturing, imposes sweeping lockdowns in an attempt to keep the Omicron variant under control ahead of the Winter Olympic Games and the Asian Games, 2022. At least 20 million people, or about 1.5 per cent of China’s population, are in lockdown, mostly in the city of Xi’an in western China and in the Henan province in north-central China.

The country’s zero-tolerance policy has manufacturers — already on edge after spending the last two years dealing

## Implement the poll rally ban



The Election Commission has extended the moratorium on open public rallies, except indoor meetings with 300 people or 50 per cent of the hall capacity can be held with COVID protocols. The onus of following the norms shall be on the political parties. The purpose of public rallies is to convince floating/undecided voters to vote for them. But most of the 300 people allowed will be dedicated party workers and the undecided voters will still remain out of reach. However, it is a welcome move by the EC to safeguard public health, which has been prioritised over

campaigning. Extending the ban on political rallies till January 22 would definitely be frustrating for major players and their over-eager candidates.

Contrary to the obvious dejection of the political class, all those citizens who fear mass gatherings would whole-heartedly welcome the EC’s decision for no right-thinking person would be happy at the prospect of deterioration in the already scary pandemic situation. Similar to all virus containment measures, effective enforcement of the ban would depend on the due diligence of officials who are entrusted to ensure compliance by the political parties. Unlike in the past, the upcoming elections would test the resilience and efficiency of the EC as the task ahead is not only limited to facilitating smooth transition of power in the five States but also ensuring compliance of all directions related to the poll code.

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandhar

with crippling supply chain woes — worried about another round of shutdowns at Chinese factories and ports. Additional disruptions to the global supply chain would come at a fraught moment for companies, which are struggling with rising prices for raw materials and shipping along with extended delivery times and worker shortages. If lockdowns become more widespread, their effect on supply chains could be felt across the United States. And major new disruptions could exacerbate inflation, which is already at a 40-year high.

MR Jayanthi | Mumbai

### NEW ISRO CHAIRMAN AT THE HELM

Sir — The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has been blessed with yet another stalwart in space science in the form of S Somnath, who recently assumed charge as its chairman. The timing is crucial as India opens its space sector to private firms and startups to build rockets and satellites for both domestic and global markets. When the privatisa-

tion reforms got underway with the launch of the New Space India Limited (NSIL) in March 2019, ISRO’s commercial arm was even more firmly established. Somnath has worked as Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC). An alumni of the Indian Institute of Science, he was instrumental in developing India’s most powerful rocket, GSLV Mk 3, which can be an asset for our human space mission. He has also worked on the Cryogenic PSLV rocket.

Like the success stories of the Mars Orbiter Mission and Chandrayaan 2 had ignited new hopes and aspirations, his tenure will see the launch of Gaganyaan, the human space flight, considering that India aims to send astronauts into space on its own by 2023. He has its task cut out in terms of increasing the agency’s output, especially in the times of the COVID crisis.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## SOUND BITE

I don’t know under what circumstances it happened and why the tableau was not included. There might be some reasons.



Netaji Bose’s daughter — Anita Bose-Pfaff

This (Texas synagogue attack) was, quite simply, a hate crime and an act of anti-Semitism.

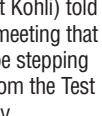
British Prime Minister — Boris Johnson

Looking forward to bringing to the audience the story of India’s most beloved *Funkaar*, Kapil Sharma.



Film director — Mrighdeep Singh Lamba

He (Virat Kohli) told us in a meeting that he will be stepping down from the Test captaincy.



Indian pacer — Jasprit Bumrah

I assure you that the roads will be smoother than the cheeks of film actress Kangana Ranaut.



Jharkhand Congress MLA — Dr Irfan Ansari



FIRST COLUMN

SOCIALISING DIGITAL BRAND COMMUNICATION

Digital avatars and ‘phygital’ communication are the new drivers



UTTAM CHAKRABORTY    SANTOSH K BISWAL

In the wake of technological upgradations, the space of media and communication is getting re-defined. Digital capital, digital representation, leap-frogging, technological determinism and communication revolution are the new buzz words. Narratives of digital marketing communications are changing fast. The advent and proliferation of 5G, increasingly adoption of popular culture and technological determinism have become the new landmarks of brand communication. There is no novelty in digitalizing the brand communication. However, socializing the digital platforms is the fad in the world of brand communication. Digital avatars, ‘phygital’ and immersive communication are the new explorations which have started influence the world of brands. Digital humanism is the larger talking point. Keeping Metaverse, social commerce and personalisation in their kitties, brand communicators are going to actualize the alternate digital realities in the dominant ecosystem of digital marketing space.



Metaverse espousing the unique digital articulations and communication will eventually the shape up the influencer marketing. This new shift taking place in the business world must be reckoned with varied yardsticks. Content creators, brands and advertisers have come forward to capitalize on Metaverse. It is going to retell the narratives of advertising through immersive storytelling. Immersive storytelling through immersive communication is a multichannel, multisensory experience - what you can see and hear. It is non-linear and exploratory in which the audiences are free to interact with whoever they want to interact with or consume content and take full control over it. It is suitable for adding gamification and interaction. The frequency of inventions and upgrades in the technological world for the last few decades enriches the platform of the metaverse and one after one technical organisations eventually incorporate them. It has been observed that metaverse is one of the significant platforms for achieving success in executing the brand strategies.

Brands are now-a-days creating immersive experiences for their consumers. They are hiring metaverse engineering directors and utilising augmented tools to simultaneously collaborate on fashion, entertainment, and gaming innovations. Metaverse also opens up opportunities to involve consumers with the platform. Value creation is one of the key aspects of this platform. Metaverse has attempted to create a new universe of fashion. Fashion is an important aspect for the human for its self-expression and also beneficial for them to create identity like the way in real life. The new virtual digital platforms open the opportunities to experience a newly three-dimensional experience. However, various studies propose that fashion will top the virtual world than the physical world because of the involvement of metaverse in the daily lives of humans.

Digital avatars are the animated or photographic images, that web surfers use to identify themselves and communicate on the online platforms. Avatars tend to enhance the entertainment and information value and improve the overall satisfaction of web-based activities. Digital representation is getting more apparent. Apart from for content creation, there is also the facility of interacting live with an audience using an avatar. Studies find that in high-involvement situation, the consumers are more likely to contemplate the content of an argument. That’s why, avatar-mediated platform is providing Philip to business, branding and communications. Tellingly, metaverse will influence traditional jobs or activities including business activities. Its impact on human especially human and society in overall will be significant. Immersive, interactive, and collaborative form of communication is going to be next level order.

*(Chakraborty and Biswal teach at Jaipuria Institute of Management, Lucknow and Symbiosis Institute of Media and Communication, Symbiosis International (Deemed University), Pune, respectively. The views expressed are personal.)*

# Delink disinvestment & budgetary exercise



UTTAM GUPTA

## The lengthy and cumbersome process of approval and bureaucratic red tape undermines the disinvestment process

With the financial year ending in two months, the Government is no close to meeting the target of ₹175,000 crore from disinvestment of Central Public Sector Undertakings set in the Union Budget for 2011-2022. It has so far realized less than ₹10,000 crore. Even after adding around ₹100,000 crore, being the expected proceeds from sale of its 10 percent shares in Life Insurance Corporation of India, (on the premise that it goes through before the year-end), there will be a whopping shortfall of ₹65,000 crore. This is not new.

It is a continuation of a trend seen during the previous six years under the Modi dispensation when in all years except during 2017-18 (in that year, the proceeds from disinvestment of a little over ₹100,000 crore were slightly higher than the target; courtesy, sale of its 51.11 percent shareholding in oil downstream CPSU Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited to another CPSU in the upstream segment, ONGC), the collection was far short of the target.

During this period, the Government laid greater emphasis on ‘strategic’ disinvestment (a sophisticated nomenclature for share sale that reduces its holding in the PSU to below 50 percent). On this front also, the outcome has been disappointing. For instance, during 2015-16, proceeds from sale through this route were ‘nil’ against budget provision of ₹28,500 crore. For 2016-17, the target itself was reduced from ₹20,500 crore to ₹5,500 crore.

In the following two years, the target for ‘strategic’ disinvestment could be met largely because of the sale of Government’s majority holding in one PSU to another: 51.11 percent shareholding in HPCL to ONGC in 2017-18 and 52.63 percent stake in the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) to Power Finance Corporation (PFC) in 2018-19. During 2019-20, 100 percent of its shareholding in NEEPCO and 75 percent in THDC India Limited were sold to National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) - another CPSU in the power sector.

These sales can’t be termed as strategic as the purchaser being another PSU namely ONGC/PFC/NTPC, the Government continues to have effective ownership and control over the divested entity viz. HPCL/REC/NEEPCO/THDC.

A number of major strategic sales such as Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited or BPCL (53.29 percent); Container Corporation or ConCor (30 per cent); Shipping Corporation of India or SCI (63.75 percent) planned during 2019-20 besides Air India or AI (and its subsidiaries) - a carry forward from the previous year - didn’t materialize. These sales didn’t happen during 2020-21 also. While, AI et al were sold in September, 2021, sale of BPCL/SCI are unlikely to get



IN THE BUDGET FOR 2021-22, THE FINANCE MINISTER ANNOUNCED THE GOVERNMENT’S DECISION TO PRIVATISE ALL CPSUs IN NON-STRATEGIC SECTORS AND UNDERTAKE PRIVATISATION EVEN IN THE STRATEGIC SECTOR WITH A RIDER OF RETAINING AT LEAST ONE UNDERTAKING IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR. THESE EFFORTS WILL BEAR FRUIT ONLY WHEN THE PROCESS IS UNSHACKLED FROM BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE AND BUDGET-MAKING

*(The writer is a policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)*



contaminated even during the current FY.

An overarching reason as to why the actual proceeds from disinvestment have fallen short of the target has to do with the very premise of treating these as a source of revenue (albeit for plugging fiscal deficit) which is flawed. Unlike tax revenue, which can be projected with a degree of certainty, the same cannot be said about proceeds from disinvestment. In this case, a lot depends on the market scenario and, in particular, the perception of investors about the PSU in which share-sale is contemplated.

In cases, where strategic sale is mooted, the Government faces a bigger challenge as apart from a favorable market, it needs bidders with deep pockets. For instance, in case of BPCL (disinvestment in the oil behemoth was originally planned for 2019-20), it needed a strategic investor who could pay around ₹60,000 crore (prevailing share price multiplied by the number of shares corresponding to 53.29 percent holding).

The lengthy and cumbersome process of approval and bureaucratic red tape further undermines the chances of the Government kicking the ball rolling just around the time when the strategic investors are ready to put in their bets.

The NITI Aayog identifies companies for divestment which are then considered by the Core Group of Secretaries on Divestment (CGD), a long-drawn process by itself, which takes it to the Alternative Mechanism (AM) - a group of ministers including finance, road transport & highways, administrative reforms etc -

for approval. After AM’s approval, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) moves proposal for in-principle approval of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA). All put together, strategic divestment involves around 12 steps.

This leads to delay and by the time, all approvals are in place, the market scenario becomes adverse. In case of BPCL, during 2019-20, the international price of crude oil (fortunes of oil companies move in tandem with it) was hovering around \$70 per barrel. But the bureaucrats were not ready. During 2020-21, COVID - 19 spoilt the party as the average crude price declined to just about \$40 per barrel (in April 2020, it had plummeted to a low of \$20 per barrel). During the current year, even as the price recovered ruling above \$70 per barrel most of the time, the officials are not ready yet again leading to deferment of its divestment to 2022-23.

In the past, successive governments used PSUs as milch cows to serve their budgetary needs. While, extracting high dividend, special dividend, bonus has been a standard practice, during 2004 - 2014, the then UPA - regime went a step ahead using them to extend petroleum subsidies (for instance, ONGC was asked to give discount on crude supplies to Indian Oil Corporation or IOCL, BPCL and HPCL to enable the latter keep the price of diesel, petrol, LPG, and kerosene low; ONGC gave a total discount of over ₹200,000 crore during this period). The same mindset drives them to look for revenue even while divesting shares of these undertakings. The

ball does not stop here.

The official think tank is ever keen that even after completing the strategic sale, the Government remains in the driver’s seat. A clear indication of this was given by the FM in her Budget speech for 2019-20. Shehad stated the intent was to change the existing policy from “directly” holding 51 per cent or above in a CPSU, to one whereby its total holding, “direct” plus “indirect”, is maintained at 51 per cent. Such a signal deters potential investors.

To conclude, the government should delink disinvestment from budgetary exercise. In other words, while projecting its revenue receipt, the Government should not include any contribution from disinvestment proceeds.

For the purpose of executing share sale, it should set up a holding company on the lines of a bank investment company recommended by the RBI committee under P Nayak for public sector banks - where all its shares in the PSUs be vested. The HC to be manned by eminent professionals should be fully empowered and given freedom to take all decisions - in consultation with the management - in regard to valuation, quantum of shares, timing of sale, etc., keeping in mind the market conditions.

In the budget for 2021-22, the finance minister had announced the government’s decision to privatize all CPSUs in non-strategic sectors and undertake privatization even in the strategic sector with a rider of retaining at least one undertaking in the public sector. These efforts will bear fruit only when the process is unshackled from bureaucratic red-tape and budget-making.

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

I’M HURT BY THE DECISION OF THE GOI TO ABRUPTLY EXCLUDE WEST BENGAL’S PROPOSED TABLEAU WITHOUT ANY REASON. —WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER MAMATA BANERJEE



THE TMC GOVERNMENT PURPOSELY MAKES SUCH TABLEAUX WHICH GET REJECTED, SO THEY CAN DO POLITICS OVER IT. —BJP NATIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT DILIP GHOSH

# Readying India for the mammoth vaccination drive

## A first-person, behind-the-scenes account straight from the trenches

Score: 156 crore vaccines., Pitch: Pandemic, War: Team Health India vs Covid-19.

One year, 156 crore vaccinations. Roughly 42 lakh vaccinations plus daily. The story of the unparalleled journey of an extraordinary achievement of “Team Health India”.

Before the world’s largest vaccination drive was launched, several experts expressed doubts based of course on their experiences, facts, and hypotheses. Will we be able to make vaccines available as per the nation’s needs? Do we possess storage capacities for such huge numbers? Do we have the necessary transport arrangements and trained manpower? It will take too long to ready the manpower to vaccinate such a large population.

Until now, the country has never vaccinated the adult pop-



MANOHAR AGNANI

*(The writer is Additional Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, GoI and Nodal Officer for the COVID-19 vaccination drive. The views expressed are personal.)*

ulation. We have not even digitized information on children’s vaccination. How will we address vaccine hesitancy among people? How will vaccine reach timely and safely to far flung regions? Who will vaccinate them?

Amid this environment of criticism, “Team Health India” counted on known strengths: ♦Decades of running our National Immunization Programme.

♦Over 25 years of administering polio drops to almost 10 crore infants.

♦Vaccinating over 35 crore children upto age 15 against measles and rubella.

♦Experience of storing vaccines in 29,000 cold chain points and sending to far flung areas.

♦Monitoring storage and distribution through e-Vin (Electronic Vaccine Intelligence



Network). ♦Implementing ‘Mission Indradhanush’ to vaccinate left-out children and expectant mothers.

The most important reason behind this self-confidence was the unshakable conviction of the Prime Minister in the hidden potential of the citizens of our country, which became the greatest strength of “Team Health India”.

The team first focused on resolving the doubts raised by the experts. So began an endless marathon of meetings on the vaccination drive. It was exact-

ly a year ago from today, before the launch of the world’s largest vaccination drive by the Prime Minister, that we finalized the basic guidelines and completed necessary trainings.

“Team Health India” had the following ready much before January 16, 2021:

♦Operational guidelines for Covid vaccination.

♦Identified manpower for the drive and training them.

♦Systems for transporting vaccines and extra storage capacities.

♦Communication strategy for vaccine hesitancy, Covid Appropriate Behaviour.

♦The CoWIN platform to enable vaccination in a digitized system.

A dry run was carried out in all States and UTs. The night of January 15 was a night to

remember, with chilling cold and nail-biting suspense to resolve a technical glitch CoWIN faced. Thousands were awake fixing the snag. Being the nodal officer for the National Covid Vaccination Programme, I too was present in the headquarters. I remember feeling like scientists sitting in a command centre about to experience the launch of a space shuttle. Words fail me in describing those moments of anxious anticipation or the deep sense of satisfaction on resolving the glitch. CoWIN was successfully kickstarted on time and we are all witness to the many benefits of the extraordinary Indian digital platform, which has continuously adapted to the evolving requirements of the programme.

This was just the beginning. In the first phase, vaccine avail-

ability was limited, and expectations were many. Rationalized distribution of the limited number of vaccines was a big challenge and criticism was inevitable. “Team Health India” worked on with virtual meetings for hours on end every day with vaccine manufacturers, vaccine transport agencies, storage centres, cold chain points and Covid Vaccination Centres with the singular aim-optimal use of every drop of the vaccine.

Next, imagine how the vaccines reached our remotest corners. Where there were no roads, cycles were used; in the deserts, camels helped; boats carried them across rivers; in the hills, vaccines were carried on backs. People were invited for vaccination with offerings of turmeric rice. For the vaccine hesitant, doors were knocked under ‘Har

Ghar Dastak’. All this while, we didn’t follow any western model; it bore the unique stamp of India’s ingenuity.

The preparations required were enormous and time too little. We kept learning from experiences gathered from the field. In this pursuit, “Team Health India” neglected their personal needs, families, dreams; many even lost their loved ones to Covid. Despite that, there was an indescribable pride “Team Health India” felt in serving the nation in this once-in-a-century crisis. What I saw or write, is just the tip of the iceberg. For “Team Health India”, there would be countless such moments of struggle and satisfaction, examples that are symbols of humanitarianism, examples that impart a sense of deep gratitude and hope.



# Joint efforts only way to fight pandemic: Xi Jinping

Blame game will delay our response: Chinese premier

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/DAVOS

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday called for joint efforts to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic while ensuring fair distribution of vaccines and expedited inoculation across the world, even as he warned against any blame game and the Cold War mentality in an apparent reference to the US. He said that holding each other back or shifting blame would only lead to a needless delay in the response and also distract us from the main objective.

In a special address on 'state of the world' on the first day of the week-long online Davos Agenda summit of the World Economic Forum, he said that humanity will certainly move on but the world needs to jointly defeat the pandemic.

"A giant ship is brave enough to brave the storm. Pandemic is proving to be a protracted one. It impacts health and the economy.

Holding each other back and shifting blames, will only shift our objectives," he said.

Favouring further opening up of the world economy and greater cooperation, he said, "We should remove barriers, not erect walls. We should open up, not close off. We should seek integration, not decoupling. This is the way to build an open world economy."

"If major economies slam on the brakes or take a U-turn in their monetary policies, there would be serious negative spillovers. They would present challenges to global economic

and financial stability, and developing countries would bear the brunt of it," Xi said. He said we need to discard Cold War mentality and seek peaceful coexistence and win-win outcomes. "Our world today is far from being tranquil; rhetorics that stoke hatred and prejudice abound. Acts of containment, suppression or confrontation arising thereof do all harm, not the least good, to world peace and security. History has proved time and again that confrontation does not solve problems; it only invites catastrophic consequences," he said.

In an apparent reference to the US, the Chinese President said protectionism and unilateralism can protect no one as they ultimately hurt the interests of others as well as one's own.

"Even worse are the practices of hegemony and bullying, which run counter to the tide of history. Naturally, countries have divergences and disagreements between them," he said, while calling for new drivers of economic growth to promote steady and robust global economic recovery.

The Chinese president said some developing countries have fallen back into poverty due to the pandemic while some developed countries are also facing hard times.

"Developed nations need responsible economic policies, should control spillover effects of policies to avoid impacting developing countries," he said while asserting that China will continue to open up and is committed to economic and market reforms. He also called for global rules on the digital economy and greater information sharing across the world. "The world is undergoing

major changes, unseen in a century and how to beat the pandemic and build a post-COVID world are a common concern for people around the world," he said while addressing the summit through video conferencing. The deadly virus, which was first reported in Chinese city Wuhan in late 2019, has so far seen over 32 crore confirmed cases globally with more than 55 lakh deaths. The international community has fought a tenacious battle against COVID-19 and the concerted efforts of the international community mean major progress has been made in the global fight against the pandemic, Xi said.

Emphasising the importance of vaccines, he called for ensuring their equitable distribution, accelerating vaccination and closing the global immunisation gap.

The World Health Organization has also been criticising the unequal distribution of vaccines and has been asking manufacturers and other countries to contribute to COVAX, an UN-backed programme for supplying vaccines to poor countries. So far, it has delivered 1 billion doses.

According to WHO, 36 of its 194 member countries have vaccinated less than 10 per cent of population and 88 have inoculated under 40 per cent.

According to latest Chinese government data, China's economy grew 8.1 per cent in 2021, exceeding its own target of 6 per cent, despite challenges, including epidemic resurgences and a complicated external environment. The Chinese economy, which was first to be hit by coronavirus and early to recover from the pandemic had grown by 2.3 per cent in 2020, the lowest annual growth rate

in 45 years. In his address at the WEF event, Xi said China will provide another one billion COVID-19 vaccine doses to African countries and 150 million doses to ASEAN countries. He said China will celebrate the advent of spring in the lunar new year, the Year of the Tiger, in two weeks' time. "In Chinese culture, tiger symbolises bravery and strength, as the Chinese people often refer to spirited dragon and dynamic tiger, or soaring dragon and leaping tiger.

To meet the severe challenges facing humanity, we must add wings to the tiger and act with the courage and strength of the tiger to overcome all obstacles on our way forward," he said. He said facts have shown once again that amidst the raging torrents of a global crisis, countries are not riding separately in some 190 small boats, but are rather all in a giant ship on which our shared destiny hinges.

"Small boats may not survive a storm, but a giant ship is strong enough to brave a storm. Thanks to the concerted efforts of the international community, major progress has been made in the global fight against the pandemic.

"That said, the pandemic is proving a protracted one, resurging with more variants and spreading faster than before. It poses a serious threat to people's safety and health, and exerts a profound impact on global economy," he said. He said acts of single-mindedly building "exclusive yards with high walls" or "parallel systems", of enthusiastically putting together exclusive small circles or blocs that polarise world will gravely undercut global efforts to tackle common challenges.

Unlikely that people will move around with masks on forever: Fauci on 'new normal'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/DAVOS

Warning that the COVID-19 pandemic is far from over and Omicron would not be last variant, global health experts on Monday said a lot would depend on transmissibility and severity of next mutants of deadly virus.

Speaking at a session on COVID-19 on first day of World Economic Forum's online Davos Agenda summit, famous American immunologist Anthony S Fauci also said while it was difficult to predict as yet what could be new normal, he does not think that people will roam around with their masks on forever.

"Omicron is highly transmissible, but apparently not very pathogenic. While I hope that remains case, but that would depend on what new variants emerge going forward," he said.

He also said there is a great deal of 'disinformation' around and that is entirely destructive to a comprehensive public health endeavour. He said endemicity means 'a non-disruptive presence, without elimination', but it cannot be said as yet whether an endemic stage is underway. "It is very difficult to predict what new normal would be like. I do not think people would be walking around with masks on forever, but one new normal I would hope for is greater solidarity with each other. I also hope new normal

would include a strong memory about what a pandemic can do to us," he said. Fauci is the Chief Medical Advisor to the President of United States and one of most prominent faces in world's fight against COVID-19 pandemic.

He is Director of National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) and serves as one of the key advisers to White House and Department of Health and Human Services on global AIDS issues, and on initiatives to bolster medical and public health preparedness.

He was joined in the panel discussion by Moderna CEO Stephane Bancel, Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness and Innovations (CEPI) CEO Richard Hatchett and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine's Professor of Emerging Infectious Diseases Annelies Wilder-Smith. Wilder-Smith said Omicron would not be last variant. "We are not out of pandemic just yet," she warned. The worldwide spread of deadly virus, which was first reported

in China's Wuhan in late 2019, has seen more than 32 crore confirmed cases globally and over 55 lakh deaths so far. The emergence of its fast-spreading Omicron variant, resulting in reintroduction of national lockdowns, travel bans and quarantines in various parts of world, has reinforced uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic.

# Russia denies looking for pretext to invade Ukraine

AP ■ MOSCOW

Russia's top diplomat on Monday angrily rejected US allegations that it was preparing a pretext to invade Ukraine as Russian troops have remained concentrated near border.

The White House said Friday that US intelligence officials had concluded that Russia had already deployed operatives to rebel-controlled eastern Ukraine to carry out acts of sabotage there and blame them on Ukraine in a "false-flag operation" to create a pretext for possible invasion.

Speaking to reporters on Monday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov dismissed US claim as "total disinformation." He reaffirmed that Russia expects a written response this week from the US and its allies to Moscow's request for binding guarantees that NATO will not embrace Ukraine or any other ex-Soviet nations, or station its forces and weapons there.

Washington and its allies firmly rejected Moscow's demands during last week's Russia-US negotiations in Geneva and a related NATO-Russia meeting in Brussels, which were held as an estimated 100,000 Russian troops with tanks and other heavy weapons are massed near Ukraine in what West fears might be a prelude to an invasion. A delegation of US senators is visiting Ukraine to emphasise US support for country. "Our bipartisan congressional delegation sends a

clear message to global community: the United States stands in unwavering support of our Ukrainian partners to defend their sovereignty and in face of persistent Russian aggression," Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, a New Hampshire Democrat, said in a statement.

Speaking Monday on a visit to Kyiv, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock warned that "any further escalation would carry a high price for Russian regime - economic, political and strategic" and emphasised need to continue negotiations.

"We are prepared to have a serious dialogue with Russia, because diplomacy is only way to defuse this highly dangerous situation at moment," she said.

Baerbock said Germany has offered to send cybersecurity specialists to Ukraine to help investigate last week's cyberattacks, which Ukrainian authorities blamed on Russia. At same time, she noted that Germany hasn't changed its refusal to provide it with weapons.

"We made clear that we will do everything to avoid escalating crisis," she said. Ukrainian officials have warned that Russia could launch an attack from various directions, including from territory of its ally Belarus. Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, who has increasingly relied on Kremlin's support amid Western sanctions over a crackdown on domestic protests, said that Russia and Belarus will hold massive military drills next month.

Pak NSA to visit Kabul on Tuesday; to discuss border fencing issue, humanitarian crisis with Taliban regime

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's National Security Adviser Moeed Yusuf will lead an inter-ministerial delegation to Afghanistan on Tuesday to discuss the issue of border-fencing and take stock of the humanitarian needs of the war-torn country with the Taliban regime, according to a media report.

During his visit from January 18 to 19, Yusuf will discuss ways to channel humanitarian aid to Afghanistan in line with requirements of UN and international sanctions, officials told Dawn newspaper. Concerns over Afghanistan's humanitarian crisis have been discussed in United Nations to avert a humanitarian crisis. On January 13, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres

warned that millions of Afghans were on the "verge of death," urging the international community to fund the UN's USD 5 billion humanitarian appeal, release the country's frozen assets and reignite its banking system to avert a major economic and social collapse.

One of the key challenges confronting Afghanistan is the near-complete exodus of skilled labour, affecting its health and infrastructure sectors. Pakistani officials said they were planning to relocate Afghan refugees who have been educated and trained in Pakistan to Afghanistan. Officials said the issue of border-fencing along Durand Line will also be discussed by Yusuf amidst differences between Islamabad and Kabul.

From oil-rich UAE, South Korea president vows climate action

AP ■ DUBAI

The president of South Korea on Monday vowed to world leaders that his fossil fuel-dependent country and the oil-rich United Arab Emirates would jointly expand their investments in renewable energy to tackle climate change. During his visit to the UAE, President Moon Jae-in reiterated Seoul's commitment to reach carbon neutrality by 2050, slash methane emissions and boost renewables as the nation known as one of Asia's biggest greenhouse gas emitters comes under growing pressure to combat climate change. "Climate change is becoming a stern reality before our eyes," he told officials and business leaders gathered at a sustainable conference in Dubai.

# Turkish court rules to keep philanthropist Kavala in prison

AP ■ ISTANBUL

A Turkish court ruled Monday that prominent Turkish civil rights activist and philanthropist Osman Kavala should stay in prison, despite his more than four years in pre-trial detention.

The hearing took place as a Council of Europe deadline that could trigger infringement procedures looms. The European Court of Human Rights ruled in 2019 that Kavala's rights had been violated and ordered his release. But Turkey has repeatedly refused to do so.

Kavala, who is in Silivri prison on outskirts of Istanbul, did not participate in hearing in line with an October statement that he would no longer attend trials via video conference because he didn't have faith court would deliver a fair trial. Kavala, 64, is accused of financing nationwide anti-government protests in 2013, attempting to overthrow government by helping orchestrate a coup attempt three years later and espionage.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

General Public is hereby informed that my client, Sh. Shoeb Jamal, S/o Lt. Sh. Hafiz Jamaluddin and his wife Smt. Haseen Akhtar, both R/o B-48, Joshi Colony, I.P. Extension, Delhi-110092 have severed all relations with their son Sh. Shees Jamal due to his bad actions and conduct. They both have disowned and debarred him from all their movable and immovable properties. Anybody dealing with Sh. Shees Jamal will do so at their own risk and my clients won't be held responsible for any act, deed or dealing done by Sh. Shees Jamal.

Sd/-  
Shiv Dutt Kaushik, Advocate

**NAME CLARIFICATION**

I, Rajmuna Devi, w/o Late K.N. Tiwari, r/o A-708, SG Impressions 58, Rajnagar Extension, Ghaziabad, UP-201017, declare that my husband's actual name was Kedar Nath Tiwari and not Kidar Nath Tiwari, which is wrongly mentioned in his service records of Army. I also declare that Kedar Nath Tiwari and Kidar Nath Tiwari was one and the same person.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to bring to the notice of the general public that one ID Card of Ms.Nikita Kumari D/O Manoj Poddar issued by ICICI Bank Ltd.having ID card no 2149286 has been found missing and/ or last on 23Dec21 at T1AM Anyone, who finds the said ID Card/s requested to return the said ID card/s requested to return the said ID card to the Manager Debt Services & Management Group, ICICI Bank Limited, SD Shoppers Arcade, Plot No.1, Community Center, Sector-7/Rohini, Delhi 110085. Therefore, all the customers of ICICI Bank Limited are hereby notified not to make any payment to any unauthorized person holding the said ID card no 2149286. Please take further notice that anybody making payment to any person holding the said ID card shall do so at his/her own costs risk and peril and ICICI Bank shall not be bound and /or responsible for any payment.

**NAME CLARIFICATION**

I, Rajmuna Devi, w/o Late K.N. Tiwari, r/o A-708, SG Impressions 58, Rajnagar Extension, Ghaziabad, UP-201017, declare that my actual name is Rajmuna Devi and not Rajmani Devi which is wrongly mentioned in my family pension papers of Army. I also declare that myself Rajmuna Devi and Rajmani Devi is one and the same person. Also, my actual date of birth is 10/06/1936 and not 01/07/1934 which is wrongly mentioned in Army records.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to bring in public notice that Rohit Goyal S/o Late Suresh Kumar Goel & R/o of H.No. 169/1, Pocket D12, Sector-7, Rohini, Delhi-110085 is mentally challenged. He will be liable for his actions himself and any person cannot bring any action on his mother Smt. Suman Lata Goyal, sister Tripta Goyal and brother Mohit Kumar Goel for the same. However, the mother, sister and brother have no link whatsoever with Rohit Goyal anymore.

**RAHUL SHARMA**  
Advocate


**Notice Inviting e-Tender**

No.SSA/Esstt/EPB/III&IV/2021-22/471/2021/8527 Date: 17.01.2022

Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam (Samagra Shiksha) invites tender from reputed exercise book manufacturers through e-Tendering process for the supply of Evaluation and Practice Books for class –III&IV (Single Line & Plain).

To participate in this tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves.

The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.

 Sd/-Mission Director  
SSA, Assam  
Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

Janasanyog/CF/2908/21

**SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE**

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

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount In Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	M/s Books Cybertech Private Limited / Shubrakant Shadangi/ Satyasai Panigrahy/ Sanjukta Shadangi/ Sucharita Mahapatra/ Sanjukta Shadangi/ Loan No:- 025005000218 & 025060000011	Nal/205, Neela Chakra Apartment, Lal Bahadur Shastri Road, Bhubneshwar Khorda, Bhubneshwar-751006/ 12-jan-2022	03-Jun-2021 Rs. 31,82,307/-	Bhubneshwar

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

Date : January 18, 2022  
Place: Delhi/ NCR

**Authorized Officer**  
ICICI Bank Limited

China's population grows by less than half-a-million in 2021; birth rate falls for 5th consecutive year

PTI ■ BEIJING

China's population grew by less than half a million last year to 1.41 billion as the birth rates fell for the fifth consecutive year, stoking fears of a looming demographic crisis and its adverse impact on the world's 2nd largest economy. At the end of 2021, China's population on the mainland grew to 1.4126 billion from 1.4120 billion in 2020, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said on Monday.

China's population increased by 480,000 in a year-on-year comparison from 2020 down from 12 million, as per NBS data. The figure does not include Hong Kong and Macao residents and foreigners who live in mainland's 31 provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities, the NBS said. The number of newborns in 2021 in world's most populous nation stood at 10.62 million, according to NBS data, with birth rate at 7.52 per

thousand, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. The national death rate was 7.18 per thousand last year, putting the national growth rate at 0.34 per thousand.

Experts have warned that a demographic turning point may be just around the corner in the world's most populous nation, and some say it threatens to erode the foundation of China's booming economic growth over the past 40 years, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported. In such a situation, the ratio of people in the work-force and dependent persons (retired with pension and other benefits) may be adversely affected, straining the economy, they said.

"The most shocking part of the data released today is that the natural growth of the population has dropped to 0.34 per thousand, the first time below 1.0 since data became available," Zhang Zhiwei, chief economist at Pinpoint Asset Management said.

Imran Khan praises Russian president for 'emphatic statement' against Islamophobia

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday spoke to Vladimir Putin and exchanged views on bilateral cooperation as well as regional and international issues and also appreciated the Russian President's "emphatic statement" that freedom of speech could not be a pretext to abuse Prophet.

During a telephonic conversation with President Putin, Prime Minister Khan said he has regularly highlighted appalling rise in Islamophobia and associated hatred in his addresses to UN General Assembly, pointing towards its serious ramifications, the Foreign Office said in a statement.

He "appreciated President's Putin statement that insulting Holy Prophet Muhammad does not count as an expression of artistic freedom", it said.

Khan in a tweet said he spoke to Putin "primarily to express my appreciation for his emphatic statement that freedom of speech could not be a pretext to abuse our Prophet". "He (Putin) is first Western leader to show empathy & sensitivity to Muslim sentiment

for their beloved Prophet," said Khan, who frequently faces wrath of headline Islamists in country over offensive caricatures of Prophet in some western publications.

Khan said they also discussed ways to move forward on trade and other mutually beneficial cooperation between Pakistan and Russia and invited each other to visit their respective countries.

During conversation, the two leaders exchanged views on bilateral cooperation as well as regional and international issues of mutual interest, the Foreign Office statement said.

Khan underscored that Pakistan's bilateral relationship with Russia was on an upward trajectory, with an increased focus on trade and economic ties and energy cooperation, it said.

He reiterated government's resolve for early realisation of Pakistan Stream Gas Pipeline Project, which is being developed with Russia's aid. Khan and Putin agreed to enhance bilateral cooperation in different areas, hike high-level exchanges, and remain in close contact on matters relating to Afghanistan, statement said.

Philippine dictator's son defeats bid vs Presidential run

AP ■ MANILA

The son of former Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos defeated on Monday a bid to disqualify him from the May 9 presidential race but still faces other petitions from human rights victims and others who have raised alarm over atrocities under his late father's rule.

The Commission on Elections rejected a petition arguing that Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. Should be barred from public office for having been convicted of failing to file income tax returns from 1982 to 1985 and stating in his candidacy papers that he had never been found guilty of a crime.

The ruling is appealable. "Respondent did not deliberately attempt to mislead, misinform or deceive the electorate," the ruling said.

Marcos Jr. Has led in popularity polls ahead of the election. "This is one challenge down," commission spokesman James Jimenez told reporters. "But there are other challenges still pending."

He said there five other petitions against Marcos Jr.'s candidacy, three of which have been consolidated into one case. Marcos Jr.'s name will be included on the ballot, which will be printed soon, despite the pending petitions, Jimenez said.

Marcos Jr.'s camp thanked the elections commission "for upholding the law and the right of every bona fide candidate like Bongbong Marcos to run for public office free from any form of harassment and discrimination."

The elder Marcos placed the Philippines under martial rule in 1972, a year before his term was to expire. He padlocked Congress and newspaper offices, ordered the arrest of political opponents and ruled by decree.

He was toppled in an army-backed "people power" revolt in 1986. He died in exile in Hawaii three years later without admitting any wrongdoing, including accusations that he and his family amassed an estimated USD 5 billion to USD 10 billion while he was in power.

A Hawaii court found him liable for human rights violations and awarded USD 2 billion from his estate to compensate more than 9,000 Filipinos who filed a lawsuit against him for torture, incarceration, extrajudicial killings and disappearances. His widow, Imelda Marcos, and her children were allowed to return to the Philippines in 1991.



# Mcap of BSE-listed companies jumps to all-time high of over ₹280 lakh cr

**New Delhi:** Market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies jumped to an all-time high of over ₹280 lakh crore on Monday as benchmark indices bounced back after taking a breather in the previous trade.

The 30-share BSE benchmark gained 85.88 points or 0.14 per cent to settle at 61,308.91. During the day, it jumped 162.45 points to 61,385.48.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms reached a lifetime high of ₹ 2,80,02,437.71 crore on Monday. Sensex and Nifty broke their five-day rising streak to close with slim losses on Friday.

"Markets started the week on a flat note amid mixed global cues. As the day progressed, high volatility was witnessed but the benchmark traded in a positive range for most of the session," said Ajit Mishra, VP - Research, Religare Broking Ltd. Ultratech Cement was the biggest gainer among the Sensex shares, with a gain of 2.78 per cent, followed by Maruti Suzuki, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Steel, TCS, L&T and SBI. In the broader market, BSE midcap index rose by

0.23 per cent while smallcap index gained 0.61 per cent.

## Sensex, Nifty edge higher on gains in auto, energy stocks

**Mumbai:** Benchmark BSE Sensex rose by 85 points on Monday following gains in auto, IT, energy and FMCG stocks amid a firm trend in European markets.

In a largely range-bound session, the 30-share index ended 85.88 points or 0.14 per cent higher at 61,308.91. Similarly, the NSE Nifty advanced 52.35 points or 0.29 per cent to 18,308.10. Ultratech Cement was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, surging nearly 3 per cent, followed by M&M, Maruti, Tata Steel, TCS, L&T, SBI and HUL.

On the other hand, HCL Tech, HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, Tech, Mahindra, PowerGrid, and Sun Pharma were among the laggards, falling up to 5.89 per cent.

## Rupee slips 9 paise to close at 74.24 against US dollar

**Mumbai:** Declining for the second straight session, the rupee on Monday fell 9 paise to close at 74.24 (provisional) against the US dollar as muted domestic equities and elevated crude oil prices weighed on investor sentiments.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened at 74.18 against the American currency and witnessed an intra-day high of 74.16 and a low of 74.36 during the session. The rupee finally settled at 74.24, down 9 paise over its previous close of 74.15 against the greenback. The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.05 per cent down at 95.11. "Weaker economic data, higher bond yields, a surge in crude oil prices and state-run banks dollar buying on behalf of importers weighed on rupee for the second day in trot," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities.

# Sebi examines alternate dispute resolution mechanism for investors, regulated entities

**New Delhi:** To provide efficacious mechanism for resolving disputes between investors and regulated entities, capital markets regulator Sebi is examining introducing an alternate dispute resolution mechanism, a release said on Monday.

Sebi in November 2021 published the 'Investor Charter' for securities markets to further augment its efforts to protect investors' interests, promote transparency in markets and enhance awareness, trust and confidence among investors. Since then, various steps have been taken to implement the charter, the regulator said.

Separate charters regarding investor-related activities of various intermediaries have been developed by Sebi in consultation with the respective entities.

The charter contains information related to details of various services provided by the intermediaries to investors, their timelines, importance of preservation of relevant documents by the investors, investor grievance redressal mechanism, etc.

As for Sebi's own charter, efforts have been taken to enhance the effectiveness

of investor grievance redressal mechanism. It has been publishing the status of disposal of investor grievances received in SCORES (Sebi Complaints Redress System) on its website on a monthly basis, the regulator noted.

Also, details of investor grievances, which are pending for more than three months with different intermediaries, are also being published. "In case Sebi receives a large number of/repeated complaints on any issue, the root causes are analyzed and if required, appropriate policy changes are made to address the issue," the regulator said.

Some of the recent policy initiatives taken by Sebi, after conducting such an analysis, include amendments pertaining to the Investor Protection Fund or Investor Service Fund and its related matters to expand the scope of dispute resolution.

In addition, "Sebi is also examining, in consultation with regulated entities, the possibility of introducing alternate dispute resolution mechanism in various agreements (wherever possible) between the regulated entities and their clients," the regulator said.

# Over 16 crore more people forced into poverty in two years of pandemic: Oxfam

**New Delhi/Davos:** The first two years of the Covid-19 pandemic saw incomes of 99 per cent of humanity fall and over 16 crore people were forced into poverty even as the world's ten richest men saw their fortune more than double to USD 1.5 trillion (over ₹ 111 lakh crore) at a rate of USD 1.3 billion (₹ 9,000 crore) a day, a new study showed on Monday.

In its report titled 'Inequality Kills' released on the first day of the World Economic Forum's online Davos Agenda summit, Oxfam International further said inequality is contributing to the death of at least 21,000 people each day, or one person every four seconds.

This is a conservative finding based on deaths globally from lack of access to health-care, gender-based violence, hunger, and climate breakdown, it added.

The world's ten richest men saw their fortunes grow at a rate of USD 15,000 per second during the first two years of the pandemic and if these ten men were to lose 99.999 per cent of their wealth tomorrow, they would still be richer than 99 per cent of all the people on this planet.

"They now have six times more wealth than the poorest 3.1 billion people," said Oxfam International's Executive

Director Gabriela Bucher.

"It has never been so important to start righting the violent wrongs of this obscene inequality by clawing back elites' power and extreme wealth including through taxation — getting that money back into the real economy and to save lives," she said.

According to Oxfam, billionaires' wealth has risen more since COVID-19 began than it has in the last 14 years. At USD 5 trillion, this is the biggest surge in billionaire wealth since records began.

A one-off 99 per cent tax on the ten richest men's pandemic windfalls, for example, could pay to make enough vaccines for the world; to provide universal health-care and social protection, fund climate adaptation and reduce gender-based violence in over 80 countries; while still leaving these men USD 8 billion better off than they were before the pandemic.

"Billionaires have had a terrific pandemic. Central banks pumped trillions of dollars into financial markets to save the economy, yet much of that has ended up lining the pockets of billionaires riding a stock market boom. Vaccines were meant to end this pandemic, yet rich governments allowed pharma billionaires and monopolies to cut off the supply to billions of

people," said Bucher.

She alleged that the world's response to the pandemic has unleashed this economic violence particularly acutely across racialised, marginalised and gendered lines.

"As COVID-19 spikes this turns to surges of gender-based violence, even as yet more unpaid care is heaped upon women and girls," Bucher said.

The study showed that the pandemic has set gender parity back from 99 years to now 135 years.

Women collectively lost USD 800 billion in earnings in 2020, with 1.3 crore fewer women in work now than there were in 2019. 252 men have more wealth than all one billion women and girls in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean combined.

It further said that the pandemic has hit racialised groups hardest.

During the second wave of the pandemic in England, people of Bangladeshi origin were five times more likely to die of COVID-19 than the White British population. Black people in Brazil are 1.5 times more likely to die from COVID-19 than White people. In the US, 34 lakh Black Americans would be alive today if their life expectancy was the same as White people, according to Oxfam.

## Min launches new rehabilitation and resettlement policy of NLC India

**New Delhi:** Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi on Monday launched a new rehabilitation and resettlement (R&R) policy of NLC India NSE 5.05 % Ltd (NLCIL) and stressed that compensation to the affected villagers will be based on the fair and transparent process. The Minister said the new policy has provisions for enhanced amenities to the project-affected families.

The Minister, who virtually launched the new R&R policy applicable to the land owners of the NLCIL mines area, lauded the efforts of the PSU and the Tamil Nadu government in framing a flexible rehabilitation policy with multiple options available to the affected people.

The Minister said NLC India Ltd, a Navratna public sector enterprise under the Union Ministry of Coal, has been playing a pivotal role in ensuring the country's energy security during the past six decades of performance. Addressing the function virtually, Minister of State for Coal, Mines and Railways Raosaheb Patil Danve said that besides benefitting the villagers, the policy will lead to a further rise in energy production by NLCIL.

## Banking, financial institutions struggling to deal with increasing fraud incidents: Deloitte survey

**New Delhi:** In the wake of Covid-19 and new digital operations, banking and financial institutions have been struggling to deal with an increasing number of fraud incidents and the trend is expected to continue, a Deloitte India survey said on Monday.

Key reasons identified for the increase in fraud incidents over the next two years include large-scale remote working models, increase in customers using non-branch banking channels and the limited/ineffective use of forensic analytics tools to identify potential red flags, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP (DTTL) said in a release.

About the survey, Deloitte said it gathered the views of 70 key C-suite stakeholders/ senior management responsible for compliance and fraud risk management, audit/finance, asset recovery from varied financial institutions based in India. Banks and financial institutions which

participated in the survey included private, public, foreign, co-operative and regional rural banks in India.

"In the wake of COVID-19 and new digital operations, banking and financial institutions have been struggling to deal with an increasing number of fraud incidents," the Deloitte India Banking Fraud Survey said, adding "this trend is expected to continue, with 78 per cent respondents stating that frauds could increase over the next two years".

As per the survey findings, retail banking was identified as a major contributor to fraud incidents, with 53 per cent of respondents indicating that they had experienced more than 100 fraud incidents (over the last two years) - a 29 per cent rise since the previous edition.

Similarly, the non-retail segment saw an average of 20 fraud incidents, highlighted by 56 per cent of survey respondents - again, a 22 per cent rise.

**PARADIP PORT TRUST**

**e-TENDER CALL NOTICE**  
Name of the Work : "Construction of Retaining Walls in the Stack Yard (MCHP area)". EMD Cost : **Rs.21,30,174/-**. Last Date and time of submission of Bid : **Dr.07.02.2022 up to 17:15 Hrs.** For details please refer our Website : **https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app**

Executive Engineer  
Harbour Works Division No. I  
PPT/PR/139/21-22 Dt.17.01.22

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given to the General public that Mrs. Rekha Devi W/o. Mr. Dev Datt Singh is the owner of ONE BUILT UP HOUSE, AREA MEASURING 42 SQ. METER (I. E. 50 SQ. YARDS, OUT OF KHET NO. 9794, SITUATED IN MAHESH VATIKA KHURJA (OUT OF CHUNSI, PARGANA & TEHSIL: KHURJA, DISTRICT: BULANDSHAHR, UTTAR PRADESH, vide registered sale deed dated 29.10.2021. All persons are hereby informed that Mrs. Rekha Devi W/o. Mr. Dev Datt Singh has approached SATYA MicroCapital Ltd. to take a Mortgage Loan for the same and they have informed SATYA MicroCapital Ltd that sale deed dated 08.03.2010 favor to Mr. Ajay Pal Singh S/o. Mr. Ishwar Singh (Doc No 3002) has been lost somewhere. If anybody has any charge/interest in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

**Mrs. Prasoona Lata, Advocate**  
**SG Associates (Law Firm)**  
Unit No 7, Basement, Plot No C 78, Sector 2, Noida, UP 201301.  
E-MAIL: **sgassociatespl@gmail.com**,  
Ph: 7011172754, 9130200837

**STERLING INFRASTRUCTURE LLP.**  
**Regd. Off.-20-A, Rajpura Road, Civil Line, Delhi - 110034**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Whereas, M/s Sterling Infrastructure LLP (Developer) is in the process of undertaking the development of Primary School site (1.0 acre), located under Group Housing Colony measuring 17.42375 Acres (License No.47 of 2013 & 109 of 2014) in Sector-79, Gurugram, granted by Director, Town & Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh.  
And whereas, the layout plan earlier approved for the said Primary School is now proposed to be revised.  
And, whereas, the office of Chief Town Planner Haryana- cum- Chairman, Building Plan approval Committee, Chandigarh, has required seeking of objections against the revision of said layout plan.  
Accordingly vide this public notice; Objections are hereby invited from any allottee in the said colony on the proposed revision of the layout plan of the said Primary School. A copy of the earlier approved layout plan/ Building Plan (drawing no. DG,TCP4624, dated 14.08.2014) & issued with License No.47 of 2013 & 109 of 2014 and the layout plan/ Building Plan now proposed to be revised through approval letter vide Memo No. ZP-897-VOL-II(AD)(RA)/2022/670 Dated 07.01.2022 are available for perusal in the office of undersigned at Plot No.745, Sector-38, Gurugram also at Office of STP, Gurugram, and can also be verified online available on the website naming "broadwaysbusinesssolutions.com".  
Any person having any objection on revised layout plan, may file his/her objection in the office of Senior Town Planner, Gurugram, also at the Office of the Company within 30 days of publication of this notice, failing which it shall be assumed that there is no objection to the proposed revision in the layout plan.  
**Place:Gurugram Date: 11/01/2022**

**For M/S Sterling Infrastructure LLP**  
**Vijay Sethi (Authorized Signatory)**

**APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION**

General Public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male **Namely Unknown S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown Age:** about 35 years, **Height:** 5'6", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Round, **Built:** Medium, **Hair:** Black, **Wearing:** Blue coloured pant, Blue coloured Checked shirt and Bare foot, was found from near Monkey Bridge, Ring Road, Behind of Red Fort. The dead body has been preserved for 72 hours at the Mortuary of GTB Hospital. In this regard a **DD No.36A, u/s 174 Cr.Pc, dated 03.01.2022** has been lodged at P.S. Kotwali, Delhi.  
If any one having any clue about deceased male may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.

**SHO**  
**P.S. Kotwali, Delhi**  
Ph.: 011-23977100, 23953442  
Mob.: 8750870121

**DP/1878/N/2022**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Be it known to all concerned that My client namely Ranjana Jeremiah is hereby cancelling the will dated 7/2/2018 in favor of my daughter, son, brother , Nephew (which include legal heirs) etc. (Which includes their legal heirs) for GROUND FLOOR AND SECOND FLOOR ETC.. Now they or their legal heirs will have no right , title, or any other claim qua the B143 C.R.PARK NEW DELHI as my client have gifted the 75% of ground floor of B143 C.R.Park , New Delhi to her son and their legal heirs and now she is gifting 75% of second floor to her daughter and their legal heirs and rest all the power of remaining property will remain in name of my client Ranjana Jeremiah. If anyone has any objection may contact undersign within 3 days from the date of publication as the will is revoked by me by today.

**SajalDhamija (Advocate),**  
**S-265, L.G.F., Greater Kailash-1,**  
**New Delhi-110018**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Be it known to all concerned that My client namely Ranjana Jeremiah is hereby cancelling the will dated 2/8/2021 in favor of my daughter, son, brother , Nephew (which include legal heirs) etc. (Which includes their legal heirs) for GROUND FLOOR AND SECOND FLOOR ETC.. Now they or their legal heirs will have no right , title, or any other claim qua the B143 C.R.PARK NEW DELHI as my client have gifted the 75% of ground floor of B143 C.R.Park , New Delhi to her son and their legal heirs and now she is gifting 75% of second floor to her daughter and their legal heirs and rest all the power of remaining property will remain in name of my client Ranjana Jeremiah. If anyone has any objection may contact undersign within 3 days from the date of publication as the will is revoked by me by today.

**SajalDhamija (Advocate),**  
**S-265, L.G.F., Greater Kailash-1,**  
**New Delhi-110018**

**Aro granite industries Ltd.**

Regd. Office : 1001, 10th Floor, DLF Tower A, Jessla, New Delhi- 110025 Ph. : 011-41686169, Fax : 011-26941984, Email : [investor@arogranite.com](mailto:investor@arogranite.com) Website : [www.arotile.com](http://www.arotile.com)

**NOTICE**  
Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Regulations 29 & 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations 2015, a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on Friday, the 28th January, 2022 *inter alia* to approve the Audited Financial Results for the Third Quarter and Nine Month period ending 31.12.2021.  
The above details of the said meeting are also available on the website of the Company [www.arotile.com](http://www.arotile.com) and also at the website of the Stock Exchanges [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com) and [www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com).  
**For Aro granite industries Ltd.**  
**Sabyasachi Panigrahi**  
**Company Secretary & Compliance Officer.**

**APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION**

General public is hereby informed that one unidentified dead body of male **Namely: Unknown, S/o: Unknown, R/o : Unknown, Age:** about 70 years, **Height:** 5'4", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Oval, **Built:** Medium, **Wearing:** Grey Green Strip Jersey, white pant and bare footed wearing shocks, who was found under Rani Jhansi Flyover in front of PS: Bara Hindu Rao, Delhi. In this regard a case **DD No. 33A dated 11.01.2022 has been registered at PS: Bara Hindu Rao, Delhi.**  
Any person having any information or clue about the above deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone nos.

**Sd/- SHO**  
**P. S: Bara Hindu Rao, Delhi**  
**Tel.011-2352 8060**

**DP/1887/N/2022 (UIDB)**

**Notice Inviting e-Tender**

No. SSA/Esst/EPB/VIII/2021-22/474/2021/8530 Date : 17.01.2022  
Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam (Samagra Shiksha) invites tender from reputed exercise book manufacturers through e-Tendering process for the supply of Evaluation and Practice Books for class –VIII (Single Line, Plain and Graph).  
To participate in this tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves.  
The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/ scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.

**Sd/-Mission Director**  
**SSA, Assam**  
**Kahilipara, Guwahati-19**

**Janasanyog/CF/2908/21**

# India's overall economic activity remains strong, says RBI article

**Mumbai:** India's overall economic activity remains strong, driven by an upbeat consumer confidence and uptick in bank credit, and expectations that Omicron may turn out to be a "flash flood rather than a wave" have further brightened the prospects, according to a RBI article.

"On the vaccination front, India has made rapid strides. On the Omicron variant, the recent data from the UK and South Africa suggest that such infections are 66 to 80 per cent less severe, with a lower need for hospitalisation," the article on the state of economy published in the RBI Bulletin said on Monday.

Amidst upbeat consumer and business confidence and an uptick in bank credit, aggregate demand conditions stay resilient while on the supply front, rabi sowing has exceeded last year's level and the normal acreage, it noted.

Noting that manufacturing and several categories of services remain in expansion, the article said, "overall economic activity in India remains strong, with upbeat consumer and business confidence and upticks in several incoming high frequency indicators".

"Expectations that Omicron may turn out to be more of a flash flood than a wave have brightened near-term prospects," it said.

The central bank said the views expressed in the article are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

There are indications that supply chain disruptions and shipping costs are slowly easing, although the waning of inflation may take longer.

This provides a window of opportunity to focus all energies on accelerating and broadening the global recovery, the article said.

## Technology to boost supplier management

**New Delhi:** Enterprises are heavily focusing on cost savings, reducing supplier risks, and improving governance and compliance in their procurement and supply chain processes. It is expected that by 2025, about 80 per cent of supplier management will be done outside of the enterprise ERP, and over 50 per cent of contracts will be automatically reviewed via technology, thereby minimising anomalies or errors significantly.

While enterprises adopt several cost-cutting programmes, they struggle with scaling these initiatives, given that the teams are dispersed and very thin. Enterprises are therefore heavily investing in digital tools and technologies to drive agility and good process governance while ensuring process consistency, said Srividya Kannan, founder and director, Avaali Solutions Pvt Ltd.

## Metro AG bullish on India business, says to continue expanding in India

**New Delhi:** Germany's cash-and-carry major Metro AG on Monday said it is bullish on its India business and continues to expand store and e-commerce footprint, amid reports that it is reviewing whether to continue its operations in India.

While declining to comment on its future in India, stressing that Metro regularly assesses its international portfolio, a company spokesperson said the Metro India business is doing well.

"At Metro, we regularly assess our international portfolio. METRO India business is doing well and we have seen a big jump (more than 57 per cent) in our Ebitda for FY21 vs FY20," said a Metro spokesperson. Ebitda stands for earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation.

रजिस्ट्री सं. डी. एल.-33004/99

REGD. NO. D.L.-33004/99



**भारत का राजपत्र**  
**The Gazette of India**

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No.127] NEW DELHI, TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2022/PAUSHA 21, 1943

**MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS**  
**NOTIFICATION**  
New Delhi, the 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2022

S.O. 131(E).—In exercise of powers conferred by sub-section (1) of section 3A of the National Highways Act, 1956 (48 of 1956) (hereinafter referred to as the said Act), the Central Government, after being satisfied that for the public purpose, the land, the brief description of which is given in the Schedule below, is required for building (widening/Six-laning etc.), maintenance, management and operation in the stretch of land from Km 37.100 to Km 43.700 of the NH-148NA extension of DND-Faridabad-Ballabgarh-Bypass junction with Delhi Vadodara Expressway near KMP interchange in the District of FARIDABAD in the state of HARYANA, hereby declares its intention to acquire such land.

Any person interested in the said land may, within twenty-one days from the date of publication of this notification in the Official Gazette, object to the use of such land for the aforesaid purpose under sub-section (1) of section 3C of the said Act.

Every such objection shall be made to the Competent Authority, namely, District Revenue Officer, Faridabad in writing and shall set out the grounds thereof and the Competent Authority shall give the objector an opportunity of being heard, either in person or by a legal practitioner, and may, after hearing all such objections and after making such further enquiry, if any, as the Competent Authority thinks necessary, by order, either allow or disallow the objections.

Any order made by the Competent Authority under sub-section (2) of section 3C of the said Act shall be final.

The land plans and other details of the land to be acquired under their notification are available and can be inspected by the interested person at the aforesaid office of the Competent Authority.

**SCHEDULE**  
Brief Description of the land to be acquired with or without structures falling NH148NA in the stretch of land from Km 37.100 to Km 43.700 of NH-148NA extension of DND-Faridabad-Ballabgarh-Bypass junction with Delhi Vadodara Expressway near KMP interchange in the District of FARIDABAD in the state of HARYANA


State: HARYANA		District: FARIDABAD			
Sl. No.	Survey/Plot Number	Type of Land	Nature of Land	Area (In Local Unit)	Area (in Hectare)
Taluk: Ballabgarh					
Village: Jajru					
1	5/23/1	Private	Agriculture	0.0227000 (Hectare)	0.0227000
Village: Jharsaintly					
1	104//24/1	Government	Non Agriculture	0.0025000 (Hectare)	0.0025000
2	104//24/2	Government	Non Agriculture	0.1012000 (Hectare)	0.1012000
3	109//13	Private	Agriculture	0.0076000 (Hectare)	0.0076000
4	109//14	Private	Agriculture	0.0506000 (Hectare)	0.0506000
5	109//3	Government	Non Agriculture	0.0025000 (Hectare)	0.0025000
6	109//4 min	Common	Non Agriculture	0.2909000 (Hectare)	0.2909000
7	109//5/2	Private	Agriculture	0.0025000 (Hectare)	0.0025000
8	109//7	Private	Agriculture	0.2656000 (Hectare)	0.2656000
9	109//8 min	Common	Non Agriculture/ Agriculture	0.1012000 (Hectare)	0.1012000
Total				0.8473	0.8473

[F. No. NHA/CMU/MTR/DND/LA-FBD/2021/D-3a-III/3A]  
RAJESH GUPTA, Director



DOCYARD

DR SUSHRUT GANPULE



Consultant — Pulmonologist

JUPITER HOSPITAL, PUNE

## Lung infections can be dangerous



Lungs play an important role in our body hence it is necessary to prioritize lung health. Very often we tend to take them for granted; however, like other parts of the body, they age with time. They lose their strength and become less flexible which results in breathing difficulty.

While our body does protect the lungs by keeping dirt and germs at bay, we can maintain the health of our lungs and reduce the risk of lung disease by adopting certain healthy habits.

**Stay away from smoking**  
Never smoke and stay away from secondhand smoke as well. Smoking is known to be a leading cause of lung cancer and lung diseases like COPD. Furthermore, it is never too late to quit smoking as lungs begin to heal almost immediately once a person quits the butt. The risk of acquiring lung cancer reduces to almost half to that of a current smoker, ten years after quitting smoking.

**Control your exposure to pollutants**  
Avoid exposure to indoor and outdoor pollutants as it can damage your lungs and accelerate aging. Lungs can easily stay strong against toxins when they are young and strong, however, with age, they are more susceptible for the damage and become more vulnerable to the disease. Its best to reduce exposure to outdoor pollutants as much as possible including:

- ❖ Avoid being out of home during peak air pollution times.
- ❖ Avoid exercising near heavy traffic.
- ❖ Take possible safety precautions when exposed to pollutants at work.
- ❖ Wear a mask whenever and wherever possible to filter out toxic particles.
- Indoor air pollution is reported to be worse than outdoor, take adequate steps to reduce indoor air pollution such as:
  - ❖ Keep your homes as clean as possible to keep dust, mold and other pollutants away.
  - ❖ Make use of natural products to clean the house.
- Keeping your home smoke-free is equally important to avoid secondhand smoke exposure.
- ❖ Avoid exposure to biomass which is commonly seen in rural areas. Use LPG or natural gas instead. Use masks wherever exposure is unavoidable.
- ❖ Ensure appropriate ventilation inside homes.
- ❖ Avoid exposure to chemicals like benzene and formaldehyde found in synthetic air fresheners, perfumes and joss sticks (agar-batti).

**Smoking is known to be a leading cause of lung cancer and lung diseases like COPD. Lungs can easily stay strong against toxins when they are young and strong, however, with age, they become more vulnerable to the disease**

**Regular exercise**  
Exercise plays an important role. Staying active keeps your lungs healthy and even improves the symptoms of some long-term lung conditions.

Do any form of exercise like walking, jogging or hitting the gym for a minimum of 30 minutes, five days a week to create strong, healthy lungs. However, if you have pre-existing breathing problems, make sure to talk to your concerned healthcare professional. In these cases specific exercises are required to relieve breathlessness.

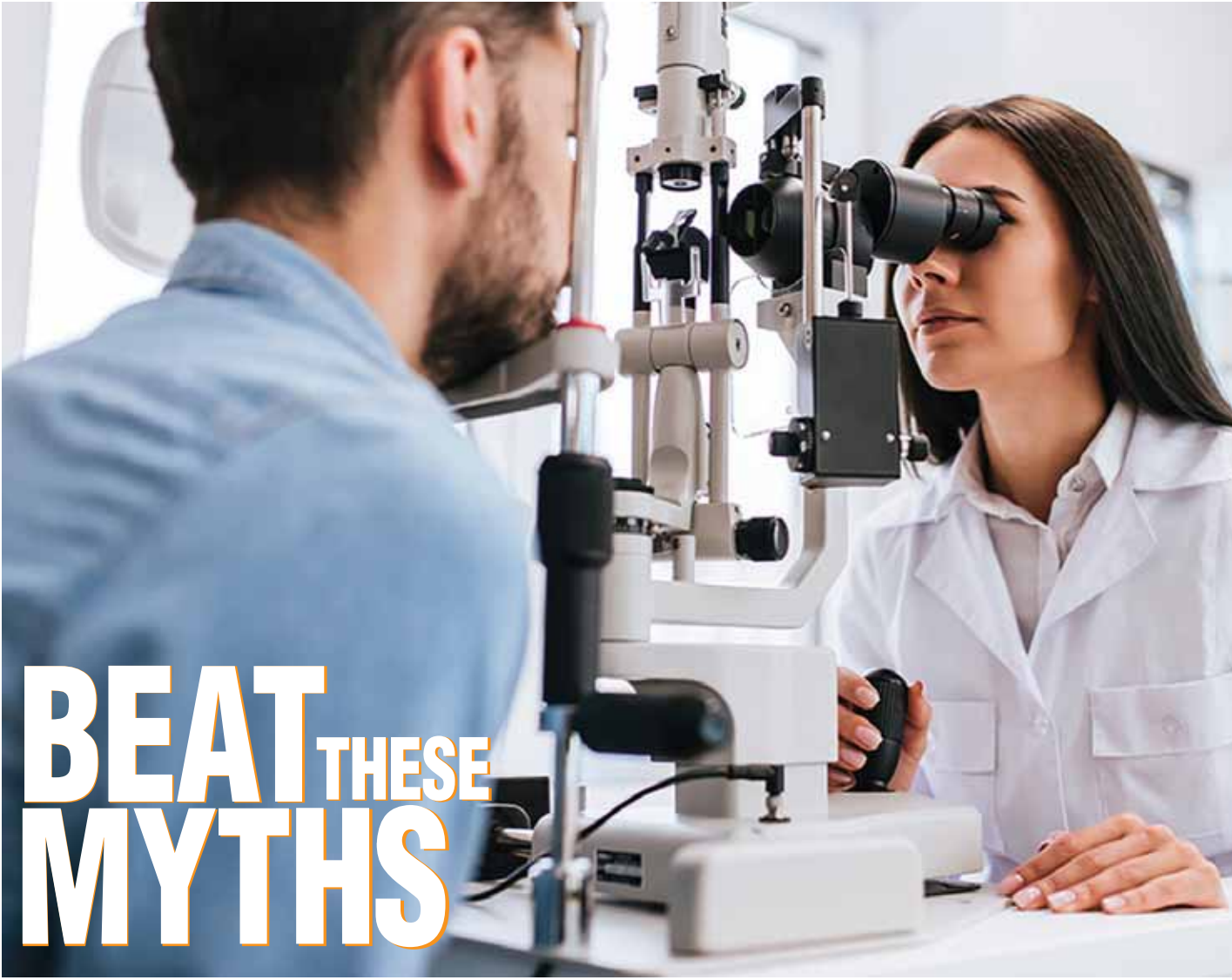
**Prevent infections**  
As we age, any lung infection can be dangerous. It is a common cause of death in elderly. There are certain steps which can be taken to avoid serious lung infection. Keep your hands clean by washing them regularly with soap and avoid touching your face. Avoid crowded places, take appropriate precautions in social gatherings and stay away from sick people. Staying hydrated when sick helps your lungs to work better. It is important to visit a healthcare professional as soon as possible, in case one has fever, Chest pain and phlegm.

**Get vaccinated**  
All individuals with age more than 65 years should receive a pneumococcal vaccine, people who have other comorbidities can take it earlier. Everyone with a pre-existing lung condition or has a high risk of developing complicated flu should receive flu shot every year.

## WARMFOOD

**RADISH:** Antioxidants including catechin, pyrogallol, vanillic acid, and other phenolic compounds are abundant in radishes. Vitamin C, which functions as an antioxidant to protect your cells from damage, is high in these root vegetables. Chemical compounds found in radishes, such as glucosinolate and isothiocyanate, can help manage blood levels. Radishes include indole-

3-carbinol and 4-methylthio-3-butenyl-isothiocyanate, among other chemicals, which assist the liver to detoxify and recover. These same molecules aid in the elimination of toxins via the kidneys. Antioxidants and minerals like calcium and potassium abound in radishes. These nutrients work together to lower blood pressure and lower the risk of heart diseases.



## BEAT THESE MYTHS

According to the World Health Organisation, glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness in the world. There are plenty of misconceptions surrounding the disease that can leave patients misinformed, says DR SHEFALI PARIKH

In India, glaucoma is the leading cause of irreversible blindness with nearly 12 million people affected and nearly 1.2 million people blind from the disease. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), glaucoma is the second leading cause of blindness in the world. Glaucoma can affect people of every age however, the risk of the disease increases with age. Glaucoma happens to be a common eye condition that affects the optic nerves of the eyes. These optic nerves are responsible for carrying information from the eye to the brain to get it processed. Thus, when the optic nerves get damaged, it leads to vision loss, and in severe cases, irreversible vision impairment. Unfortunately, there are plenty of misconceptions surrounding the disease that can leave patients misinformed.

### 5 of the most common glaucoma myths

**Glaucoma only affects the elderly**  
While it is certainly true that people above the age of 60 have greater chances of developing glaucoma as compared to people in their 40s, it can also affect people aged 20-50 as well as infants. For instance, some babies can have glaucoma by birth (called congenital glaucoma), while other children have other eye diseases that lead to secondary glaucoma.

The same is true for adults—one can have an eye condition, for example, uveitis, diabetes which results in secondary glaucoma.

Other types of glaucoma can often manifest in patients between ages 20 and 50 like pigmentary glaucoma.

### Symptoms are visible during the early onset of glaucoma

Open-angle glaucoma, which is the most common form of glaucoma, doesn't exhibit any signs or symptoms until the later stages when vision loss sets in. Even though people may think that the increased eye pressure causes pain, it doesn't. Also, as peripheral vision is generally first compromised very slowly, one may not recognize vision loss until the vision has become significantly impaired. The only way to detect glaucoma is to undergo a comprehensive eye exam.

### Glaucoma can't be prevented

Routine and regular eye exams can certainly aid in the prevention of glaucoma related blindness. While it is true that vision loss due to glaucoma can't be reversed, having regular eye exams by an ophthalmologist that include measurements of the eye pressure can certainly go a long way in preventing blindness due to disease. According to the Glaucoma Experts, it is important to have an exam every two years beginning at age 40 if there are no glaucoma risk factors, and every one year if one is at high risk or over 65.

### Glaucoma testing can be painful

Testing for glaucoma is not at all painful. There are different



Dr Shefali Parikh, Glaucoma Specialist at Shreeji Eye Clinic, Andheri, Mumbai

**Glaucoma happens to be a common eye condition that affects the optic nerves of the eyes. These optic nerves are responsible for carrying information from the eye to the brain to get it processed**

types of tests for glaucoma. There's also a test known as Goldman applanation tonometry where patients receive a painless eye drop in each eye. The ophthalmologist then directs a blue light onto each eye and looks into an instrument that precisely measures intraocular pressure. This test is also quick and painless. Angle assessment with lenses called gonioscopes is very important to differentiate between two most common glaucoma prevalent in Indian scenarios. Other tests include testing of visual field with perimeter, and scanning of the optic nerve with imaging technology.

### Glaucoma is inherited

Certain types of glaucoma are hereditary, and a family history of glaucoma is a risk factor no doubt. But there are many glaucoma patients who are the only ones in their families who are diagnosed with the disease.

It is also possible that there does not appear to be a strong family history because not every family member has been appropriately examined. Thus, it is important that patients with glaucoma should share their diagnosis with their family members and ask them to have a dilated eye examination.

Stop believing in the myths surrounding glaucoma and work with your eye doctor to preserve and protect your eye health. Glaucoma cannot be cured but definitely the blindness due to glaucoma can be prevented if early diagnosis.

## Make healthy resolutions



With the excitement of the holiday season over, now is the time for us to prioritise a healthy beauty regimen. DR SACHIN PAWAR shares six resolutions for healthy hair and skin

### Build a good sleep habit

The New year is the perfect time to resolve to develop proper sleep hygiene. Not only does it keep you well rested, getting a good night of sleep is beneficial for both your hair and skin. As you sleep, your body boosts blood flow to the skin, preventing it from sagging and giving a healthy glow. Lack of sleep can also cause hair loss, breakage, damage, and affects hair growth. 7 to 9 hours of sleep every day can help you develop a radiant complexion.

### Vitamin E intake is Vital

Traditionally, festive seasons especially New Year's Eve is all about getting decked up and feasting. Well, make-up may give you the glam look, but there are chances that your skin may end up looking dull if you have not maintained a balanced and healthy diet. For a solution that works from the inside to renew your look on the outside, include a daily dose of Vitamin E. Though Vitamin E is widely available in everyday foods, you can also strengthen the cellular health of your skin and hair by adding Vitamin E supplements like Evion® Forte to your daily routine. The natural antioxidants work at the cellular level to repair, restore, and revive your cells, thus, protecting your skin from damage and supporting the microcirculation and oxygenation of the scalp. Its anti-inflammatory properties can protect your skin from the harsh effects of the sun.

### Sun and Heat Safety

External stresses cause your body to produce free radicals that attack collagen, the protein that allows your skin to stay young and beautiful. This imbalance caused by free radicals is known as oxidative stress. It damages and weakens your skin cells, which leaves your skin looking tired and worn out. Having a skincare routine becomes even more important during this time. Likewise, hair damage—hair that is thin, brittle, dull, or flat—can result from many factors, including environmental factors like UV radiation and pollution. Make sure you prep your tresses with a good heat protectant. The key to having strong and glossy hair, perfect for your new year avatar is combining good hair care with healthy habits.

### Hydrate and Nourish your body

The more hydrated you stay, the fewer wrinkles and improved complexion you'll see. Drinking enough water can help you combat a variety of skin issues and give you glowing skin. A hydrated body also results in hair growth as it reduces dryness in the scalp and promotes the growth of hair from the roots. Let's not forget the importance of nourishment to your body. A healthy body and mind require consuming a daily dose of nutrients, including vitamins and minerals. One of the easiest ways to ensure youthful skin and rejuvenated hair is by incorporating Vitamin E-rich foods into your diet.

The writer is MD Head –Medical & Technical affairs – India Cluster, Procter & Gamble Health Limited

# Get rid of joint pain this time

Low temperature exacerbates joint pain. Now that the weather is getting colder, it's more necessary to pay attention to your bones, says DR VIVEK MAHAJAN

The number of patients diagnosed with arthritis increases during the winter. It's defined as the swelling of one or more joints, with joint discomfort being the most common symptom, which often gets worse as you get older. The two most common types of arthritis are osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis.

**Knee Pain**  
Chronic knee pain is caused by a lack of ligament in the knee bone and bone wear. Knee discomfort is more common in adults over the age of 50. People who are overweight have a higher risk of developing this condition. It is an illness that will be passed down through the generations. Women are more likely to have this condition as compared to men.

**Joints stiffness**  
In chilly conditions, muscle spasms are more prone to occur, resulting in greater joint discomfort and

stiffness. Cold weather decreases blood circulation in the fingers and toes, exacerbating arthritic discomfort. Low temperatures can cause the joint fluid to thicken, making the joints stiff and difficult to move. Vitamin D levels drop as a result of less sunlight throughout the winter, which can lead to brittle bones and joints.

**Prevent arthritis pain**  
Vitamin D: Joint discomfort might worsen in the winter due to a lack of sunlight, which reduces the body's ability to synthesise vitamin D. It is therefore important to take adequate sunlight even during the winters. If you intend to take Vitamin D capsules, make sure to consult your doctor first.

Exercise on a regular basis: During the winter, people's fitness regimens tend to stall. This can not only cause you to gain weight, but it can also lead to other problems.



Dr Vivek Mahajan Orthopedic and Joint Replacement Surgeon Indian Spinal Injuries Center, New Delhi

Consult your doctor before beginning a fitness programme to alleviate the pain of arthritis. Make it a point to exercise for at least 30-40 minutes every day. In addition, get a good night's sleep of around 8 hours per day.

Dress warmly: Dress appropriately with extra layers of clothing to keep yourself protected. Sitting on a

chilly floor is not recommended by doctors because it may aggravate the pain. Avoid taking the stairs as well, as it puts additional strain on your joints. Even if you're at home, don't walk around without warm socks. Woolen socks should always be worn to protect your feet. Use hot water to relieve arthritis pain.

**Healthy diet:** Try to eat more fruits and vegetables than you normally do throughout the year. Consume only fresh fruits and vegetables. Vitamin B12, found in eggs, yoghurt, and many types of fish, has been shown to help lower homocysteine levels. Homocysteine levels in the blood have been linked to an increased risk of developing cardiovascular complications.

Similarly, vitamin B6 may aid in the reduction of joint inflammation. Carrots, spinach, sweet potatoes, and bananas are just a few of the

many common vitamin B6-rich foods. If you're thinking about taking vitamins or supplements, talk to a doctor first because everyone's needs are different.

It is also critical to avoid alcohol and refined sugars while following a healthy diet. If these things are consumed in large quantities during the winter, it can aggravate the pain.

**Stay hydrated:** Water consumption decreases during the winter. This can cause issues for arthritis patients. Drinking enough water is critical for your body's proper functioning. Being adequately hydrated may help regulate your body temperature, aid digestion, and boost your immune system, among other things.

Furthermore, the extra walks to the bathroom as a result of drinking more water are an easy way to add a little more movement to your day.

## INBRIEF

### First Closed Loop Artificial Pancreas Insulin Pump installed

India's first automatically adjustable, *The MiniMed™ 780G system* which is the world's first Advanced Hybrid Closed Loop (AHCL) system, was successfully delivered and fixed on a 7-year-old boy with type 1 Diabetes at Dr Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre, one of the healthcare groups in Asia devoted to the treatment of Diabetes and its complications. The patient recently diagnosed with type 1 Diabetes is the first one to get the advanced and automated insulin pump fixed in India. *Medtronic's MiniMed™ 780G* made its first ever launch in India, at the hands of Dr V Mohan, Chairman & Consultant Diabetologist, Dr Mohan's Diabetes Specialities Centre.

Commenting on the first successful delivery of the device, Dr V Mohan said, "It's extremely difficult to manage blood sugar levels in children and teenagers with Type 1 diabetes because of their high activity levels, constantly fluctuating hormones and ongoing growth and development. The 7-year-old boy who was recently diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, was also struggling with blood sugar control with several high sugar and low sugar episodes. The device automatically adjusts and corrects insulin levels 24/7, every 5 minutes, as needed. It also anticipates insulin needs and adjusts insulin delivery, while also correcting highs automatically and protecting from lows."



# KALEIDOSCOPIC VIEW

PANKAJ KUMAR travels to Guwahati and trains his lens on the North East Festival to give a glimpse into the rich culture, varied dance traditions, sustainable crafts and foot-tapping music from the region



Apparao Gallery's exposition of Sohan Qadri's works on paper, on the TAP India platform, has about it the feel and expression of an artist who delighted in creating works in solitude. Qadri, the poet and Tantric guru, was an internationally acclaimed artist who was deeply engaged with spirituality and yoga. The famed art critic Donald Kuspit hailed Qadri to be "the pre-eminent aesthetic mystic of modernism."

These works on paper embrace your being like tableaux of luminous colour and viscosity; they also recall the lush palette of life in the rustic villages of India. Qadri, who in an interview at Kumar Gallery, told me "I am a dot, abandoned abstract representation in his search for transcendence. These works have about them an evanescent grace of a floating object."

Qadri's process of using paper and dye was unique and rare in terms of artistic exploration. He would bathe the paper in liquid and carve it in several stages while he applied inks and dyes with a brush. These works are at once imbued with vibrant and subtle hues. Qadri's greatest insignia with the paper was the serrated surfaces that had about them an aura of energy and resilient rhythm. In the hands of Qadri, the seer and the thinker, the very nature of paper would be transformed into a three-dimensional medium.

His many years in the West gave him a practise and deeper understanding of abstraction than most Indian artists, who merely think it is representation. For him, the swathes of colour, deep folds and hints of a tiny dot somewhere in its domain had about it a spiritual fervour both rare and unseen. Most of his collectors were Europeans who understood the dynamics of design and often said he was India's Rothko.

The largest number of Qadri's shows were held by Kumar

## A lush palette

There is a tranquil coexistence of binary opposites in SOHAN QADRI's work displayed at Apparao Gallery, says UMA NAIR



Gallery in Delhi and Sundaram Tagore in New York. There is a tranquil coexistence of binary opposites in Qadri's work — male and female, known and unknown,

physical and spiritual. It is more than a literal translation of the symbols of Oriental philosophy. When Qadri paints, he explains, "First I empty my mind of all images. They dissolve into primordial space. Only emptiness that I feel should communicate with the emptiness of the canvas." Born into a Hindu-Sikh family, Qadri's art was deeply influenced by a spiritual journey that began at a young age. He was initiated into yogic practice at the age of seven. As a teenager, he ran away to a Tibetan Buddhist monastery in search of higher truth. He spent days on end in remote temples in the Himalayas and Tibet. The isolation, he experienced at that time, was one of his influences to paint. Later in life, he became fascinated with Sufism and Vajrayana Buddhism, which became potent sources of inspiration for later works.

The exhibition can be viewed at [www.theartplatformindia.com](http://www.theartplatformindia.com)

The National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi celebrated Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav with Kala Kumbh — artist workshops for painting scrolls measuring approximately 750 metres, representing the tales of valour of unsung heroes of India's freedom movement.

These scrolls analyse the potential of art as a means to express national pride and excellence with varied forms of art from diverse geographical locations of the country. The celebration of the true essence of *Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat* was visible in these workshops where the rich diversity of our country in its cultural aspects was witnessed while portraying the heroic lives and struggles of unsung heroes of India's freedom movement. These have been diligently researched upon and painted enthusiastically by more than 500 artists spread over two locations, Odisha and Chandigarh.

Aligning with the flagship programme of the Ministry of Culture, the aspect of collaborations and collective work has been outlined in these workshops. At Odisha, the National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi collaborated with Kalinga Institute of Technology and Silicon Institute of Technology in Bhubaneswar between December 11 and 17 and, at Chandigarh, the collaboration was done with Chitkara University from December 25 to January 2.

Kala Kumbh-Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav reflects the essence of unity in diversity while also commemorating 75 years of India and the glorious history of its people, culture and its achievements. The scrolls painted in these workshops may be seen as an embodiment of all that is progressive about India's socio-cultural identity which has been imparted prominence on the large scale scrolls as per the artistic vision of Adwait Garaniyay, director-general, NGMA and mentored by eminent senior artists.

Ten gigantic scrolls of approximately 750 metres portray the tales of valour and the legacy of the

## Scroll of freedom

The National Gallery of Modern Art, New Delhi celebrated Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav with Kala Kumbh artist workshops. By TEAM VIVA



unsung heroes of India's freedom struggle. Inspiration has also been drawn from the creative illustrations in the Constitution of India wherein the artistic elements painted by Nandalal Bose and his team have imparted a distinctive appeal along with several representations from the indigenous arts of India. These represent and showcase the rich cultural heritage of India along with the insights of struggles undertaken by the unsung heroes for achieving India's freedom.

At Bhubaneswar, the narratives have reflected the tales of valour and historical elements of India's



movement of freedom struggle focusing on Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Bengal, northeastern parts of India and Andhra Pradesh with artistic expressions reflecting the indigenous forms of art such as Pattachitra, Talapatra Chitra, Manjusa, Madhubani and Jadu Patua to name a few.

At Chandigarh, the narratives have been a reflection of the tales of valour of unsung heroes from Ladakh, Jammu, Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan with artistic expressions reflecting the indigenous forms of art such as Phad, Pichwai, Miniature, Kalamkari, Mandana, Thangka and Warli.

Students visited both venues. NCC cadets have also witnessed the creative representations of India's unsung heroes of freedom struggle at Chandigarh. Lt Gen Devendra Sharma, SM, Chief of Staff, HQ Western Command, Lt Col Abhinav Navneet, PRO (Defence), DPR, Major D P Singh (Retd) along with other officials from the Ministry of Defence also visited the workshop at Chandigarh.

The closing ceremony of Kalakumbh- Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav at Chandigarh was graced by Banwari Lal Purohit, Governor Punjab and Administrator of UT Chandigarh and at Bhubaneswar by Member of Parliament, Dr Achutya Samanta who is also the founder of KIIT and KISS. Series of cultural programs were held in the evenings during these workshops, reflecting upon the rich traditions of folk and indigenous performing arts of India in collaboration with Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre and Northern Zonal Cultural Centre.

In the next phase, these scrolls will be placed artistically at Rajpath for the celebrations of Republic Day. The strategic location of these scrolls would serve as an open gallery for all the citizens and it is intended to inspire people about the rich national heritage and legacy of Bharat in its true sense.

### TRANSPIRING THE LANGUAGE OF BEING

The solo show by EH Pushkin has pieces that originate from the profound inner space for humanity and love. The use of primary colours and a constant brooding nature of the magnified objects cape with elongated shadows, oblong acrylic figurations, backdrop doubling up as a post-figurative floating surface and self-referential iconic titles of the works on the futility and inevitability of market-driven isolation of identities make this exhibition a compelling view.

**Where:** Gallery 1000A -210 D, Old M B Road, Lado Sarai, New Delhi 110030.  
**When:** Till January 29



### THE 2022 AUROVILLE FILM FESTIVAL



The online edition allows people to continue enjoying great films while reaching those who cannot travel to Auroville during the pandemic. This year features films in two categories. The international category of films that develop the theme of human unity contains 35 films from 18 different countries. The Aurovilians category has 36 films from 14 Aurovilians and residents of the bioregion, including one student. These give a taste of the creative life in the Auroville area.

**Where:** <https://auroville.shift72.com>  
**When:** January 18-23

### THE FIFTH EDITION OF THE JAPANESE FILM FESTIVAL (JFF) 2022

The digital edition will screen 20 globally popular Japanese movies of varied genres and styles. The two-week festival will kickstart from February 14. Celebrating the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Japan and India, this festival will focus on its diverse lineup of acclaimed, highest-grossing and award-winning films such as *Under the Open Sky*, *It's a Summer Film*, *Mio's Cookbook*, *Masked Ward*, *Under the Open Sky*, *Awake*, *Aristocrats*, *Time of Eve*, *Ito, Patema Inverted*, *Sumodo - The Successors of Samurai*, *The God of Ramen*, *Rashomon*, *The Floating Castle*, *Happy Flight*, *Oz Land*, *Until the Break of dawn*, *Her Love Boils Bathwater*, *The Chef of South Polar*, *Bread of Happiness* and *ReLIFE*.

**Where:** <https://jff.jp/gp/watch/jffonline2022/india/>  
**When:** February 14-28



### MAKING OF AN IDEAL CITIZEN

Professor Nivedita Menon, Professor, Centre for Comparative Politics & Political Theory, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University; Dr Gautam Bhan, urban researcher and writer; Dr Ghazala Jameel, assistant professor, Centre for the Study of Law and Governance, Jawaharlal Nehru University and Dipta Bhog, journalist and activist will discuss what makes for an ideal citizen. Prof Apoorvanand, Department of Hindi, Faculty of Arts, University of Delhi, will chair the discussion.

**Where:** [https://zoom.us/join/register/WN\\_mOqkMJ1nRpOQE2xa\\_5lJsw?\\_x\\_zm\\_rtaid=sqYjYvsxTGie1UbWZr3mbA.1642425112178.fddb39df7ed364db04a5b44ba3d213d&\\_x\\_zm\\_rtaid=362](https://zoom.us/join/register/WN_mOqkMJ1nRpOQE2xa_5lJsw?_x_zm_rtaid=sqYjYvsxTGie1UbWZr3mbA.1642425112178.fddb39df7ed364db04a5b44ba3d213d&_x_zm_rtaid=362)  
**When:** January 18 at 03:00 pm





# IF GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY, IT WILL BE AN HONOUR TO CAPTAIN INDIA: JASPRIT BUMRAH



PTI ■ PAARL (SOUTH AFRICA)

India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah on Monday said he is not averse to leading the national team if an opportunity comes knocking at his door in the near future.

With Virat Kohli's captaincy tenure in all formats coming to an end following his resignation from Test leadership, there are questions about who could be his long-term successor considering that Rohit Sharma will be 35 next year. "If given an opportunity, it will be an honour and I don't see any player (who) would say no and I am no different," Bumrah, who is KL Rahul's deputy for the ODI series against South Africa, replied to a query from PTI in a press conference ahead of the three-match rubber starting Wednesday. "Be it any leadership group, I always look to contribute however I can, to the best of my abilities," he added.

Bumrah said taking responsibility and helping teammates comes naturally to him.

"I look at this situation in the same manner... Taking responsibility and talking to players and helping them out has always been my approach and it will

always be my approach going further keeping any situation in mind."

The India pace spearhead believes that there would be no tangible change in his role although he is the vice-captain now. "Having post or not doesn't matter. I always focus on how I can contribute," he said.

"For me, the role doesn't change at all. I have to do my job first, isn't it? Trying to contribute as much as I can and then helping KL if he needs any assistance on the field and sharing a bowler's mindset on what kind of fields you can keep that I always look to do," Bumrah said.

In fact, he has done all this and more even when he wasn't anointed the vice-captain.

"Even when I am not vice-captain, I try to talk to some of the younger guys, have a lot of discussions on what kind of fields that need to be set and the same role I will try to do that again as well.

"No specific role or added pressure I am going to take. Yes, helping KL in any way possible and trying to keep a calm head."

New Team Management?

"Change is the only constant"

The Indian team manage-

ment, following Virat Kohli's complete exit from captaincy roles across formats, bears a new look but Bumrah doesn't see "anything weird" and believes that one needs to respect the new set-up that's in place and start moving ahead.

"I can't speak for everyone but I can say that for me, it doesn't really make much of a difference. I am here to help all in whatever way I can. All the players are responding to the changes that have and everybody is respectful and understand how the processes are going."

"Change is the only constant and we are happy everybody is contributing and we are getting (acquiring) a lot of knowledge and trying to contribute to that. I don't think anybody is facing a problem or is in a weird space with the change that is happening," Bumrah spoke for himself.

Acceptance is key and that's what Bumrah expects from everyone. "Everybody understands change and have played enough cricket to understand that this is the way the game goes and this is how you move forward. So everyone in the team is quite positive and eager to contribute."



## Rohit close to getting match-ready

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's white ball captain Rohit Sharma is recovering well from his left hamstring injury and has a bright chance of making a comeback for the six-match home white-ball series against the West Indies next month.

Rohit, who was also the designated Test vice-captain for the tour of South Africa, sustained a left-hamstring strain during a net session just prior to the team's departure for the tour and had to pull out.

He was subsequently also forced to skip the ODIs in South Africa, starting this Wednesday, as he couldn't attain full fitness before the selection committee announced the team.

"Rohit's rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy is going pretty well. He is

expected to be okay for the West Indies series.

It's still close to three weeks from now before the first ODI is played in Ahmedabad from February 6," a BCCI source privy to developments told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

The series against the West Indies comprises three ODIs and as many T20 Internationals. The one-dayers will be played February 6 to 12, followed by T20Is from February 15 to 20.

For Rohit, the hamstring has been a recurrent problem which also forced him to miss the first two Test matches as well as the white-ball leg of the tour of Australia in 2020-21.

He did make a comeback for the final two Tests after serving a two-week hard quarantine in Sydney for the last two Test matches.

## Sindhu looks to end title drought at Syed Modi International



PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu will look to recover from her unexpected semi-final loss at the India Open and end her title drought at the Syed Modi International, which begins here on Tuesday.

The 26-year-old from Hyderabad was well on course to win her first title since the 2019 World Championship triumph last week before left-hander Supanida Katethong of Thailand shattered her hopes with a three-game win at the India Open.

Sindhu, who had finished runner-up at Swiss Open and World Tour Finals last year, will hope to turn things around this week when she begins her campaign against compatriot Tanya Hemanth. The Indian will be itching to settle scores against Supanida, whom she is likely to face again at the semifinals at the Babu Banarasi Das Indoor Stadium here. Second seeded Canadian Michelle Li, a Commonwealth Games silver medallist, will be one of the strong contenders for the title in women's singles, which also has Polish eighth seed Jordan Hart, second seed Iris Wang of USA and Russia's fifth seed Evgeniya Kosetskaya.

Men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty has decided to give the Super 300 tournament a miss after claiming their maiden India Open Super 500 crown. Lakshya Sen, who secured his maiden Super 500 title at New Delhi on Sunday, also is likely to follow suit after playing continuously since October last year.

Among others, World Championships silver medallist and top seed Kidambi Srikanth also is unlikely to compete this week as he is undergoing seven-day mandatory quarantine after withdrawing from the main draw last week following a positive COVID-19 result.

Third seed B Sai Praneeth, who had pulled out of India Open after testing positive, is also awaiting a RT-PCR test result, while Ashwini Ponnappa and Manu Attri are yet to recover from the virus and will miss the tournament.

Ashwini is part of the top seeded women's doubles pairing, while Manu and B Sumesh Reddy are seeded third in the men's doubles event.

On a comeback trail, former top-10 player H S Prannoy gave a good account of himself before being stopped by 20-year-old Sen in the quarterfinals last week.

## England register seven-wicket win over Bangladesh

PTI ■ BASSETERRE (ST KITTS AND NEVIS)

Defending champions Bangladesh suffered a seven-wicket loss against England in a lop-sided contest to make a poor start to their campaign at the ICC U-19 World Cup here.

Opting to bat, Bangladesh were bundled out for a paltry 97 by England, who then returned to overhaul the target in 25.1 overs.

England produced a lethal bowling effort to reduce Bangladesh to 51 for nine in the 25th over at Warner Park in the Group A match.

No.11 Ripon Mondol hit 33 not out in a spirited last-wicket stand of 46 with Naimur Rohman (11) to drag Bangladesh close to the 100-mark.

Left-arm pacer Joshua Boyden was the pick of the bowlers for England with figures of four for 16, while right-arm fast bowler Thomas Aspinwall scalped two wickets, giving away 18 runs.



Besides, Tom Prest (1/5), Fateh Singh (1/29) and James Sales (1/29) took a wicket each.

In reply, England lost opener George Thomas (15) and captain Tom Prest (4) but Jacob Bethell (44) and James Rew (26 not out) put on 65 before the former was run out just shy of the finish line as England cruised to victory.

Earlier, Bangladesh's decision to bat first backfired

knock which was studded with five boundaries and one six.

Chasing the total, England got off to a slightly nervy start as Bethell survived a run-out scare when SM Meherob could not gather the ball at the stumps with only five on the board.

He survived a close lbw appeal off Ashique shortly after before opening partner Thomas began to up the ante after a cautious start.

But having hit three fours, Thomas perished for 15 when he miscued another attacking shot off Ripon to leave England 20 for one in the ninth over.

That breakthrough gave Bangladesh a small glimmer of hope but when the English captain Prest nicked one behind off his counterpart Rakibul for four soon after, the game was very much on.

However, Rew joined hands with Bethell and together they batted superbly, counteracting the Bangladesh spin attack to alleviate any potential English nerves.

## Ireland's historic ODI series win over West Indies

AP ■ KINGSTON

Ireland achieved a historic series win over the West Indies after winning their deciding one-day international by two wickets at Sabina Park.

The 2-1 come-from-behind series victory from the third ODI gave Ireland a first ODI series win away from home against a full member.

This also was only its second series win against a full member, after Zimbabwe at home in 2019.

After bowling out the West Indies for 212 inside 45 overs, Ireland reached a winning 214-8 in the 45th.

It was a remarkable end to a COVID-19-disrupted two-nation tour which began with Ireland's own historic loss to a hosting United States in a Twenty20.

An over-eager William Porterfield was lost to the first ball of Ireland's chase on Sunday but the batting was mainly patient and practical.



The poised top order did its job. Stand-in captain Paul Stirling, dropped before he scored by Jason Holder in the slips, made 44 off 38 balls with five boundaries and a six. Stirling was out at 73-2. No. 3 batter Andy McBrine, after taking four wickets, scored 59 off 100 balls before he edged behind. He was out at 152-3 and eventually given a second straight man of the match award. That also earned him man of the series. His offspin earned 10 of the West Indies' 30 wickets in the series.

No. 4 Harry Tector notched a third half-century in three matches with his 52 off 76 balls. Tector lifted Ireland to the brink of victory when he was out at 197-6 in the 42nd over.

Two wickets in three balls by Akeal Hosein added some late drama, but tailender Craig Young completed Ireland's triumph with a boundary for the match and series with 5.1 overs to spare. The West Indies won the first ODI by defending 269 runs, lost the second on Thursday after making 229.

## Djokovic heads for Belgrade after deportation from Australia

AP ■ DUBAI

Novak Djokovic was heading home to Serbia on Monday after his deportation from Australia over its required COVID-19 vaccination ended the No. 1-ranked men's tennis player's hopes of defending his Australian Open title.

An Emirates plane carrying him from Australia landed in Dubai early Monday, and Djokovic was later seen on board a plane due to land in the Serbian capital of Belgrade at 12:10 CET. His lawyers had argued in an Australian court on Sunday that he should be allowed to stay in the country and compete in the tournament under a medical exemption due to a coronavirus infection last month.

Djokovic has won nine Australian Open titles, including three in a row, and a total of 20 Grand Slam singles trophies, tied with rivals Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal for the most in the history of men's tennis. Federer is not playing while recovering from injury, and Nadal is the only former Australian Open men's champion in the tournament that began Monday.



Djokovic's visa was initially canceled on Jan. 6 by a border official who decided he didn't qualify for a medical exemption from Australia's rules for unvaccinated visitors. He was exempted from the tournament's vaccine rules because he had been infected with the virus within the previous six months.

He won an appeal to stay for the tournament, but Australia's immigration minister later revoked his visa.

## OSAKA, NADAL ADVANCE IN AUSTRALIA

AP ■ MELBOURNE

The first test of Naomi Osaka's new approach to tennis might have been when she completely whiffed an overhead to give her opponent a break point on Day 1 of the no-Novak-Djokovic Australian Open.

Osaka didn't chuck her racket. She didn't roll her eyes. She smiled.

"There are situations where I previously would get upset. But at this point in my life, like, I'm here because I want to be here and because I find that it's fun for me," Osaka said.

"Might as well enjoy it while I still can."

In Osaka's mind, the drama involving nine-time champion Djokovic's deportation on the eve of the Australian Open was



something for the players in the men's draw to worry about. Her title defense began smoothly enough: She won the first five games on the way to a 6-3, 6-3 victory over Camila Osorio on the main court.

With so much attention on the 11-day saga of Djokovic's attempt to participate in the year's first Grand Slam tournament, and bid for a fourth consecutive title at Melbourne Park, the returns of Osaka and Rafael Nadal have been

overshadowed.

Osaka wasn't bothered by that. Nadal didn't seem to be put off by it, either, renewing his bid for a record 21st Grand Slam singles title with a 6-1, 6-4, 6-2 win over Marcos Giron.

"Growing up, I've looked up to him," said Giron, a 28-year-old from the U.S.

"He's one of the absolute legends of the game." Nadal is tied with Djokovic and Roger Federer with 20 major sin-

gles titles each, the most in the history of men's tennis. With Djokovic unable to defend his crown in Melbourne because he didn't meet Australia's strict COVID-19 vaccination criteria, the door is slightly more ajar to Nadal.

Osaka's main concern, meanwhile, is winning a fifth major title, and her third at the Australian Open.

"To be completely honest, it didn't really affect me," Osaka said about what went on with Djokovic.

"My goal, like even before this whole situation, is to just focus on myself more, what I need to do to become better."

"Me, I'm a tennis player. I'll focus on my matches. You as, I guess, an audience, focus on whatever is in the news, no?"

# Real Madrid tops Athletic 2-0 to win Spanish Super Cup

AP ■ MADRID

Real Madrid won't be going a second consecutive season without a title.

After failing to lift a trophy under Zinedine Zidane last season, Carlo Ancelotti's Madrid secured the Spanish Super Cup with a 2-0 win over Athletic Bilbao on Sunday in Saudi Arabia. Luka Modric and Karim Benzema scored a goal in each half of the final as Madrid comfortably defeated the defending champions to reinforce its status as the top team in Spain this season.

Madrid has already beaten Barcelona twice — including in the

Super Cup semifinals — and Atlético Madrid once, and is more than 15 points ahead of both rivals halfway through the Spanish league season. Ancelotti has also led Madrid to the knockout stage of the Champions League.

Madrid went without a trophy for the first time in more than a decade last season under Zidane.

"This is motivation for us to keep going," Ancelotti said.

"We have to keep competing like this." Madrid's 12th Super Cup title moves the club only one behind Barcelona, the competition's most successful team. Athletic was seeking its fourth Super Cup trophy.

It was Madrid's second Super Cup title since the competition was moved to Saudi Arabia in 2020. It had won the first edition of the tournament in the Middle East country by beating Atlético in the final.

The Super Cup returned to Spain in 2021 because of the coronavirus pandemic. The Spanish soccer federation has had to defend itself from criticism from human rights groups for its decision to play in Saudi Arabia in a deal reportedly worth 30 million euros (\$34 million) a year through 2029.

Athletic was seeking its second consecutive title after defeating Barcelona in last year's final. It beat



Atlético in this year's semifinal in the revamped "Final Four" format.

Modric opened the scoring with a curling shot into the top corner after being set up by forward Rodrigo just inside the area in the 38th minute. Benzema added to the lead by converting a 51st-minute penalty kick after a handball determined by video review. Athletic had a chance to move closer in the final minutes but Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois saved Raúl García's penalty kick with his left foot. Madrid defender Eder Militao was sent off for the handball that prompted the penalty.

"We could have gotten back into

the game but Courtois ended our chances with that save," Athletic defender Óscar de Marcos said.

"It's a shame but we have to be proud. It's not easy to make it to these finals. We competed against great teams." Madrid's triumph gave veteran Brazil defender Marcelo a record-tying 23rd title with the club since he arrived in 2006, joining Paco Gentó. It moved him ahead of former central defender Sergio Ramos, who is now with Paris Saint-Germain. It is Marcelo's fifth Spanish Super Cup title. He entered the match as a substitute in the 86th and lifted the trophy as team captain.