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SOUTH AFRICA HAND 'OUT OF SYNC' INDIA SERIES DEFEAT

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HAVE NO LIMITS:
RANVEER
10 VIVACITY

703 die, 3.5L infected in a day as corona marches on

Kerala positivity rate soars to 43%

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India on Friday recorded 3,47,254 new cases of Covid-19, including 9,692 cases of the new Omicron variant, while 703 fatalities were reported in the last 24 hours. The active cases have increased to 20,18,825, the highest in 235 days, the Union Health Ministry data showed. The active cases comprise 5.23 per cent of the total infections.

The Test Positivity Rate surged to 43.76 per cent in Kerala, painting a gloomy picture about the Covid-19 situation in the State which recorded 41,668 fresh cases during the last 24 hours on Friday. The samples tested on Friday stood at 95,218.

By far this is the highest positivity rate recorded by any State in India ever since Covid-19 spread in the country. Positivity rate is the percentage of people who test positive of those overall who have been tested.

The Kerala Government suffered a setback on Friday as a Division Bench of the Kerala High Court asked the Kasaragod district adminis-



A student stands for verification as a health worker administers a Covid-19 vaccine to another at a private school in Kolkata on Friday. AP

The Government on Friday increased the limit of registering the number of people on Co-WIN using one mobile number from four to six to cover maximum number of beneficiaries

tration not to allow any public meetings attended by more than 50 persons. Though the District Disaster Management Authority had issued an order limiting the number of persons that could assemble for any meeting to 50, the district collector reportedly under polit-

ical pressure issued a new order stating that the number of persons that could be allowed to attend public meetings should be decided based on the Test Positivity Rate as well as the number of beds available in the district.

Neighbouring Karnataka too is battling massive surge in Covid-19 cases. The State reported 48,049 new Covid-19 cases along with 22 deaths and 18,115 recoveries on Friday. Bengaluru registered 29,068 infections and six deaths.

The Karnataka Government on Friday decided to lift the weekend curfew that was in place with an aim to control the spread of Covid-19 infections. However, the night curfew hours between 10 pm and 5 am everyday will continue. This comes as Karnataka registered a steep spike in Covid-19 cases on Thursday.

Meanwhile, Delhi reported 10,756 new Covid-19 cases, 17,494 recoveries and 38 deaths in the last 24 hours.

Continued on Page 2

Amar Jawan Jyoti merger stirs row; India Gate to get Bose's statue

Rahul raps Govt for moving flame to War Memorial

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amar Jawan Jyoti on Friday was merged with the eternal flame at the newly constructed National War Memorial (NWM) here. Some veterans and political leaders, including Rahul Gandhi, however, criticised the move and said it was an insult to the fallen soldiers.

In a short military ceremony, the flame at the Amar Jawan Jyoti at the India Gate was taken and merged with the War Memorial about 400 metres away in the afternoon. Chief of Integrated Defence Staff Marshal BR Krishna presided over the ceremony that included a parade and salute.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, meanwhile, announced that a statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose will be installed at India Gate as a symbol of India's indebtedness to him. This announcement came ahead of Bose's 125th birth anniversary.

Until the installation is completed, a hologram of Netaji will be projected at the site of the statue, the Prime Minister said. "I will unveil the



Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's statue (that is yet to be installed) at India Gate area in New Delhi, to mark his 125th birth anniversary. PTI



hologram statue on 23rd January, Netaji's birth anniversary," he tweeted.

"At a time when the entire nation is marking the 125th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, I am glad to share that his grand statue, made of granite, will be installed at India Gate," Modi tweeted on Friday. "This would be a symbol of India's indebtedness to him."

The statue will be installed under the grand canopy near which the Amar Jawan Jyoti flickers. The canopy, which was built along with the rest of the grand monument in the 1930s by Sir Edwin Lutyns, once housed a statue of the former king of England George V. The statue was later moved to Coronation Park in Central Delhi in the mid-1960s.

The National War Memorial, built in 2019, will now be the single point for military ceremonies and tributes to fallen soldiers.

Continued on Page 2

Parrikar's son quits BJP to fight as independent from coveted Panjim

PTI ■ PANJI

Denied ticket from Panaji, his late father's constituency, former Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar's son Utpal Parrikar on Friday quit the BJP.

He would contest the February 14 Assembly elections in the State from Panaji as independent, he announced here.

The day before, the ruling BJP nominated from Panaji — which Manohar Parrikar had represented for over two decades — its sitting MLA Atanasio Monserrate, one of ten legislators who had joined the saffron party in July 2019 after quitting Congress.

"I was left with no other choice. I have resigned from the party and I would be contesting as an independent from Panaji," Utpal Parrikar told reporters.

He also said that resignation was a formality but the BJP will "always remain in my heart."

"It is a difficult choice for me, I am doing it for the people of Goa. No one should be worried about my political future, people of Goa will do it," he said.

The BJP had offered him "other options" (constituencies other than Panaji), Parrikar said.

"I am fighting for the values which I believe in. Let people of Panaji decide. I cannot negotiate with my party," he added.

Asked whether he would seek support of other political parties, he said the only platform for him was the BJP.

"If not BJP, then I would go for (contesting as) independent. I will not go for any other political party," Parrikar said.

On Thursday, the BJP's Goa in-charge Devendra Fadnis had said while releasing its first list of candidates that the party offered some other seats to Utpal, but he was not willing to contest from any of them.

Earlier in the day, Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut said his party, which had formed a tie-up with the NCP for Goa elections, would support Parrikar if he promised not to back the BJP post elections.

On Thursday, Aam Aadmi Party leader and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had slammed the BJP for adopting "use and throw" policy regarding the Parrikar family, and invited Utpal to join his party.

Priyanka pitches herself as CM candidate in UP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi on Friday pitched herself as the party's Chief Ministerial face in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls as she released a "youth manifesto" for the State, along with her brother Rahul Gandhi.

Priyanka, who has been leading from the front in the crucial poll-bound State, however, evaded queries on whether she would contest the Assembly polls. At the same time, she said the Congress would be open to a post-poll alliance if the need arose. Rahul on his part chose to attack the BJP alleging that those preaching Hindutva are spreading hatred in the cyber world.

"Do you see any other face from the Congress party?" Priyanka said when asked who would be the party's Chief Ministerial candidate in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls. "You are seeing my face everywhere," the Priyanka added while addressing the joint press conference with Rahul to release the "Bharti Vidhan"



Congress party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra speaks during the release of the Congress party's manifesto for the upcoming State election in Uttar Pradesh, in New Delhi, on Friday. AP

(recruitment document) manifesto that promises a new vision for youth in the State and the creation of 20 lakh jobs, including eight lakh for women.

To a question on whether she would herself contest the Assembly polls, Priyanka said, "We have not yet decided." She said it would be known once that is decided.

Continued on Page 2

Aditi Singh in BJP's 3rd list of 85 names for UP elections

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Friday announced its third list of 85 candidates for the upcoming Uttar Pradesh elections that includes Aditi Singh — who recently quit the Congress — fielded from Rae Bareilly.

The BJP has also given ticket to Asim Arun, who recently resigned from the IPS, in its third list of candidates.

The list also includes incumbent MLA Hariom Yadav, a relative of Samajwadi Party patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav. Hariom Yadav had quit the Opposition party recently and crossed over to the BJP.

The BJP has named both Aditi Singh and Yadav from their current seats of Rae Bareilly and Sirsaganj respectively, while Arun, a Dalit, will contest from Kannauj, a reserved seat.

The Rae Bareilly Assembly seat is part of the Rae Bareilly Lok Sabha constituency which is represented by Congress president Sonia Gandhi.

Uttar Pradesh Assembly Deputy Speaker Nitin Aggarwal, who had also left the SP to join the BJP, will fight

from Hardoi.

Other key candidates include former BSP leader Ramveer Upadhyay from Sadabad, Archana Pandey from Chhibramau, and Satish Mahana from Mahrajpur.

Riya Shakyia, daughter of Bidhuna MLA Vinay Shakyia who joined the SP, has also got a ticket to contest from her father's seat.

With the fresh list of candidates, which includes 15 women, the total number of names announced by the party for the seven-phase election to the 403-member assembly has reached 195.

Last week, the BJP had released its first list of candidates for the upcoming Uttar Pradesh Assembly election. It was announced that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will contest the polls from the Gorakhpur seat and Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maura from Sirathu.

Uttar Pradesh elections for the 403 Assembly constituencies are slated to be held in seven phases starting from February 10. The counting of votes will take place on March 10.

LG rejects Govt's proposal to reduce Covid restrictions

SAPNA SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal on Friday rejected Delhi Government's recommendations on the lifting of weekend curfew and reducing Covid-related restrictions. The Kejriwal Government proposed relaxation in curbs as the positivity rate has come down from 31 per cent to 17 per cent.

The Delhi administration had also proposed the removal of odd-even restrictions imposed on shops and other commercial establishments in the city.

Bajjal clarified that existing restrictions should remain in force until the Covid-19 situation further improves. He, however, allowed Delhi Government's proposal that private offices should operate at 50 per cent capacity.

"A status quo remains with regards to the opening of markets as the case positivity rate of Delhi is still above 21 per cent and the number of daily coronavirus cases being reported is over 12,000," the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) noted.

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What DDMA order says

- Restaurants and bars will remain closed across Delhi. Online delivery has been permitted
- Private offices have been allowed to function at 50 per cent capacity, however offices must be situated outside the containment zone
- Cinemas, theatres, spas, and gyms will continue to be shut
- All educational institutions, including schools, colleges, and

universities, will remain closed till further orders

- Shops in markets, market complexes, and malls are allowed to run on an odd-even basis between 10am and 8pm. Only one authorised weekly market can function with an upper limit of 50 per cent vendors at a time.
- Delhi Metro and buses can continue to run only at full seating capacity with no standing passenger

Domestic fliers can't carry more than one hand baggage

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Domestic air passengers will no longer be allowed to carry more than one hand baggage. In a bid to reduce congestion at airports, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has asked the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) to strictly implement the rule which mandates that only one handbag is allowed per passenger.

The CISF has said flyers with more than one cabin handbag are choking the security check-in counters at airports as well as causing delays, congestion and inconvenience to passengers. CISF guards all



key airports in India.

Interestingly, BCAS's own rules allow passengers to carry one hand baggage, the existing rules permit a passenger to carry one laptop bag, one ladies' handbag, and one blanket, gift item purchased from duty-free shop, umbrella, and a reasonable amount of reading material on board an aircraft.

In a letter to Director General, BCAS, the CISF's IG/Airport Sector Vijay Prakash pointed out that it has been seen that passenger on

average carries two to three handbags to the screening point. This has led to increased clearance time as well as delays, congestion in PESC points, and inconvenience to passengers. "As per BCAS AVSEC Circular Nos. 06/2000 & Lt12000, no passenger should be permitted to carry more than one handbag other than those items already listed in the circular including lady's bag," the CISF said, adding, "All airlines and airport operators may be instructed to take steps to implement 'One Hand Bag rule' meticulously on the ground to ease the congestion and other security concerns."

Continued on Page 2

Harak Rawat joins Congress

PNS ■ DEHRADUN/NEW DELHI

Expelled BJP leader and former Uttarakhand Minister Harak Singh Rawat on Friday joined the Congress in Delhi along with his daughter-in-law Anukriti Gusain in the presence of party campaign head for Uttarakhand Harish Rawat, PCC president Ganesh Godiyal, Leader of Opposition in Uttarakhand Assembly Pritam Singh.

Harak, who represented the Kotdwara seat in the Uttarakhand Assembly, was among the 10 MLAs who had rebelled against the then Chief Minister Harish Rawat-led State Government in 2016 and joined the BJP.

Harak was expelled from the BJP five days back.

35 YouTube, 2 Twitter accounts blocked for anti-India canards

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Acting on intelligence inputs, the Government has blocked 35 YouTube channels, two Twitter accounts, two Instagram accounts, two websites, and a Facebook account for spreading anti-India propaganda and spreading fake news in a "coordinated manner" on the Internet from Pakistan.

Talking to the media, Apurva Chandra, secretary Union Information and Broadcasting Ministry, said these YouTube accounts had a total subscriber base of over 1.20 crore, and their videos had over 130 crore views. The Government last month had



blocked 20 YouTube channels and two websites for spreading anti-India fake and divisive news and other content.

According to Chandra, the 35 YouTube accounts blocked by the Ministry were all operating from Pakistan and were identified to be part of four coordinated disinformation networks. These include Faisal Tarar Speaks, Apni Duniya TV, Haqeeqat ki Dunia, Shahzad Abbas, Mera Pakistan with

Shahab, Khabar with Ahmed, HR tv, Sabeel Kazmi, Such tv network, Saqib Speaks, and Salman Haider Officials.

The Apni Duniya Network operates 14 YouTube channels, and Talha Films Network operates 13 YouTube channels. A set of four channels and a set of two other channels were also found to be acting in synchronisation with each other.

The channels were used to post divisive content in a coordinated manner on topics like Kashmir, Indian Army, minority communities in India, Ram Mandir, General Bipin Rawat, etc. One of the groups identified on YouTube was "Naya Pakistan".

Continued on Page 2

CAPSULE

CLUBHOUSE APP CHAT CASE: 3 ARRESTED

Mumbai: The Mumbai Police has arrested three persons from Haryana in connection with the chat on Clubhouse app, in which obscene comments were allegedly made against Muslim women, an official said on Friday. In a tweet posted early on Friday morning, Shiv Sena's Rajya Sabha member Priyanka Chaturvedi praised the city police for the arrests in the case.

R-DAY REHEARSAL: TRAVEL ADVISORY ISSUED

New Delhi: The Delhi Traffic Police on Friday issued an advisory on the arrangements and traffic restrictions in place for the smooth conduct of full dress rehearsal in national Capital on January 23 for the Republic Day parade.

Yogi releases BJP's song for UP elections

Rioters who had previous Govts' patronage have their posters on public places: CM

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday released the BJP's song for the Assembly polls and said rioters, who once enjoyed the patronage of previous governments and were a threat to the State's peace, now have their posters pasted in public places. Adityanath released the song titled 'UP Phir Manglein BJP Sarkar' at the party's State headquarters here in the presence of its Uttar Pradesh chief Swatantra Dev Singh, Deputy Chief Ministers Keshav Prasad Maurya and Dinesh Sharma, and Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur.

The Chief Minister said, "The rioters who were once a threat to the peace and harmony of the State and enjoyed patronage of previous governments, today have their posters pasted on roads and crossings." "Taking the basic mantra of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' of Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the aim of our government, we have worked for the development of all but appeasement of none," Adityanath said and referred to the achievements of his government.

Under the SP and the BSP governments sugar mills used to remain closed and arrears of sugarcane farmers were pending for years, Adityanath said, adding that his government made record payments to sugarcane farmers.

"Our government also paid cane dues pending from the SP and BSP governments' time," he said. Adityanath said that his government has fulfilled the promises made by the BJP in its 2017 election manifesto. **PTI**

Lokhandwala shoot-out ATS chief no more

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Yesteryear's dare-devil, swashbuckling and debonair IPS officer A A Khan — who as the then Anti Terrorist Squad (ATS) chief led a team of 100-odd police officers that eliminated dreaded gangster Maya Dolas and four sharpshooters of Dawood holed up in one of the flats in a building at Lokhandwala in north-west Mumbai in a much-discussed shoot-out — is no more.

Khan, who as the — then Additional Commissioner of Police inspired the formation of the Maharashtra ATS and also became its first chief in 1991 — breathed his last at the Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital here at around 3 pm on Friday. He had not been keeping well for several days. He was 81.

The term "encounter" came into vogue after the Mumbai

On November 16, 1991 — then ATS chief A A Khan led a team of 100-odd policemen to eliminate the dreaded gangster Maya Dolas, Dilip Buwa, Anil Pawar at Lokhandwala in north Mumbai

police gunned down gangster Manya Surve at Wadala in January 1982. Nine years later — on November 16, 1991 — then ATS chief A A Khan led a team of 100-odd policemen to eliminate the dreaded gangster Maya Dolas, Dilip Buwa, Anil Pawar and four other sharpshooters of Dawood who were holed up in one of the flats at Swati Apartments at Lokhandwala, Andheri (West) in north Mumbai in a rapid exchange of fire lasting for nearly four-hour-long hours. More than 450 rounds were fired in the daylight shoot-out.

Over 48K Covid cases logged after 5,000 reduction in Maha

Mumbai: In an alarming development, Maharashtra recorded a staggering 48,270 Covid-19 cases on Friday, even as the pandemic cases dropped further to 5,008 from Thursday's tally of 5708 cases the state recorded 144 Omicron cases.

A day after Maharashtra recorded 46,197 cases, the number of daily infections in the state went up by 2073 cases to touch a tally of 48,270 cases. With fresh infections, the total number of Covid-19 cases in the state went up from 73,71,757 cases to 73,71,757 cases.

The Covid-19 claimed 52 lives in the state on Friday, as against 37 deaths recorded on Thursday. With the latest deaths, the total number of deaths recorded in the state went up from 1,41,971 to 1,42,023 cases.

Mumbai, which has been witnessing a drop in the number of cases for the last few days, witnessed a drop in the fresh Covid-19 cases from

5,708 cases on Thursday to 5,008 cases on Friday. With the fresh cases recorded on Friday, the total Covid-19 cases rose from 10,23,707 cases to 10,28,715 cases.

As 42,391 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 69,67,432 to 70,09,823 cases. The recovery rate in the state dropped from 94.52 per cent to 94.47 per cent.

The number of "active cases" in the state increased from 2,58,569 cases to 2,64,388 cases. The fatality rate in the state dropped from 1.92 per cent to 1.91 per cent.

In a repeat of the happenings in the first and second pandemic waves, the active cases in Pune jumped a shocking 78,846 cases as against 73098 active cases that existed on Thursday.

In a big relief to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) which has been handling the Covid-19 effectively during the third wave of the pandemic, the active cases dropped significantly from 21,838 cases to 14,178 cases, while the active cases in the neighbouring Thane came down from 50456 to 46985 cases. Nagpur accounted for 18,679 cases.

703...

From Page 1

Active cases stood at 61,954. At the same time, Mumbai recorded 5008 new Covid-19 cases, 12,913 recoveries and 12 deaths in the last 24 hours.

In the meantime, the Union Health Ministry said "isolation facility would not be mandatory for international travellers arriving from at-risk countries from January 22.

In a statement here, it added that they would still be required to undergo seven-day home quarantine. "If tested positive, their samples should be further sent for genomic testing at INSACOG laboratory network. They shall be treated/isolated as per laid down standard protocol," tweeted the Ministry.

In India, the active Covid-19 cases comprise 5.23 per cent of the total infections, while the national Covid-19 recovery rate is at 93.50 per cent, the Ministry said.

An increase of 94,774 cases has been recorded in the active Covid-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours. The country had reported 3,11,170 cases in a single day on May 15 last year. The daily positivity rate was recorded at 17.94 per cent while the weekly positivity rate was recorded at 16.56 per cent, according to the Ministry.

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 3,60,58,806, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.27 per cent. The cumulative doses administered in the country so far under the nationwide Covid-19 vaccination drive has exceeded 160.43 crore, said the Ministry in the statement.

India's Covid-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 2020, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19. India crossed the grim milestone of two crore on May 4 and three crore on June 23.

Priyanka pitches...

From Page 1

The Congress general secretary in charge of Uttar Pradesh said the party would certainly look at supporting other parties for Government formation and was open to backing them if the situation were to arise after the elections.

She, however, said the Congress would keep implementing its vision for youth, especially women, as a priority while extending any such support for Government formation in UP. "We would be open to considering that. If such a situation arises, then we would certainly want our agenda for the youth and women to be fulfilled if we were going to be part of any such dispensation," she said to a question on whether the Congress would support other parties in Government formation.

The party has resolved to fill the "massive backlog" of jobs in the public sector and promised 20 lakh jobs, including eight lakh for women, in their manifesto for the youth. The campaign in Uttar Pradesh is very negative and is centred around caste and religion, Priyanka said, adding that the Congress is moving away from this to present a development oriented roadmap.

Addressing the media, Rahul stressed that the country needs a new vision and their document is "not hollow words" but drafted after consulting youth whose views are reflected in it. "There are polls in UP and the youth there need a new vision and only the Congress party can give that vision to the state," the former Congress chief said.

"We don't spread hatred, we work to unite people and we want to build a new Uttar Pradesh driven by the strength and confidence of youth in the state," he said.

In Uttar Pradesh, Rahul said, 880 youth lose their jobs everyday and over 16 lakh youth have been rendered unemployed in the last five years of BJP rule. The Prime Minister promised to provide two crore jobs every year to youth and the entire country is seeing the truth, he said.

"Our understanding and our belief is that India requires a new vision. The vision that was proposed by the BJP in 2014 has completely failed. It is a disaster and it is turning our demographic dividend into a demographic disaster. India requires a new vision going forward," he told reporters when asked about the need for such a manifesto focussed on youth.

Even people in the BJP, he alleged, admit that something has gone "very wrong" and the vision that was committed to has failed. Uttar Pradesh would lead the country in jobs and was the centre of the resistance to the British. It was from where the far-reaching ideas came from, he noted, adding that the manifesto is a step towards providing a vision for the country and the Congress believes this has to begin in Uttar Pradesh.

Countering the "untoward remarks" on social media, Rahul said those preaching Hindutva are spreading hatred in the cyber world. Calling them cowards, he said they do not have the courage to come out in the open and asked supporters to fight the 'hatred'. "Hindutvavadis" have been spreading hatred in the cyber world because cowards only attack while hiding. Had they mustered enough courage, they would have come forward. We need to be strong and keep tackling this hatred - the country needs to be saved! #NoFear," Rahul tweeted in Hindi.

Amar Jawan...

From Page 1
In the past three years, most military events have been moved to the new memorial from India Gate.

Then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi inaugurated the

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Seema born on 15/2/1979, D/o Lajpat Rai, R/o C-600, 27 Foot Road, Dabua Colony, NIT Faridabad 121001 Haryana do hereby declare that I hold identities by the name of Seema and Seema Sindhu and both are one and the same person. I shall be known by my full name Seema Sindhu hereinafter. PD (9136)C

THANKSGIVING

Thankyou holy spirit for all blessings Celine PD(9137)C

Thankyou Mother Mary for all blessings Celine PD(9137)C

Thankyou Mother Mary for all blessings Celine PD(9137)C

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कार्यालय नगर परिषद भाण्डेर, जिला दतिया (म.प्र.)
(Email) cmobhander@mpurban.gov.in
NIT No. 54/UADD/2022/Bhander/e-tendering भाण्डेर, दिनांक 13.01.2022
ऑनलाइन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

निम्नलिखित निर्माण/आपूर्ति/सेवाओं के लिये निविदा मापदंडों को पूरा करने वाले ठेकेदारों/कंसल्टेंट्स और ख्याति प्राप्त फर्मर्स से ऑनलाइन बोली आमंत्रित है :-

क्र.	कार्य का नाम	ऑनलाइन टेण्डर नम्बर	अनुमानित लागत	अमानत राशि	निविदा पत्र मूल्य	कार्य हेतु समयवधि
1	नगरीय क्षेत्र-नगर सड़की मार्केट निर्माण कार्य	2022_UAD_179030_1	1,64,64,000	82320	12500	180 दिवस
2	खटककाना मोहल्ला से सिक्न्दपुर होते हुये बरकीसराय की पुलिया तक नाला निर्माण कार्य	2022_UAD_179055_1	1,61,33,000	80665	12500	180 दिवस

1 इच्छुक बोलीदाता वेबसाइट www.mptenders.gov.in पर एन.आई.टी. देख सकते हैं।
2 बोली दस्तावेज सार्वजनिक अवकाश को छोड़कर 14.01.2022 समय 17.30 से 15.02.2022 तक समय 5.30 बजे तक क्रय की जा सकती है।
3 एनआईटी. में संशोधन यदि कोई होता है तो कृपया श्री आशीष सुमन उपयंत्री (7724057797) से संपर्क कर सकते हैं।

(इकबाल मोहम्मद) (आशीष सुमन) (विजय बहादुर सिंह)
प्रशासक उपयंत्री मुख्य नगर पालिका अधिकारी
नगर परिषद भाण्डेर नगर परिषद भाण्डेर नगर परिषद भाण्डेर

DELHI JAL BOARD : GOVT OF NCT OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (T/M-7)
NEAR SURAJMAL STADIUM METRO STATION
NANGLOI PH.III: NEW DELHI-110041
Gmail ID aeet.djb@gmail.com
PRESS NIT NO. 47/EE(T/M-7) (2021-22)

S. No.	Description	Amount put to tender	Tender Fee	Earnest Money	Date of release of tender in E-procurement solution	Last date/time of receipt of tender through e-procurement
1.	Replacement of MS container into stainless Steel water container of 3 KL for Karala water emergency in Mundka AC-08 under AEE(M)08.	Item Rate	Rs. 500/-	Rs. 73,000/-	20.01.2021 I.D. No 2022_DJB_215066_1	31.01.2022 at 3:00 PM

Further details in this regard can be seen at <https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER) Advt. No. J.S.V. 1032 (2021-22) "STOP CORONA: Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene" (SATISH KUMAR GUPTA) Ex. Engineer(TENDERING)M-7

TENDER NOTICE

No. CIID/SLR/Tender/2021-2022 / (PART-I)
The Senior Divisional Commercial Manager/Freight, Northern Railway, New Delhi invites E-tender for the contracts of leasing of SLR parcel space in the following trains originating from various stations over Delhi Division :-

Tender Opening Date :- 14.02.2022

S. No.	Train No.	From	To	CC	Comptt	Freq.	Reserve Price per day (in Rs.)	EMD (in Rs.)	Tender Cost (including GST @ 18% in Rs.)	Tender No.
1.	12282	NDLS (New Delhi)	BBS (Bhubaneswar)	3.9	FI	Thursday	31393	100000	1180	SLR-FI-12282-Jan22
2.	12724	NDLS (New Delhi)	HYB (Hyderabad Decan)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	24624	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-12724-Jan22
3.	14006	ANVT (Anand Vihar Terminal)	SMI (Sitamarhi)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	18751	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-14006-Jan22
4.	12802	NDLS (New Delhi)	PURI (Puri)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	26315	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-12802-Jan22
5.	12302	NDLS (New Delhi)	HWH (Howrah Jn.)	3.9	FSLR	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday & Sunday	27981	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-12302-Jan22
6.	12190	NZM (Hazrat Nizamuddin)	JBP (Jabalpur)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	15689	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-12190-Jan22
7.	14206	DLI (Delhi Jn.)	AYC (Ayodhya Cantt)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	10444	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-14206-Jan22
8.	12958	NDLS (New Delhi)	ADI (Ahmedabad Jn.)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	19168	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-12958-Jan22
9.	14208	DLI (Delhi Jn.)	PBH (Partapgarh Jn.)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	11084	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-14208-Jan22
10.	20840	NDLS (New Delhi)	RNC (Ranchi)	3.9	FSLR	Monday, Friday	25667	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-20840-Jan22
11.	12310	NDLS (New Delhi)	RJPB (Rajendranagar Terminal)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	20511	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-12310-Jan22
12.	12304	NDLS (New Delhi)	HWH (Howrah Jn.)	3.9	FSLR	Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday & Sunday	23184	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-12304-Jan22
13.	22858	ANVT (Anand Vihar Terminal)	SRC (Santragachi Jn.)	3.9	FSLR	Tuesday	23424	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-22858-Jan22
14.	22950	DEE (Delhi Sarai Rohilla)	BDTS (Bandra Terminus)	3.9	FSLR	Thursday	20830	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-22950-Jan22
15.	15956	DLI (Delhi Jn.)	KYQ (Kamakhya)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	28017	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-15956-Jan22
16.	12394	NDLS (New Delhi)	RJPB (Rajendranagar Terminal)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	16409	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-12394-Jan22
17.	12622	NDLS (New Delhi)	MAS (MGR Chennai Central)	3.9	FSLR	Daily	29456	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-12622-Jan22
18.	22824	NDLS (New Delhi)	BBS (Bhubaneswar)	3.9	FSLR	Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Saturday	32293	100000	1180	SLR-FSLR-22824-Jan22

Interested bidders may please visit official website for E-tendering i.e. www.irps.gov.in for further details and submitting tender.

Important Note:
1. Bidders who wish to participate in the e-tendering will have to procure class-3 valid Digital Security Certificate (DSC) as per Information Technology Act, 2000. Bidders can procure this certificate from any of the certifying authority of Controller of Certifying Authorities (CCA) Government of India. Details of certifying authorities can be obtained from www.cca.gov.in.
2. Bidders who want to participate in this E-tender, will be required to register on Indian Railways website www.irps.gov.in through a valid Class-3 Digital Security Certificate (DSC), if not registered earlier. All information related to bidder registration and participation in this e-tender is available on the official website of Indian Railways www.irps.gov.in.
3. Railway Administration reserves the full and absolute rights to short terminate these tenders/contracts at any point of time (or for taking any decision regarding the discontinuation/continuation of these tenders/contracts with modified/additional terms and conditions) depending upon the continuation/discontinuation of these trains or commencement of new train services.
4. Kindly carefully read and follow the "General Instructions, Instructions to tenderers and "Terms and Conditions" (including certain new modified instructions/conditions) given in the Tender Document before submitting the ONLINE BID.

75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

NORTHERN RAILWAY

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

152/2022

LG rejects Govt's...

From Page 1

Reacting on L-G's decision, the Chief Minister's Office said that it is unfortunate that L- G has rejected the demand of traders and the business community. "LG has rejected the proposal of elected

Government despite the fact that corona cases are reducing at a very fast pace. When all markets of Gurugram and Noida are open, why should the business community of Delhi be made to suffer by BJP's Central Government," said a statement from CMO.

Meanwhile, as per the fresh order of DDMA, the current night curfew between 10 pm and 5 am, and weekend curfew in the city will remain in place till further orders in view of the Covid-19. The authority also has decided to

offer relaxation to the functioning of private offices in the national Capital. "Private offices that are not present in containment zones, can operate with a maximum capacity of 50% attendance. Private firms have been directed to stagger work timings and the presence of employees at the same time in order to ensure social distancing is maintained at the workplace," the order said. Earlier, the authority had ordered 100 per cent work from home for private offices.

PUBLIC NOTICE

General Public is hereby informed that my clients, Sh. Ram Asre R/o H.no. 28-2-E S/F, GautamGali, Jwala Nagar, Shahdara, Delhi-110032 have disowned and debarred their son Shau Gupta from all their movable and immovable assets. Any person dealing with them shall do so at his/her own risk and responsibilities and my clients shall have no responsibility or liability of any kind whatsoever arising out of act(s) and/or omission(s) of Shau Gupta.

Ankit Sharma (Advocate)
Enrolment No D-3879/2016
Ch. No. D-218, Karkardooma Court Complex Delhi-32.

CORRIGENDUM

ICICI Bank

Refer to the advertisement of the Bank DRT Notice published in The Pioneer on 26-11-2021 under the Borrower's Name HARISH MANGHWANIA in New Delhi edition. Due to inadvertent mistake in the O.A. No. was mentioned as O.A. No. 128/2020 instead of O.A. No. 129/2021. Kindly read it as OAI/129/2021. Other Contents of the notice remains the same

Date: January 21, 2022
Place: Delhi/NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

Domestic fliers...

From Page 1

The airline may be made responsible and depute staff to guide pax, check and verify their handbag status, etc, before allowing the passenger for Pre-embarkation security checks. All airlines may be directed suitably to inform pax and to display "one handbag rule" on their tickets/boarded passes very conspicuously," reads the communique.

35 YouTube...

From Page 1

The channels had a combined subscriber base of over 35 lakh, and their videos had over 55 crore views. Some of the YouTube channels of the Naya Pakistan Group (NPG) were being operated by anchors of Pakistani news channels. "The content is absolutely fake and toxic like the government is responsible for Bipin Rawat's death, Bipin Rawat's daughter is accepting Islam, North Korean army is going to Kashmir, etc. What sort of nonsense is this! And these YouTube accounts had a total subscriber base of over 1.20 crore.

DCPCR serves notice to NMC

Over building multi-level parking on land allotted to schools



New Delhi: The Delhi Commission For Protection of Child Rights on Friday served a notice to North MCD following a complaint by AAP MLA Vishesh Ravi alleging that multi-level parking was being built on the land allotted to two primary schools.

The Delhi Commission For Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR), in its notice, asked officials concerned to submit all records pertaining to the matter and file a detailed submission within seven days.

It further said that it is in receipt of a complaint from Karol Bagh MLA Vishesh claiming that the North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) was building a multi-level parking complex

on the land allotted to two MCD primary schools -- MCD Primary Boys School and MCD Primary Girls School -- in Karol Bagh. The Commission said it has taken cognizance of the matter and issued notices to Director Education, NorthM CD and Deputy Commissioner MCD (Karol Bagh Zone).

"The complaint further submits that the destruction of these two schools is completely against the norms of the RTE Act that states children should have access to primary schools within the radius of 1 km. Also, children as young as 6-year-old in class 1, are forced to travel for more than 3-5 kms because of the destruction of these schools," read the notice. **PTI**

Court expresses anguish over ED's casual probe in money laundering case

New Delhi: A Delhi court has expressed "anguish" over the "casual and cavalier approach" in which investigation was conducted by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case.

Special Judge Dharmender Rana made these observations while granting bail to a businessman Jatinder Pal Singh in a case of money laundering related to an corruption deal, as it found various discrepancies in the investigation and the arguments made before the court.

"Before proceeding to deal with the issue on merits, in pains, I must admit at the very outset that the conduct of ED in the instant matter is highly disappointing, if not deplorable as suggested by the defence.

"In its zeal to ensure the sustained detention of the applicant/accused, ED seems to have thrown out the baby with the water," the judge said.

According to the ED, Singh purchased cloth worth ₹6.60 crore from Astonishing Pvt Ltd and sold it to Shree Shyam Dhani Trading Company, a proprietorship concern of one Sanjay Kumar, for Rs 12.23 crore.

ED claimed that both -- Astonishing Private Limited and Shree Shyam Dhani Trading Company - are sham companies and were not traceable. "In my considered opinion,

the activities ascribable to accused are merely layering activities and accused appears to be a mere cog in the wheel," the judge said in the order passed on January 17.

He said that under such circumstances, the focus of investigation should in fact be the 'source of money' used to purchase the fabric, so as to decide the crucial issue as to if the money came from a tainted source or not.

"However, unfortunately, instead of focusing upon the source of money, accused is the focus of investigation in the instant matter," the judge noted.

He further observed that having failed to detect the source of money and apprise the court if it came from a tainted source or not, ED, during the course of arguments, improved upon its own case and came up with an altogether different contention that the 'commission generated' by the accused on account of fabric shown to have sold off by them to Shree Shyam Dhani Trading Company was in fact the proceeds of crime in the instant case.

"However, if the said contention is accepted to be correct and the proceeds of crime in the instant matter is admitted to be the commission generated, the very arrest of accused in the case at hand becomes seriously questionable," the judge said. **PTI**

Delhi Police issues travel advisory for R-Day full dress rehearsal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With Republic Day celebrations round the corner, the Delhi Traffic Police (DTP) on Friday issued an advisory on the arrangements and restrictions in place for smooth conduct of Full Dress Rehearsal on January 23 for the Republic Day parade.

According to the advisory, the parade rehearsal will start at 9.50 am on Monday from Vijay Chowk and will proceed to National Stadium.

"The parade will start from Vijay Chowk and enter National Stadium from gate number 1 via Rajpath, Amar Jawan Jyoti, India Gate, round about Princess Palace, turn left towards Tilak Marg and turn right on "C" Hexagon. In order to facilitate smooth passage of the parade, no traffic will be allowed on Rajpath from Vijay Chowk to India Gate from 6 pm on Saturday till parade is over on Sunday," stated the advisory.

"No cross traffic on Rajpath from 11 pm on Saturday at Rafi Marg, Janpath, Man Singh Road till Parade is over. 'C'-Hexagon-India Gate will be closed for traffic from 9.15 am on Sunday till the entire parade and tableaux enter National Stadium," said Vivek Kishor, the Joint Commissioner of Police, traffic.

"The commuters are advised to avoid the route of parade from 9 am to 12.30 pm. Though there will be no restriction for people from north Delhi going towards New Delhi Railway Station or Old Delhi Railway Station yet it is advised that they plan their journey in advance and take sufficient extra time to reach their destination to avoid possible delay, according to the advisory.

The movement of the city bus services will be curtailed at Park Street/Udyan Marg, Aram Bagh Road (Paharganj), round about Kamla Market, Delhi Secretariate (IG Stadium), Pragati Maidan (Bhairon Road), Hanuman Mandir (Yamuna Bazar), Mori Gate, ISBT Kashmiri Gate, ISBT Sarai Kale Khan and Tis Hazari Court, the advisory said.

Buses from Ghaziabad bound for Shivaji Stadium shall take NH-24, Ring Road and terminate at Bhairon Road. Buses coming from NH-24 shall take right turn on Road No 56 and terminate at ISBT Anand Vihar, it said.

Buses coming from Ghaziabad side will be diverted to Mohan Nagar towards Bhopra Chungi for Wazirabad Bridge. All Inter State buses coming from Dhaura Kuan side shall terminate at Dhaura Kuan, it stated.

Metro Rail services will remain available for commuters at all stations during the full dress rehearsal ceremony. However, boarding and de-boarding will not be allowed at Kendriya Sachivalaya and Udyog Bhawan from 5 am till noon on Saturday, it said.

Flying of sub conventional aerial platforms like paragliders, para motors, hang gliders, UAVs, UASs, microlight aircrafts, remotely piloted aircrafts, hot air balloons, small size powered aircrafts, quadcopters or para jumping from aircraft etc. are prohibited over the jurisdiction of National Capital Territory of Delhi from 20.01.2022 up to 15.02.2022 (both days inclusive), the advisory said.

Motorists are requested to observe traffic rules and follow directions of traffic personnel deployed at all intersections. People are requested to plan their journey in advance and keep sufficient time in hand to avoid inconvenience, it added.

Budget will bring back derailed city's economy on track: Sisodia

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government started working on the upcoming Delhi Budget 2022-23, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said on Friday.

Sisodia, who also holds a portfolio of Finance Minister in the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Delhi conducted a high-level review meeting.

"Delhi budget 2022-23 will be special and will foster the economic growth of the national capital, the budget will be prepared by keeping all the needs of Delhi residents in mind. Along with this, based on the findings of various studies conducted by the planning department, we are trying to



understand what innovative ways that can be introduced to boost the capital's economy and increase job opportunities," Sisodia said. "The economy has suffered great losses in the past two years due to COVID pandemic. We will give special attention to bringing the capital's economy back on track. Delhi Budget 2022-23

will also be very important regarding industrial development. In this budget, the Delhi Government will focus on developing Delhi as a hub for business and services."

He also added, "in the Delhi Budget 2022-23, will also focus on various schemes of public welfare including education, health, electricity, clean drinking water among other basic need areas. The necessities of all state residents will be kept in mind while preparing this year's budget and it will help them recover from the pandemic-led economic crisis."

City logs 10,756 new cases, 38 deaths

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi on Friday reported 10,756 daily cases of Covid 19 and 38 deaths related to the infection, State Health Bulletin said. While 59,629 tests were conducted, the test positivity rate stood at 18.04 and 17,494 patients also recovered.

Health Minister Satyendar Jain said Covid situation is under control due to stringent measures imposed by the Delhi Government.

Jain said, on Thursday, 12,306 new cases of the corona were reported in Delhi, the positivity rate is 21.48%. Unfortunately, 43 deaths occurred due to Covid over the past few days." Along with this, he said that the rate of admission in hospitals is low, and has slowed down in Delhi in the last few days. Apart from this, 18,815 people also recovered from the corona. "Despite the arrival of new cases every day for the last few days, the number of patients admitted to the hospital is stable at present. The Delhi government is prepared to bolster health services on all fronts," he added.

Need to watch trend to tell if Covid death peak has hit Delhi: Experts

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

New Delhi: The number of Covid cases in Delhi has come down after registering a record surge a week ago, but the daily fatalities trend needs to be watched for the next few days to tell if the death count has reached its peak, according to medical experts.

Senior doctors at leading Covid facilities, both state-run and private, have emphasised that the peak in death cases happen generally a week or two after the peak in the daily cases tally.

Delhi saw a record surge in daily cases recently with over 28,000 cases registered in a day on January 13, and the positivity rate too had gone beyond 30 per cent on January 14.

The daily case count has come down in the last few days, and the city logged 12,306 cases on Thursday.

It also recorded 43 deaths on that day, the highest since June 10. Experts said this is a general epidemiological trend and death count peak is generally seen 7-14 days after the peak in daily cases as patients' condition deteriorate later after testing positive.

Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain on Friday asserted that the danger of Covid-19 has subsided in the national capital and the situation is "quite under control".

He also said that the virus was the primary cause of death in only three of the 43 fatalities recorded the previous day.

A senior doctor at the Delhi Government-run Institute of Liver and Biliary Sciences (ILBS) said, "Very few hospital admissions are being seen in this wave, compared

to the previous ones." "But any patient who has got admitted after testing positive, generally dies after his or her condition deteriorates in the next one week or so, and hence, death tally will peak later than the cases tally," the doctor said.

In this wave, led largely by the Omicron variant of the coronavirus, even if one family member is getting infected, almost the entire family is contracting the infection, the doctor said.

Because of this, everybody is getting isolated quickly, so the recovery is also taking place simultaneously and hence, "quick rise will also be followed by quick fall in cases", the senior doctor said. Nearly 400 deaths have been reported in the month of January so far, according to official data. **PTI**

Water plan to be made in Gurugram in view of 2041 population: Admin

Gurugram: The Gurugram district administration will prepare the water plan keeping in mind the declining groundwater level in the Gurugram district and population norms for the year 2041.

For this initiative, Deputy Commissioner Gurugram, Dr Yash Garg has appointed nodal officers in various departments involved in planning.

All these nodal officers will submit a detailed report of the usage and supply of water and other resources from the entire district to the Gurugram Society by January 31.

Thereafter, after discussing all the reports by the society, a final plan will be prepared and sent to the Haryana Water Resources Authority (HWRA).

"The depleting groundwater level in Gurugram is a matter of concern. In such a situation, keeping in view the increasing pressure of population and the demand for water in the district, necessary steps will have to be taken on some important points to prepare a water plan in the district, considering the population stan-

dards for the next 20 years i.e. the year 2041," he said.

For this, we need to work extensively to recharge the groundwater level by saving rainwater in maximum quantity. Along with this, wherever there is an industrial area in the district, there is a need to emphasize the use of treated wastewater, reducing the dependence on the groundwater source," Garg said.

He informed that about 53 per cent of the groundwater in Gurugram is used for agricultural purposes.

In such a situation, farmers in the district will have to be made aware and diverted towards micro and drip irrigation.

There is also a need to increase the supply line of treated wastewater in the district.

The Deputy Commissioner said that keeping the target of the year 2041, it would also have to be decided where in the district there is a need to build micro STP and also to what extent our dual water system can be expanded.



Indian Youth Congress leaders during a protest against extinguishing the Amar Jawan Jyoti at India Gate in New Delhi on Friday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Doctors save 92-year-old paralytic man's life with advanced treatment

Gurugram: Doctors at Artemis Agrim Institute of Neurosciences perform advanced treatment of mechanical thrombectomy to save the life of a 92-year-old man from Gurugram, who suffered a severe paralytic attack due to stroke. The timely intervention not only saved his life but the patient recovered to go back to his normal life.

The patient's son who was returning from the US to visit his father saw him in an ailing condition with complete paralysis on the right side of the body, inability to speak or understand and rushed him to the emergency of the Hospital.

Doctors investigation including MRI and CT angiography revealed a stroke in the left side of the brain occluded by a large blood clot, which resulted in a complete lack of blood flow in the left side of the brain.

The Stroke team of the hospital quickly evaluated and decided to give him a clot-dissolving drug (TPA) by an injection in the arm. "The stroke intervention team angiogram in

the neuro-interventional Cath lab confirmed the persistent blockage of the left-sided brain artery.

Doctors decided to do a procedure known as "mechanical thrombectomy, a procedure where, through the leg blood vessel a thin tube was taken into the brain into the area of the clot which was a device known as stent retriever was deployed in the clot and it was taken out of the body, restoring the oxygen supply to the brain. This procedure helped in reviving the brain tissue which was not yet dead but wasn't functioning because of lack of blood flow.

Since most of the brain tissue was saved from the damage, the patient started to make a recovery and his right-sided movements started to come back on a follow-up after a month patient could walk and do his day-to-day activities independently," said Dr Vipul Gupta, Chief of Neurointervention and Co-director of Stroke Unit at Artemis-Agrim Institute of Neurosciences.

Fog reduces visibility, maximum temperature settles at 19.6 deg C

New Delhi: After a foggy morning that caused visibility levels to drop to 200 metres, the maximum temperature in Delhi settled at 19.6 degrees Celsius, two notches below the season's average, on Friday, according to the India Meteorological Department. The city recorded a minimum temperature of 7.6 degrees Celsius, the IMD said.



The maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to settle around 16 degrees Celsius and 11 degrees Celsius respectively.

A man on a cycle crosses a road as vehicles ply with their headlights on, during a cold and foggy winter morning, in New Delhi on Friday

Delhi's air quality was recorded in the 'very poor' category on Friday. The 24-hour air quality index (AQI) read 365 at 4 pm, Central Pollution Control Board data showed.

The AQI in neighbouring cities of Faridabad (360), Ghaziabad (340), Gurgaon (302), Greater Noida (302) and Noida (338) was also recorded in the 'very poor' category.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'. **PTI**

Jamia Millia Islamia to name internal quality assurance cell after Prof who died of Covid

New Delhi: The Jamia Millia Islamia on Friday decided to name its internal quality assurance cell (IQAC) after one of its professors, who died due to Covid during the second wave of the pandemic.

In a meeting, the varsity's executive council (EC) approved that the cell be named after Prof. Shafique Ahmad Ansari.

The EC also approved the appointment of Prof. Mehtab Alam, Department of Civil Engineering, as the pro-vice chancellor with effect from January 23, the Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) said in a statement. "The EC resolved to

approve that the present Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) will be named after Late Prof. Shafique Ahmad Ansari, the then Hony. Director, IQAC for his outstanding contribution to the cell. He died due to Covid during the second wave of the pandemic," it said.

Earlier, the university's vice-chancellor Najma Akhtar had said that the IQAC was constituted for the NAAC team visit.

The university was ranked A++ in the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) review last month. The grading provided by the NAAC is crucial for

funds and grants allotted to a university by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

JMI got a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.61. The CGPA for A++ accreditation is between 3.51 to 4.

The statement said that the EC resolved to adopt the qualifications for appointment and promotions of teachers in Jamia Schools on the pattern of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS).

The EC also resolved to adopt the revised minimum wages rates for different categories of staff in the university, it said. **PTI**

Masks not for children below 5 years: Revised guidelines

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In what should come as a huge relief for both parents and children, wearing of masks is not recommended for children aged 5 years or below according to the revised Covid-19 guidelines issued by the Union Health Ministry. Those aged 6-11 years may wear it depending on the ability of the child to use a mask safely and appropriately under direct supervision of parents. Ensuring that the kid masks up properly has been of much concern to parents while masking up didn't go too well with children who felt suffo-

cated. As per the 'Revised Comprehensive Guidelines for Management of COVID-19 in Children and Adolescents (below 18 years)', those aged 12 and above should wear a mask under the same conditions as adults, the guidelines said. It also said that use of antivirals or monoclonal antibodies is not recommended for those less than 18 years of age, irrespective of severity of Covid infection, and if steroids are used, they should be tapered over 10 to 14 days, subject to clinical improvement. The guidelines were reviewed by a group of experts in view of the current surge that

is mainly attributed to the Omicron variant of the coronavirus, which is also a variant of concern. The available data from other countries suggests that the disease caused by the Omicron variant is less severe. However, there is a need for a careful watch, as the current wave evolves, the ministry said. It categorized cases as asymptomatic, mild, moderate and severe. According to the guidelines, COVID-19 is a viral infection and antimicrobials have no role in the management of uncomplicated COVID-19 infection. In asymptomatic and mild

cases, antimicrobials are not recommended for therapy or prophylaxis while in moderate and severe cases, antimicrobials should not be prescribed unless there is clinical suspicion of a superadded infection. In case of septic shock, empirical antimicrobials, according to body weight, are frequently added to cover all likely pathogens based on clinical judgement, patient host factors, local epidemiology and antimicrobial policy of the hospital, it said. The guidelines stated that steroids are not indicated and are harmful in asymptomatic and mild cases of COVID-19.

They are indicated only in hospitalised severe and critically ill COVID-19 cases under strict supervision, the guidelines said. Steroids should be used at the right time, in the right dose and for the right duration, they stated. Steroids should be avoided in the first three to five days since onset of symptoms as it prolongs viral shedding, the guidelines stated. Anticoagulants are not indicated routinely and all hospitalised children should be evaluated for risk of developing thrombosis and monitored for development of thrombosis, the ministry said.

As far post-COVID-19 care is concerned, the guidelines stated that children with asymptomatic infection or mild disease should receive routine childcare, appropriate vaccination (if eligible), nutrition counselling, and psychological support on follow up. In addition to the above, parents or caregivers of children, who suffered moderate to severe Covid, during discharge from hospital should be counselled regarding monitoring for persistence or worsening respiratory difficulty and explained the indications for bringing the child back to the facility, the guidelines stated.



MHA to allow arms manufacturers to enhance weapon production

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Friday amended the rules to enable arms manufacturing companies to enhance their production of firearms and ammunition. Under the Arms (Amendment) Rules, 2022, the arms manufacturers, however, will have to submit online every month details of the firearms manufactured, sold or transferred or consumed for the month. "The manufacturer who has been issued licence in Form VII under these rules shall be permitted to have enhanced annual production of firearms or ammunition or caliber wise revision of his licensed capacity by giving intimation to the licensing authority and also to the State Government concerned within ninety days from the end of the financial year and for which no further endorsement on the licence as to capacity shall be required," the MHA notification said. While applying, the manufacturer has to submit a detailed proposal for enhancement of manufacturing capacity or caliber wise revision of licenced capacity, project outlays, means of finance and justification for economic viability and market demand projections, duly certified by the authorised signatory of the company. Monthly online returns, detailing the produc-



The manufacturer who has been issued licence in Form VII under these rules shall be permitted to have enhanced annual production of firearms or ammunition or caliber wise revision of his licensed capacity by giving intimation to the licensing authority and also to the State Government concerned within ninety days from the end of the financial year and for which no further endorsement on the licence as to capacity shall be required

dilution of promoters shareholding below 10 per cent. However, prior approval will not be required if there is increase in shareholding of a shareholder, who held less than 10 per cent in the share capital of the company, to 10 per cent or more provided that for transfer of share holding between the two promoters which is already approved by the licensing authority.

AG OK's contempt proceedings against Yati

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Attorney General KK Venugopal on Friday granted consent to activist Shachi Nelli for initiation of criminal contempt of court proceedings against controversial Yati Narsinghanand over his recent derogatory remarks against the Supreme Court. The AG found that Narsinghanand's statement "those who believe in this system, these politicians, in the Supreme Court, and in the Army will all die the death of a dog", was a direct attempt to lower the authority of the Supreme Court in the minds of the general public. As per Section 15 of the Contempt of Courts Act, the consent of Attorney General is required before the Supreme Court can hear a criminal contempt of court petition filed by a private individual. The complainant Nelli wrote to the AG seeking his consent for the same. In her letter seeking consent, Nelli had stated that in an interview given by Narsinghanand which went viral on social media was total-



ly contempt for the Supreme Court and the Constitution of India clear by saying, "We have no trust in the Supreme Court of India and the Constitution. The Constitution will consume the 100 crore Hindus of this country. Those who believe in this Constitution will be killed. Those who believe in this system, in these politicians, in the Supreme Court, and in the Army will all die the death of a dog." Narsinghanand's statements were made in response to questions posed about the court proceedings in the Haridwar hate speech cases. He was arrested for the vitriolic speeches at Haridwar Dharam Sansad.

SC refuses to entertain plea to censor Kangana posts

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday refused to entertain a plea seeking censorship of actress Kangana Ranaut's all future statements on social media, clubbing multiple FIRs lodged against her for remarks against the Sikh community and investigation by Mumbai police. It asked the petitioner either to ignore the utterances made by her or avail remedy under law. The bench also said that the petitioner, a member of the Sikh Community, as a public cannot seek clubbing of multiple FIRs, and only the accused or informant can seek such remedy. A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and Bela Trivedi told petitioner Sardar Charanjit Singh Chanderpal, an advocate, appearing in person that remedy which he was seeking cannot be granted under Article 32 petition and he has to pursue relief under the criminal law. "There are two possible solutions. Either you ignore the utterances made by her or avail remedy under law. We respect the communi-



ty. We respect your faith...By speaking these utterances you are doing more disservice to the cause. Don't try to prejudice the mind of the court. Don't politicise it. We have read these utterances in your file. You don't need to speak up," the bench told Chanderpal, when he tried to read the remarks which Ranaut had made on social media. Chanderpal said that he has filed an intervention application in the FIR quashing petition of Ranaut and is pursuing it. The bench then ordered, "As regards to first relief is concerned, the petitioner-in-person states that he has already adopted proceedings for the purpose of availing of his remedies in accordance with law by instituting a private complaint. In view of the invocation of the remedy by the petitioner in person, we, therefore, request this court to treat the petition in so far prayer A (censoring social media posts) is concerned as being disposed of without being expressed any opinion by this court at the present stage." Chanderpal said that the actress is going on and on with her "outrageous" and "defamatory" statements that "Sikh Farmers were Khalistani Terrorists" and tried to portray the community as "anti-national".

CANCELLATION OF SPECIAL TRAINS

In order to further strengthen the infrastructure, Northern Railway will undertake the Engineering and OHE works on DN line between Rohtak and Shakurbasti stations over Shakurbasti-Bathinda section. To execute this work a 4 hrs. Power and Traffic Block will be taken on 23.01.2022. Consequently the following trains will temporarily be affected as under:-

Train Number and Name	Date of Cancellation (from originating station)
04453 New Delhi - Rohtak EMU Special	23.01.2022
04456 Rohtak - Delhi Jn. EMU Special	23.01.2022

For any kind of information such as detailed Time-Table of stations enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

All norms of the State and Central Government regarding COVID-19, may please be followed in the trains and at the Railway stations. All other precautions associated with COVID-19 should also be ensured.

RAILMADAD HELPLINE NO. 139

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Press N.I.T. No. 49(2021-22)

S. No	Name of work	Estimated Cost (In Rs.)	Date of release of tender in e-procurement solution	Last date/time of receipt of tender through e-procurement solution
1	Replacement of water line for removing contamination through 300,200,150 & 100 mm dia DI water line at Block No. 5(Upper portion) Dakshinpur Extn. under EE(M)-47.	57,38,003/-	2022_DJB_215150_1 20.01.2022	01.02.2022 up to 3.00 pm
2	Replacement of old damaged water line 350mm dia, 150mm dia & 100mm dia at F-6 to F-13, B-206 to B-216 and D 8 to fire station Okhla Phase-I at Tughlakabad Constituency under EE(M)52.	33,08,397/-	2022_DJB_215150_2 20.01.2022	01.02.2022 up to 3.00 pm
3	Improvement of sewerage system by replacement of badly silted up and damaged sewer line from H.No. 400 to 437,443 to 512, 513 to 590, 595 to 616 in K Block Dakshinpur In Dr. Ambedkar Nagar Constituency under EE(M)-48.	40,90,339/-	2022_DJB_215150_3 20.01.2022	01.02.2022 up to 3.00 pm
4	Improvement of sewerage system by replacement of badly silted up and damaged sewer line from H.No. 120 to 125, 115 to 117 in Khanpur Village in Dr. Ambedkar Nagar Constituency under EE(M)-48.	28,40,676/-	2022_DJB_215150_4 20.01.2022	01.02.2022 up to 3.00 pm
5	Improvement of sewerage system by replacement of badly silted up and damaged sewer line from H.No.90 to 106,107, 70 to 72, 109 to 110 and 132 in Khanpur village in Dr. Ambedkar Nagar Constituency under EE(M)-48.	43,24,938/-	2022_DJB_215150_5 20.01.2022	01.02.2022 up to 3.00 pm
6	Providing & Laying of sewer lines for trapping sewerage of Nandan Camp Sangam Vihar under EE(M)49 (AC-49).	35,22,004/-	2022_DJB_215150_6 20.01.2022	01.02.2022 Up to 3.00 pm

N.I.T. No. 51 (2021-22)

1	Refurbishment of UGR's using injection system & technologies at badar pur village UGR, & DDA Janta flat UGR at Badar pur constituency AC 53 under EE(S) IV/ EE(M)- 53 (Re-invited).	26,38,512/-	2022_DJB_215176_1 21.01.2022	02.02.2022 up to 3.00 pm
2	Refurbishment of UGR's using injection system & technologies at Molar band village BPS, shamshan ghat BPS & Jatpur village bps at Badar pur constituency under EE(S) IV/ EE(M)-53 (Re-invited).	41,89,822/-	2022_DJB_215176_2 21.01.2022	02.02.2022 up to 3.00 pm

Further details in this regard may be seen at (<https://govtprocurement.delhi.gov.in>)

ISSUED BY P.R.O. (WATER)
Advt. No. J.S.V. 1036 (2021-22)

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

(Arif Hussain) AEE(T)M-11

Backlash forces Nestle to discontinue KitKat bars with Hindu deities on wrappers

New Delhi: A furious backlash in India has forced Nestle to discontinue a range of KitKat bars covered by wrappers with images of Hindu gods on them, the Daily Mail reported. The range has sparked worries that the chocolate bars adorned with the images of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Mata Subhadra would inevitably be thrown away in bins and on the streets, the report said. It is only recently that the KitKat wrapper with a picture of Lord Jagannath came into the spotlight, sparking reactions on social media. "Kindly remove the pictures...they might even get stepped on unintentionally," one Twitter user posted. Another Twitter user commented that it is an honour to have "Odisha culture and Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Subhadra on KitKat, but throwing the wrappers in dustbin or stepping on them accidentally would be an insult to the deities." The bars were introduced to "celebrate the culture",



according to Nestle. The company has since issued an apology, and withdrawn the bar range. A Nestle spokesperson said: "We do understand the sensitivity of the matter and regret if we have inadvertently hurt anyone's sentiment. We had already withdrawn these packs from the market last year. We thank you for your understanding and support. "We wanted to encourage people to know about the art and its artisans. We do understand the sensitivity of the matter and regret if we have inadvertently hurt people's sentiments." The bars were introduced to "celebrate the culture",

Ventura case: ED attaches assets worth ₹2 crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has attached assets worth Rs 2.37 crore of Jeevendra Poddar and Shipra Singh under Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in the offence of money laundering initiated against Ameet Savant and others. The attached assets are in the form of a flat in Goa, Office Space in Gera Imperium Grand in Goa and BMW cars among others. The ED had initiated money laundering investigation on the basis of FIRs dated August 21, 2019 and December 12, 2019 registered by Goa Police under various sections of IPC and Goa Protection of Interest of Depositors (In Financial Establishments) Act, 1999 against Ameet Savant, Jeevendra Poddar, Shipra Singh, and others for duping of investors to the tune of approximately Rs 21.38 crore by promising fixed returns of 2 to 5 percent per month. Investigation by ED revealed that Ameet Savant, as Authorized Representative (AR) of Ventura Securities Ltd. had collected money to the tune of Rs 21.38 crore from the complainants between 2015 and 2019. Instead of depositing the same in the demat accounts of investors maintained with Ventura Securities Ltd., had misappropriated the same by depositing in the accounts of his own similarly named proprietorship firm, VENTURA, the agency said in a statement. Savant had further laundered the money received from complainants for gambling/speculation in the securities market and lost money to the tune of Rs 9.86 crore approximately between 2016 and 2018, it further said. Further, Savant had transferred Proceeds of Crime (POC) to the tune of Rs 5.45 crore in the bank accounts of Jeevendra Poddar and Shipra Singh as commission/brokerage for sourcing clients for him, it added.

ED files chargesheet against IREO Group's MD

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has filed Prosecution Complaint (chargesheet) before Special Court at Panchkula, Haryana against Lalit Goyal, Vice-chairman cum Managing Director of IREO Group of companies named in the Panama Papers leak, and others under the Prevention of Money-laundering Act (PMLA) in a case related to multi-crore real estate scam. The ED investigation, inter-alia revealed that over 1,050 homebuyers/investors of IREO Projects were duped of Rs 1,225 crore. The Special Court, Panchkula on Friday took cognizance of the present prosecution complaint. The ED had initiated money laundering investigation on the basis of FIRs under



various Sections of Indian Penal Code (IPC) registered at various police stations across Gurugram, Panchkula, Ludhiana and Delhi. As many as 30 FIRs have been identified

Fiveriver, The Corridors, IREO City, Gurgaon Hills in Haryana and IREO Waterfront Township in Punjab, among others, had made advance payments but are yet to receive their booked flats/plots despite a lapse of more than 4-5 years," it said. Investigation further revealed that IREO Group of companies could not complete the projects due to diversion and siphoning of funds. Customer receipts to the tune of Rs. 1,225 Crore have been diverted outside India in the form of redemption / purchase/transfer and buy-back of shares violating the FDI policy and other laws, it said. "The modus operandi adopted by the group includes routing of funds to India from various entities based in tax havens like British Virgin Islands, Mauritius, recording of fictitious expenses in the books of account, writing off project in progress, interest free loans and advances to sister concerns and round tripping of funds through shell companies and creation of assets within and outside India," it said. Investigation further revealed that Lalit Goyal is "settler and named beneficiary" of an overseas Trust which owns and controls entities holding assets outside India. Recent Pandora Papers Leak has also named four entities (which are beneficially owned by Lalit Goyal) which are holding assets of more than USD 77.73 million (Rs. 575 crore approximately) overseas, it added. Goyal, was arrested on November 16 last year after a Look Out Circular (LOC) was issued against him and has since been in judicial custody. In the matter, searches were also conducted on November 22, it added.

GOOD GOVERNANCE INDEX

J&K first UT to have GGI

Union HM Amit Shah to release index for 20 districts today

PNS ■ JAMMU

The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir is set to witness cut throat competition among different district headquarters as the Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah is set to release the District Good Governance Index for 20 Districts on Saturday.

The exercise on formulation of District Good Governance Index was set in motion in July, 2021 which has now been completed and Jammu & Kashmir will become the first Union Territory in the country to have Good Governance Index.

The index of Good governance has been prepared after assessing the different aspects of development and district administration in sectors such as agriculture, commerce and industry, human resource development, public health, public infrastructure and util-

ities, economic governance, welfare and development, public safety, judiciary, and citizen-centric governance.

The maiden event is being organized jointly by the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances (DARPG), GOI and Jammu & Kashmir Institute of Management, Public Administration & Rural Development in association with the Centre for Good Governance, Hyderabad.

Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir and Dr Jitendra Singh, Union Minister for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions are also expected to address the event.

The District Good Governance Index of Jammu and Kashmir was prepared by DARPG in collaboration with Government of Jammu and Kashmir in pursuance of the announcements made in the "Behatar e-Hukumat - Kashmir

Aelamia" resolution adopted on July 2, 2021 in the Regional Conference on Replication of Good Governance Practices held at Srinagar.

The District Good Governance Index of Government of Jammu and Kashmir represents a major administrative reform in benchmarking good governance at district level and a significant step for timely collation and publication of statistics at State/ District level. The District Good Governance Index is a milestone and it is expected that it will provide a robust framework for evidence based assessment of the performance of all the districts in Jammu & Kashmir.

The Chief Secretary Government of Jammu & Kashmir Arun Kumar Mehta and V. Srinivas, Secretary DARPG, Government of India will also be addressing the event. The event will be attended by Senior Officials of

Government of Jammu and Kashmir, District Collectors and Chief Planning Officers of Districts. Secretaries of Planning and Secretaries of Administrative Reforms of all State/ UT governments and District Collectors of non-election bound States have also been invited to participate in the event by video conferencing.

During the occasion, a presentation on formulation of District Good Governance Index will be made by Centre for Good Governance, Hyderabad. This will be followed by district presentations by selected 12 District Development Commissioners, who will be showcasing achievements of various sectors. Thereafter a panel discussion will be held on DGGI-A Way Forward for futuristic 2.0 version of DGGI for measuring and benchmarking performance and improvement of Districts in future as well.

'Netaji statue a damage control exercise' TMC not happy with Centre's move to erect statue at India Gate

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress continued to attack the Narendra Modi Government for ignoring Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose even after the Centre's decision to install a granite statue of the legendary freedom fighter at the iconic India Gate in the national Capital.

When asked to comment on the latest development senior TMC leader and MP Saugatar Roy said, "today they are installing Netaji's statue ... if they have so much of respect for him then why they did not allow the Bengal Government to prepare a tableau on him to commemorate his 125th birth anniversary," adding the belated decision (to install his statue) had been taken as a damage control exercise.

Similarly Forward Bloc leader Naren De said 'simple installation of Netaji's statues will not suffice ... you have to follow his principles and ideas ... otherwise there are thousands of statues of this great

It's a nice gesture, better late than never: Bose's daughter

Kolkata: The daughter of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Anita Bose-Pfaff, on Friday hailed as "a nice gesture" Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement about installing a statue of the iconic freedom fighter at India Gate, and hoped it will put to rest the controversy over rejection of West Bengal's tableau for the Republic Day parade.

Welcoming the decision as "better late than never", Bose-Pfaff said the announcement took her by surprise.

"I am very happy about the decision. It is very good location. I am certainly glad that his

statue would be put up at such a prominent place. What surprises me is it came all of a sudden now. One might have prepared a bit earlier, but better late than never, I must say. I hope that the controversy about the tableau can also be put to rest in a satisfactory manner," Bose-Pfaff told PTI over the telephone from Germany, where she lives.

When asked if she thinks that the decision was taken to end the tableau controversy, she said she is not in a position to comment on it.

"I don't know. Let's put it that way", she said. **PTI**

leader throughout India ... If you really have to respect Netaji then you should follow his ideals ... he was a leader who respected all the communities ... he never mixed religion with politics." Bose had joined and built Forward Bloc after leav-

birth anniversary ... why was it not installed earlier ... they are doing it as a face saving exercise," he said.

Chowdhury would not spare the Trinamool Congress ruling out fit on different issue --- for destroying the anti-BJP forum led by the Congress in India.

"Everyone knows that only Congress can take on the BJP with the kindout outreach it has through the length and breadth of the country ... TMC cannot do a fraction of what the Congress can do to dislodge the BJP ... yet they are trying to harm the Congress by entering the States like Goa, Meghalaya where the Congress has a good support base ... The TMC is doing this to weaken the Congress and strengthen the BJP"

On the TMC keeness to ally with the Congress in Goa Chowdhury who is also the Bengal Pradesh Congress president said "today they are talking of alliance when they know that they will be rejected by the people of Goa".

BULLI BAI APP CASE

3 accused denied bail; court says their acts defamed womanhood

Mumbai: A court in Mumbai denied bail to three students arrested in the Bulli Bai app case by stating that the trio had committed serious acts of "defaming womanhood" and, therefore, in the larger interest of society the personal liberty of the accused can be curtailed.

The Bulli Bai app had made public the details of several Muslim women in a bid to malign them, allowing users to participate in their 'auction'.

Vishal Kumar Jha, Shweta Singh and Mayak Rawat were denied bail by Bandra Metropolitan Court Magistrate Komalsingh Raj on January 20, but a detailed cop of the order was made available on Friday.

While Singh and Rawat were arrested by the Mumbai police's cyber cell from Uttarakhand on January 5, Jha was nabbed from Bengaluru on

January 4.

"No doubt accused persons are students of tender age and they have fundamental right to life and liberty, but those rights are subject to reasonable restrictions. They were arrested for collection of evidence relating to non-bailable offence and, hence, their arrest is not in violation of any law," the magistrate said in the order.

"They were found to have committed serious acts defaming womanhood. The larger interest of society is at stake. Therefore, their personal liberty can be said to be curtailed following due process of law," the magistrate said.

The court also noted there was "some ill-intention" on part of the creator and followers of the app as well as persons propagating and disseminating information about women of a

particular religion.

Stating that, prima facie, the involvement in of the accused is noticed, the court said, "The disputed fact is only in respect of exact role played by them. It is contended on behalf of the applicants that they are just followers and disseminated the information containing its link. Even if it is presumed they are just followers/subscribers of the application, at this stage it cannot be said they are innocent."

The court further said records showed their "active involvement" in propagating and disseminating the information/data relating to the women.

Meanwhile, accused Vishal Kumar Jha has moved sessions court for bail, and his plea is likely to be heard on Monday.

In the bail application, moved through his lawyer

Clubhouse App chat case: Mumbai Police arrests three from Haryana

Mumbai: Mumbai police have arrested three persons from Haryana in connection with the chat on Clubhouse app, in which obscene comments were allegedly made against Muslim women, an official said on Friday. Personnel of the cyber police station of the Mumbai crime branch made the arrests late on Thursday night, he said. Two of the accused will be produced in a local court later in the day, the official said. In a tweet posted early this morning, Shiv Sena's Rajya Sabha member Priyanka Chaturvedi praised the city police for the arrests in the case. "Kudos @MumbaiPolice, they have got cracking on the Clubhouse chats too and some arrests have been made. Say no to hate. #Clubhouse," she said in the tweet. On Wednesday, the Delhi police had written to the Clubhouse app and search engine Google, seeking details about the organiser of the alleged audio group chat in which "obscene comments were made against Muslim women". **PTI**

Shivam Deshmukh, the accused claimed he had been "falsely implicated in this case".

"The accused hails from a respectable family hav-

ing deep roots in the eyes of society and any such act as alleged by the present complainant is beyond imagination," Jha's plea said. **PTI**

Four hurt in parcel bomb blast in Bengal

Kolkata: Four persons were injured, three critical when a parcel bomb exploded at a shop in Hembatabad town of North Dinajpur district bordering Bangladesh in North Bengal, police said.

All the injured had been admitted to the Raiganj super-specialty hospital.

"The incident took place when a parcel (packet) sent in the name of one Bablu Chowdhury a medicine retailer was opened by him," said a local adding three onlookers too were injured in the blast.

"The packet was delivered to me by an unknown toto driver," said one of the injured persons adding "out of curiosity the injured person opened it and the thing exploded in his face." **PNS**

CBI probe into actor SSR's death was a hoax, says Maha Cong leader

Mumbai: Maharashtra Congress general secretary Sachin Sawant on Friday said the CBI probe into actor Sushant Singh Rathod has been a hoax and a disgrace to the renowned institution.

Taking to Twitter, Sawant said that at least 534 days after the CBI took charge and 474 days since the AIIMS ruled out murder in the case of Rajput's death, the investigation has been a hoax and disgrace to the renowned institution.

The Congress leader took to social media to pay tribute to the actor on his birth anniversary.

"Tribute to a talented actor #SushantSinghRajput on his birth anniversary. His unfortunate death was horribly misused by Modi govt & BJP for cheap electoral gains in Bihar. Cheap

stunt to defame & destabilise MVA govt," Sawant said. "534 days of CBI took charge & 474 days since the AIIMS ruled out murder.

CBI, which shows extraordinary efficiency in investigating matters related to opposition leaders, continues to drag its feet on the SSR case.

This investigation has been a hoax & disgrace to this renowned institution," he tweeted.

The 34-year-old actor was found dead in his apartment in Bandra on June 14, 2020. Starting with the Mumbai Police, Enforcement Directorate (ED), Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) were brought in to investigate various angles in the actor's death. **PTI**



An artist prepares a sculpture of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose ahead of his 125th birth anniversary, in Kolkata on Friday **PTI**

Security situation in J&K reviewed ahead of R-Day

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Ahead of the Republic day celebrations a Core Group consisting of top officials of Civil Administration, Intelligence Agencies and security forces Friday reviewed the security situation in Kashmir at Badami Bagh Cantonment. The meeting was co-chaired by the General Officer Commanding, Chinar Corps, Lt Gen DP Pandey and Director General of Police, Dilbag Singh.

The core group discussed fresh strategies of the terrorist organizations and their handlers including use of Hybrid terrorist and targeting of soft targets. 15 terrorists killed in 2021 were fresh names not on the security forces radar.

The officials stated that the ceasefire has improved the security situation along the border, however, intelligence inputs of terrorist launch pads

and terrorist training activities in Pakistan indicate the need to be alert along the Line of Control. On the Line of Control, late snow has kept the infiltration routes open for a longer time, however effective domination has ensured decrease in overall infiltration including those from South of Pir Panjal. The vigil on the Line of Control against infiltration of men, drugs and weapons is continuing.

According to a Defence spokesman the officials shared the challenge of propaganda of the nexus through internet and social media. Sadly, these efforts include propaganda to legitimize killing of Kashmiri civilians by the terrorists. "Deliberations were also focused on the use of social media to spread disinformation. The officials present in the meeting observed joint efforts were needed to counter it by exposing fake news, booking of



radicals trying to foment unrest and proactive sharing of information by state agencies.

The spokesman said, "The setting up of the State Investigative Agency and the increased booking by NIA is showing the impact of focused intelligence and investigation efforts. These efforts have been effective in targeting drug, hawala and the OGWs networks. Legal action on those willfully harbouring terrorists is being increased as the harbourers have direct involve-

ment in terror activities. The DGP and the Corps Commander commended the officials present on improved security indicators. They appreciated that post the abrogation of Article 370, certain benchmarks were set which have been achieved successfully for the restoration of peace and prosperity in the region. The DGP stated that reduction in local terrorist recruitment is one parameter that all must approach with continued focus. A special mention was made

on the measures taken to minimize the collateral damage in operations despite risk to own soldiers. He recommended continued efforts to give chance of surrenders to local terrorists to give them a second chance at living a fruitful life. The Corps Commander called upon all to treat 2022 as a transformative year where common man used to zero civilian casualties in 2021 should see 2022 as the year when things turned good for the long term. He cautioned the trend of the terrorists to use urban areas with thick built up area for operations as they provide more avenues to hide or escape and puts higher onus in security forces to exercise restraint to avoid collateral damage. He called for continued efforts along with the civil society to counter the separatist propaganda and break the cycle of violence for long term peace in Kashmir.

COVID BULLETIN

Covid-19 cases continue to rise in Kerala, over 41K logged in 24 hrs

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Though Kerala's Department of Health brought down the number of samples tested on Friday to 95,218, the Covid-19 cases continued to remain unabated in the State. A total of 41,668 persons were diagnosed with the pandemic during the last 24 hours and the Test Positivity Rate surged to 43.76 per cent. A total of 51,607 persons succumbed to the pandemic in the State till Friday evening, according to a release issued by Veena George, minister of health.

The Government of Kerala suffered a setback on Friday as a Division Bench of the Kerala High Court asked the Kasaragod district administration not to allow any public meetings attended by more than 50 persons. Though the

District Disaster Management Authority had issued an order limiting the number of persons that could assemble for any meeting to 50, the district collector reportedly under political pressure issued a new order stating that the number of persons that could be allowed to attend public meetings should be decided based on the Test Positivity Rate as well as the number of beds available in the district.

A Public Interest Litigation filed in the High Court on Thursday had pointed out the restrictions were compromised possibly to facilitate CPI(M) district meetings. It has been argued by the petitioner that the Chairperson of the Disaster Management Authority can only amend his orders on certain new circumstances for the purpose of prevention of dis-

asters or their mitigation.

The Kasaragod district meeting of the CPI(M) was underway at Kasaragod in violation of all safety protocols when the High Court delivered its interim order. "What is so special about the political party meetings? The number of persons who could attend the Republic Day itself has been restricted to 50," said the Division Bench.

Taken aback by the High Court order, the State leadership of the CPI(M) decided to hold the Thrissur district committee meeting which began on Friday. Though Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan was scheduled to be present in Thrissur for the three day event, his hospitalization in USA has led to the cancellation of the public meetings which were to be held on Friday and Sunday. **PTI**

Meghalaya CM tests +ve day after meeting Amit Shah

Shillong: Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Friday tested positive for COVID-19, a day after meeting Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma in Delhi. Sangma urged everyone who has come in contact with him to isolate themselves and get tested if necessary. "I have tested positive for COVID-19. I am isolating myself for the required time. I have mild symptoms. All those who came into contact with me last few days are requested to observe their symptoms and test if necessary," he tweeted.

Sangma and Sarma had met Shah on Thursday to submit reports on the amicable resolution of dispute in a few areas along the Meghalaya-Assam inter-state boundary. **PTI**

Daily Covid positivity rate shoots up to 30% in AP as over 13,000 test +ve in 24 hours

Amaravati: The daily infection positivity rate shot up to 30 per cent as 44,516 tests turned out 13,212 Covid-19 positive cases in Andhra Pradesh in the 24 hours ending 9 am on Friday. Consequently, the number of active cases climbed to 64,136.

The state reported five fresh Covid-19 fatalities and 2,942 recoveries in 24 hours, the latest bulletin said.

The cumulative case count is now 21,53,268, recoveries 20,74,600 and deaths 14,532, the bulletin added.

Visakhapatnam district reported the highest of 2,244 fresh coronavirus cases and three deaths in 24 hours.

Chittoor district registered 1,585 more cases and one death. Anantapuram added 1,235. Srikakulam 1,230, Guntur 1,054 and SPS Nellore 1,051 new cases. SPS Nellore also reported one death in a day. Kurnool logged 961, East Godavari 816, Prakasam 772, Vizianagaram 681, Kadapa 649, West Godavari 596 and Krishna 338 fresh positives. **PTI**

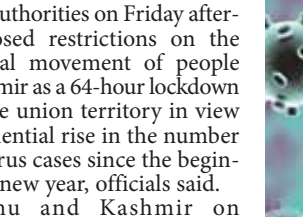
Curbs imposed amid case surge in Valley

Srinagar: Authorities on Friday afternoon imposed restrictions on the non-essential movement of people across Kashmir as a 64-hour lockdown began in the union territory in view of an exponential rise in the number of coronavirus cases since the beginning of the new year, officials said.

Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday recorded 5992 fresh cases of coronavirus -- the highest single day spike since the pandemic began.

There are 31,044 active cases in the UT. Police vehicles fitted with public address systems announced the restrictions at several places across the valley in the afternoon after the government ordered complete restriction on non-essential movement during from 2 pm on Friday till 6 am on Monday in the entire Jammu and Kashmir, the officials said.

Shops and other business establishments in the city and elsewhere in the valley -- which had opened this morning -- were forced by police to shut in view of the restrictions, they



said.

The police closed the markets and asked people to return to their homes. After the movement of people early in the morning, the police erected barricades at several places in the city here and other areas of the valley and the movement of public was restricted, the officials said.

They said only employees and emergency cases were allowed to move and all other non-essential movement was restricted.

The district authorities appealed to the people to cooperate with the administration and curtail their movement in view of the rising cases. **PTI**



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PAPER WITH PASSION

The medium

To teach in English or in mother tongue? A multilingual approach is the answer

The Telangana Government has decided to introduce English as a medium of instruction in Government schools from the next academic year. The State language, Telugu, will be parallelly available as the other medium of instruction. On the face of it, there is a ready-made explanation for the change. More and more parents of children in Government schools of Telangana feel the kids, when they reach the college level, fail to catch up with the standards of English-medium students. Secondly, private schools, hitherto limited to the urban centres with their English-medium education, have of late mushroomed across rural Telangana offering education in the English medium. That has led to a near-exodus from Telugu-medium Government schools, many of which have either closed down or merged with bigger schools, or relocated for want of students. The Government in any case runs a few residential schools with English medium and thinks offering English medium across the State would not be much of an issue. The problem the Government faces is finding teachers who can teach in English. They are scarce. The majority of the teachers is proficient in Telugu. The Government has to re-train these teachers — a tough task — and encourage prospective teachers to take up B Ed courses in English. But by and large, not many eyebrows are being raised as the English medium creeps into the Government school system in Telangana where 'going to America' is a popular cry and Telugu-medium students shell out big money to enrol in private English-language courses.



The issue, however, points to a disturbing fact. Even after 75 years of Independence, we are stuck with basic stuff, like what should be the medium of education in our schools. We are still debating whether children should be taught in English or their mother tongue. We

are also not sure whether mother tongue constitutes languages or dialects, too. For instance, millions speak Bhojpuri but it is considered a dialect of Hindi. Only last year, a Minister in Bihar mooted the idea of making the "mother tongue of the region" the medium of teaching. It just shows India never had an exhaustive debate on the subject. Linguists backing cognitive education insist that children learn skills in their mother tongue, a language they grow up with. The aspirational, social-empowering, rights-based argument favours English because it is the language that works in the world. Thus, the medium of instruction carries the baggage of ideology and elitism in the world's largest multi-lingual federation that is India. In contrast to parents' eagerness for their children to be taught in English, the Centre's National Education Policy (NEP) largely prefers the mother tongue. The answer is a bilingual or, preferably, a multilingual approach. Technology makes it possible. In a country where most children live their lives in two or three languages, multi-lingual teaching methods provide a level playing field for diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds while reconciling the desires of both parents and the NEP.

PICTALK



A troupe of folk singers during a rehearsal on the Red Road for upcoming R-Day function, in Kolkata

PTI

Ill at ease

As Kerala grapples with rising COVID cases, its 'immaculate health care' balloon has burst

As the number of daily COVID-19 cases soared to 46,487 on Thursday, Kerala's boast of being a role model for health care came crashing down like a pack of cards. The death toll in the State till Thursday stood at 51,501. Kerala has not been free from the pandemic's onslaught since India's first COVID-19 case was diagnosed in the State in early 2020. However, the State administration-sponsored media blitzkrieg portrayed an "all is well" image. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, who is currently recuperating in a US hospital, had addressed the media daily to tell the world that Kerala was the only State taking on the pandemic by the horns. The daily briefings, which were telecast by all satellite news channels, were used by Vijayan to campaign for the 2021 Assembly election. He claimed that Kerala was receiving global acclaim for its health care system and other countries were emulating its example. But after the LDF retained power following the 2021 Assembly election, he discontinued the practice of addressing the media daily; the opportunist in Vijayan the politician chose to ignore people as the next major election is due only in 2024.



When the cases of COVID-19 surged, the Government turned to blaming people for the transmission of the virus. The truth, however, is that no worthwhile efforts were made to study the pattern in the spread of the disease. The State Government continued to tom-tom and live by its past laurels, when some agencies had praised the Kerala model of health care. The health department was complacent throughout this period, and manipulated figures failed to cover up the administration's malpractices. A 600-bed COVID hospital at Kasaragod, built by the Tatas and handed over to the Government in early 2021, is yet to become fully operational. The Government doctors were on a path of agitation for the last one year, demanding restoration of allowances which were cancelled citing financial crunch. The much-touted Kerala model was virtually a red herring spawned by friendly media. EMS Namboodiripad and C Achutha Menon, the Communist Chief Ministers of the State, used to fly to Romania and East Germany for medical treatment while Vijayan and his conscience-keeper Kodiya Balakrishnan prefer the "imperialist" US as their medical caretaker. It's time for the Comrades to see the writing on the wall, isn't it already?

Afghan women's rights are still far

The Taliban's recent announcements fail to inspire confidence and don't go far enough to impress the international community



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

Two news items, published in newspapers on January 20, 2022, merit attention. The first by AFP, carried in the Delhi edition of a leading daily, is about Acting Afghan Prime Minister Mohammad Hassan Akhund's appeal on January 19 to Muslim countries "to take the lead and recognise us officially". He was speaking at a conference to address Afghanistan's massive economic problems. The second, by PTI, featured in the Delhi edition of *The Pioneer*. It cited Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Xiao Lijian as saying at a media briefing on January 18 that he hoped that the Afghan side would respond further to the international community's expectations that it would "establish an open and inclusive political architecture, adopt moderate and prudent domestic and foreign policies, firmly combat all sorts of terrorist forces" and be "on friendly terms with other countries, especially its neighbours and integrate into [the] international family at an early date".

The statement, made following a mention of the Taliban seeking China's help to get global diplomatic recognition, clearly indicated that the world did not think that they had established an "inclusive" Government or that their policies towards women would not be a repeat of the horribly repressive ones that marked their earlier stint in power from 1996 to 2001. And this, when they had promised that women would enjoy all the rights to education and work available under Sharia law.

In fact, the UN and its bodies have, on several occasions, asked the Taliban to implement their promises and made critical observations about their actions. Its secretary-general, Antonio Guterres, told reporters on October 7 last year, "I am particularly alarmed to see promises made to Afghan women and girls by the Taliban being broken." He added, "I strongly appeal to the Taliban to keep their promises to women and girls and fulfil their obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law." Speaking at the Human Rights Council, an inter-govern-



mental body within the UN system responsible for promoting and safeguarding human rights, Michelle Bachelet, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, said on September 13, 2021, "My office has received credible allegations of reprisal killings of a number of former ANSF (Afghan National Security Forces) personnel, and reports of officials, who worked for previous administrations, and their family members being arbitrarily detained.... In some cases, the officials were released and, in others, they were found dead." Bachelet also highlighted "deeply troubling information" about Taliban raids on offices of some advocacy groups.

The UN bodies have acted. On September 17, the Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution asking the Taliban to establish an inclusive Government that has "the full, equal and meaningful participation of women" and upholds human rights. The Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on October 7 to have, from March 2022, a special rapporteur, supported by UN experts, on the ground to monitor the human rights situation in Afghanistan.

There are some indications



THE FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT DOESN'T MENTION THE PRECISE DATE WHEN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES WILL REOPEN, NOR DOES IT MENTION WOMEN'S RIGHT TO WORK. CLEARLY, NEITHER ANNOUNCEMENT MEANS MUCH

that the Taliban are reacting. Abdul Baqi Haqqani, Minister for Higher Education, announced at a press conference in Kabul on January 12 that the Government would soon reopen public universities for male and female students. He also announced that these students would be segregated and cited Afghanistan's economic crisis and the lack of separated classes for male and female students, as reasons for the delay.

Earlier, in a decree on December 3 in the name of the Acting PM, the Taliban had stated that a "woman is not a property, but a noble and free human being; no one can give her to anyone in exchange for peace...or to end animosity". Both women and men, it had added, "should be equal" and that "no one can force women to marry by coercion or pressure". The decree also enabled a widow to re-marry 17 weeks after her husband's death — against the longstanding Afghan tribal custom of her marrying one of her husband's brothers or relatives after his death. Further, the Taliban leadership has reportedly ordered Afghan courts to treat women fairly, especially in cases of widows seeking inheritance as next of kin. The announcement also cites the

Taliban as saying they had asked their Ministers to spread awareness about women's rights across the population.

Significantly, the first announcement does not mention the precise date when public universities will reopen. Nor does it mention women's right to work. The third *sura* of the *Koran* (ayats 193 and 194) forbids the wasting of anyone's — whether a man or woman's — labour. The fourth *sura* (ayats 36 and 37) says, "To the men a share of what they have earned, and to the women a share of what they have earned..." (translation from *The Koran Interpreted* by Arthur J Arberry). The second announcement says nothing about women's right to education and work, which are crucial issues with the international community. Also, the rights the decree announces regarding marriage have all been enshrined in Islamic jurisprudence since the time of Prophet Mohammad. Clearly, neither announcement means much and is unlikely to impress the international community sufficiently for the purse strings to be loosened generously or recognition to be forthcoming soon.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MAJOR MIDAIR COLLISION AVERTED

Sir — A major midair collision was averted earlier this month in Bengaluru's skies as two aircraft of the same airline, which had taken off almost simultaneously from the city's Kempegowda International Airport, almost brushed against each other. While one of the planes was headed for Kolkata, the other aircraft was flying passengers to Bhubaneswar. It was a really shocking incident as to how the two aircraft were allowed to take off at the same time. It is a matter of grave concern as to how the planes were in this dangerous situation; besides, the air traffic control (ATC) didn't even report this incident nor made a record of it in the log book.

Luckily, an alert radar controller spotted the potentially grave error and immediately alerted both the pilots, thus saving hundreds of lives. In recognition of his presence of mind, both the radar controller and his swift action should be applauded and he should be suitably rewarded, too. The Government should order a thorough probe into this matter and ask the DGCA to conduct an in-depth investigation, which should be followed by taking necessary action in what could easily have been one of the biggest air safety lapses at the Bengaluru airport and in the country in recent history.

Ramesh G Jethwani | Bengaluru

ANOTHER BLOW TO SPIRIT OF FEDERALISM

Sir — It appears that the BJP Government at the Centre is determined to curtail the powers of the States by introducing controversial Acts and amendments to the Constitution and other existing regulations, despite protests from the States concerned. Before the din on the undemocratic denial of the participation of the tableaux from non-BJP ruled States like Tamil Nadu, Kerala and West Bengal in the upcoming Republic Day parade on flimsy grounds could die down, the Centre has now proposed changes to the IAS cadre rules which, when implemented, would remove power from the States and their rights as far as transfer/deputation of the

Respect history, and monuments



I'm not at all surprised to hear that after burning for five decades, the Amar Jawan Jyoti will be put out at India Gate, and merged with the National War Memorial 400 metres away. The Jyoti has a cenotaph and a monument to honour our fallen soldiers, on a marble pedestal, with a rifle and a soldier's helmet on it. The flame, lit to pay tributes to the soldiers martyred in the 1971 war, was inaugurated by then Prime Minister

Indira Gandhi on the Republic Day of 1972. Actually, one can learn from PM Narendra Modi how to kill two birds with one stone. Just as the nation commemorated 50 years of the 1971 war, the Defence Ministry announced that the Jyoti will be put out.

Similarly, in August 2021, Modi suddenly renamed the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna as Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna. All this is nothing but an attempt at "freeing" India of the Gandhi-Nehru name and legacy while, at the same time, rewriting history in favour of Modi by decisions such as building the Central Vista. Sadly, the Modi Government seems to have forgotten that respecting history involves conservation of the old while building new institutions. Hence, instead of extinguishing one memorial after the other, the Government will do better to make sincere and concrete attempts to spark the fire of patriotism among all countrymen.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

IAS cadres to the Centre are concerned. This amendment would entail the Union Government to transfer IAS officers without the consent of the States, which is clearly against the spirit of cooperative federalism. Though many Chief Ministers have raised their voice against this amendment and termed it draconian, it is alleged that the BJP Government, as usual, is going to implement the amendment unmindful of the objections. This amendment, if implemented, will be another blow to the democratic norms and cooperative federalism the country has been cherishing all these years.

Tharcus S Fernando | Chennai

OBC QUOTA IN NEET UPHELD

Sir — The Supreme Court has upheld the constitutional validity of reservation for OBC candidates and it is a right step in the right direction. While upholding the constitutional validity of reservation for OBCs in AIQ seats, the court elaborated on the concept of merit and

observed that it is not of one's own making. It noted that "reservation is not at odds with merit" in open competitive exams. While open examinations present equal opportunity to candidates, reservation ensures distribution of such opportunities, the court said.

It added that privileges of forward classes include not just having access to quality schooling and good coaching centres but also social networks and cultural communication, including good speaking skills, accent and academic accomplishments. All these ensure that children from forward classes take up jobs commensurate with the family's standing whereas first-generation learners from Other Backward Classes, who lack these, are placed at a disadvantage. Marks alone are not an indicator of merit, but also the resilience required to uplift oneself from the conditions of deprivation.

MR Jayanthi | Mumbai

SOUNDBITE

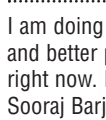
An agreement on extending a \$190 mn Line of Credit from India to Mauritius will be exchanged.



Prime Minister — Narendra Modi



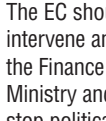
US President — Joe Biden



Actor — Parineeti Chopra



Former India captain — Sunil Gavaskar



Congress leader — Randeep Surjewala

I think Vladimir Putin will move in on Ukraine but (he) does not want a full-blown war.

I am doing bigger and better projects right now. I have a Sooraj Barjatya film and Sandeep Vanga's next with Ranbir Kapoor.

Only the captain has the answer as to why Venkatesh wasn't bowled even once.

The EC should intervene and direct the Finance Ministry and ED to stop politically motivated raids (on Punjab CM's relatives).

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

QUICK COMMERCE: A NEW RETAIL MANTRA

Essentially large warehouses, dark stores enable fast delivery of goods in localities



MICHAEL CHANDA



UTTAM CHAKRABORTY

A wise person can create 'The Advantage of Adversity'. And you can very much learn this from retail marketers at this crucial juncture. Coping with the crucial situations of COVID-19, retail marketing is scaling newer heights. Business climate for retail marketing is getting conducive as there is a win-win situation for both the marketers and the clients. Today, retail industries are resorting to varied strategies to meet up consumers' demands. Moreover, the modus operandi of delivering the goods and services is becoming digitalized and even fast-paced. Consequently, understanding and innovating the retail has become a new business mantra. So much so Amazon, Flipkart, Ola, Uber, Zepto, Blinkit, Swiggy, Dunzo, Bigbasket and other business units are surprisingly found to be engaged with quick commerce companies. Owing to fasten the business, dark stores have been founded in the local area for trading



purposes. Essentially, dark stores are large warehouses that are the central points of retail distribution. They cater exclusively to local needs through online shopping. Quick commerce is indeed the next generation of e-commerce. It is an international business process that caters to the wishes of the consumers to bring instant delivery of goods. It provides instant support to the modern communities which are in dire need. Groceries, stationaries hygiene products etc., are coming under the ambit of quick commerce activities. Quick commerce websites are used to provide an online platform for various trading in the country. However, this business method helps the online shoppers to make safe purchases for their stores. Such a business model wants to be the biggest kirana store in the urban colony. It should be expressed that a dark store hits a frequency of more than 200 orders per day. The unit economics depends on the fact that there is a mixture of perishable and non-perishable in transaction. Tellingly, quick commerce remains a new and evolving business management with the effective inclusion of information technology. Many e-commerce companies are turning to social media channels such as Facebook and Instagram to showcase their vast array of products. Customization is the key of this trade. It will facilitate speed and efficiency. Quick commerce addresses are meaningful. The customers can use their mobile devices for shopping. However, quick commerce can invite online fraudulent activities. Credit card frauds are persistent in online businesses. It is apparent that quick commerce or electronic commerce is above all a commercial transaction over the Internet. It is a space mainly to watch out for logistics and e-commerce players. The expectations are likely to settle in at a sweet spot of thirty minutes' delivery or so. According to industry players, ten minutes' delivery model will see rationalization over time. Subscription-based e-commerce is another new venue that is being explored. It customers to subscribe to a product on a recurring basis depending on their need. However, the local kirana stores in the local area lose business due to the rise of dark stores that modernises the trading process. The local businessmen cannot afford to make big capital for having dark stores. These stores are losing customers due to the higher discount offerings of the companies. The companies have appointed a number of bikers and cyclists to deliver the commodities to the customers from dark stores. The corporate giants should pay minimum heed to the interest and survival of owners of kirana stores.

(Chanda is an author-activist and works as an advocate at High Court, Calcutta. Chakraborty teaches at Jaipuria Institute of Management, Lucknow. The views expressed are personal.)

Cinema ticket pricing vs bloated film costs



RAMACHANDRA MURTHY KONDUBHATLA

The Andhra Govt has issued an order fixing slabs for tickets in cinema halls in municipal corporations, municipalities, *nagar panchayats* and village *panchayats*

Two controversial Government Orders issued by the Andhra Pradesh Government related to entertainment and culture have created a lot of heat. The first GO issued in April 2021 was aimed at regulating film industry. The second one was recently issued banning a popular and message-oriented stage play 'Chintamani'. Both the issues could have been dealt with skilfully had the Government consulted the stakeholders before taking the decisions.

The Government of YS Jagan Mohan Reddy which has been dabbling in controversies of all kinds has added two more, involving the film industry and stage plays.

About 170 of the 950-odd theatres in Andhra Pradesh have been closed since the GO was issued. The exhibitors say they lost hugely due to Covid during 2021 when the theatres were completely shut. They were reopened with 50 per cent occupancy on July 31, 2021. Even before that, the State Government issued GO 35 fixing slabs for tickets in cinema halls in municipal corporations, municipalities, *nagar panchayats* and village *panchayats* under economy, deluxe and premium classes for multiplex, AC theatres and non-AC theatres.

Filmmaker Ram Gopal Varma met AP Information, public relations and cinematography minister Perni Venkataramaiah (Nani) and told him that the Government has no business to intervene in this issue. It is for the exhibitors and audience to decide the price of tickets. Pawan Kalyan, film hero-cum-politician (president of Jan Sena which has alliance with the BJP) was rather aggressive in his criticism. He said since the Government has no money, it is indulging in online ticketing and fixing ticket prices. Minister Nani asked the actor why would the government which has no money would reduce the ticket price instead of increasing. Senior actor, Pawan Kalyan's elder brother and former union minister Chiranjeevi tried to break the ice when he travelled to Amaravati to meet Jagan Mohan Reddy over lunch on last Thursday. Some news channels and newspaper said Chiranjeevi was offered a Rajya Sabha seat by the YSRCP chief which was promptly and curtly denied by the mega star. He said the problem would be resolved soon.

What is the problem? Is it peculiar to Tollywood? So, it appears. The problems in the industry started with stardom. At least six stars today charge a fee of ₹45 crore each for a movie. Heroines also are paid in crores, though their remuneration is nowhere near the actors'. Directors don't take all the remuneration by cheque or cash but ask for share in the revenue area wise. Together they eat away three-fourth of the budget.

Persons working in 24 crafts in films get a pittance. The presence of Chiranjeevi, Prabhas, Mahesh, Pawan Kalyan, NTR (Jr) and Ram Charan Teja makes the budget



THE PRESENCE OF CHIRANJEEVI, PRABHAS, MAHESH, PAWAN KALYAN, NTR (JR) AND RAM CHARAN TEJA MAKES THE BUDGET OF ANY FILM CROSS ₹100 CRORE. IN ORDER TO EARN THAT KIND OF MONEY, THE EXHIBITORS ORGANISE BENEFIT SHOWS AND EXTRA SHOWS TO COLLECT MORE. FOR BENEFIT SHOWS, THE PRICE OF THE TICKET WOULD BE ABOVE ₹1,000 FOR BIG-TICKET MOVIES

(The writer is Editor, Primepost, the news website based out of Hyderabad. The views expressed are personal.)



of any film cross ₹100 crore. Each actor acts in one movie in one or two years.

In order to earn that kind of huge money the exhibitors organize benefit shows and extra shows to collect more. For benefit shows, the price of the ticket would be above ₹1000 for big-ticket movies in which one of these stars acts.

If you have two stars like NTR (Jr) and Ram Charan Teja and a star director such as Rajamouli of Bahubali fame, as in RRR (Raudram, Ranam and Rudhiram), the budget would be around ₹300 crore. The film RRR was supposed to be released on January 7 after three postponements. Some other films slated to be released on Sankranti postponed their dates thinking that RRR would be released by then. The release of SarkaruvariPaata (featuring Mahesh Babu) was put off till April 1 and BhimlaNayak (Pawan Kalyan, Rana) till February 25. It happened because when a big budget film, such as RRR, is released, it is exhibited in most of the theatres for one week with special shows and higher ticket prices to earn back the huge investment. The poor and the middleclass among the audience are made to pay through their noses to pay to the stars. During that week no theatres would be available for other films.

Small cinema which used to flourish earlier has been thoroughly discouraged. Small producers have to depend on OTT platforms or sale of the cyber rights. The remuneration for artists is far less in Kannada, Malayalam and

Marathi movies.

Once late Raj Kumar, the Kannada Kanteerava, invited all Kannada producers, directors and exhibitors to his residence, gave them sumptuous dinner and politely asked them permission to raise his remuneration by ₹25,000 since he has a number of children. The guests were stunned and told him he could enhance his fee by lakhs.

The late NTR acted for twenty years for less than a lakh of rupees for a film. The days of NTR, ANR, Sobhan Babu and Krishna were golden for Tollywood. Beside the heroes, actors, directors, technicians and other craftsmen used to live happily. If the prices of tickets are low, small movies can get theatres and reasonable revenue. Some exhibitors went to AP High Court which asked the government to appoint a committee to study the issue. In the absence of compliance, the HC has stayed the operation of the GO. Then the government organized raids on theatres which were running without proper license and selling refreshments at higher prices. The result is bad blood between the government and the industry.

Meanwhile, the Telangana Government has agreed to the demand of the film industry and allowed fixing of ticket prices by the producers and exhibitors. Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao did not want any trouble on this count. The ideal solution would be for both the chief ministers of Telugu States to sit with the important persons from Tollywood to sort out the matter once for all. The remuneration of the stars, the stranglehold of four families on hundreds of theatres in both the States (Families headed by Dil Raj, Allu Aravind, Daggubati Suresh and Sunil Narang) and the unethical exploitation of the film lovers, scope for small budget film producers to survive and the welfare of technicians and others (estimated to be more than 50 thousand) have to be discussed threadbare to arrive at a comprehensive and amicable solution. Sooner it is done the better for both government and film industry.

The ban on Chintamani, the popular stage play, imposed by Rajat Bhargava, the Principal Secretary through a GO, was not warranted although the complaint of a community is genuine. The original play written by social reformer, writer and poet Kallakuri Narayana Rao, exactly one hundred years ago, was sophisticated and enlightening. It was a critique of the Devadasi system. Subbi Shetty, a character in the play, is a vaisya (bania), who loses his wealth to Chintamani and his character is used to engage the audience through his teasing chat with Chintamani's mother Srihari and sister Chitra. It is true that some actors introduced vulgarity and obscene dialogues between Subbi Shetty, Chitra and Srihari, hurting the sentiments of a community.

The Andhra government should have allowed the play to run with a condition that vulgar characters and dialogues are removed. Even today, the play has great relevance. The AP Government's decision needs to be revised.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THE DOUBLE-ENGINE GOVT PEOPLE ARE DISMANTLING EACH OTHER'S WHEELS. THE DELHI CAMP HAS SHUNTED THE CM TO GORAKHPUR. —SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF AKHILESH YADAV



THOSE NOT GETTING TICKETS TO RIDE THE DOUBLE ENGINE ARE BUYING TICKETS IN BLACK TO RIDE THE BICYCLE. —UP BJP CHIEF SWATANTRA DEV SINGH

Will Russia play the 'Cuban card'?

But Russia stopped being Communist 30 years ago

After a week of intense discussions about 'security' between Russia and the NATO countries, this is the week when the Western allies will send their written replies to Russian President Vladimir Putin. Various pundits, some of whom have actually been to Russia, warn us that there will be 'War in Europe' if Putin's demands are not met.



GWYNNE DYER

(You there, at the back. Stop giggling! This is no laughing matter! Peace is hanging by a thread!)

Historians keen for a moment in the limelight are being wheeled out to draw parallels with past diplomatic disasters like the Munich conference of 1938 (appeasement of Hitler) and Yalta in 1945 (carving up Europe and giving Stalin the eastern half in 1945).

(Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'The Shortest History of War'. The views expressed are personal.)

And this just in! Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov, just back in Moscow from the talks, told Russian television that if the talks failed, he could "neither confirm nor exclude" that Russia would send "military assets" to Cuba and Venezuela.

Wow! A dagger - no, two daggers - pointed at the heart of America (although they'll have to work on the length of the Venezuelan dagger, since it's 2,000 km. from Caracas to Miami). If that does not force the Americans to give in, what will?

I'm sorry. That's enough sarcasm. It's just that all this prancing around and mugging for the camera gets tiresome. This is a minor diplomatic spat that has been deliberately inflated far beyond its merit, and it is being taken much too seriously. Let's start with Russia play-



ing the 'Cuban card'. Cuba is still a Communist country, and Maduro's regime in Venezuela also has aspirations in that direction - but Russia, in case you've forgotten, stopped being Communist thirty years ago.

Putin's regime in Moscow is nationalist-populist, and Cuba has absolutely no motive to host Russian troops and risk triggering a confrontation with the United States. In any case

Russian troops in Cuba would pose no military threat to the United States. What are they going to do? Invade Florida?

Ryabkov's intention was obviously to do a "How would you like it if...?" on American diplomats. How would like it if there were Russian troops '90 miles from Florida' (as people used to say during the Cuban crisis of 1962), and not NATO troops 450 km. from Moscow

(which is where they are now).

The grown-up American answer to that would be "Who cares?" In real life, there are a number of troglodytes in the US Congress who would work themselves up into a lather about Russian troops in Cuba - but since the Cubans would not agree to it in the first place, it's really quite irrelevant.

Well, then, what about the alleged historical precedents: Munich and Yalta? They were both about granting a 'sphere of influence' in Europe to a great power (Germany in 1938, the Soviet Union in 1945) that could easily enforce its wishes on the ground.

Russia is effectively demanding a comparable sphere of influence in its old 'satellite' countries, which would not be allowed to have friendly foreign troops on

their soil even though they are NATO members, but it's a complete non-starter. Russia lacks the military capacity to enforce its will on the ground.

So will there be 'War in Europe', as the feverish headlines suggest? Not in the sense they imply: massive armoured forces rolling across whole countries, with the threat of nuclear war looming in the background. But there might be some shooting on or just inside Ukraine's border with Russia.

Of course, there's already a little bit of shooting along that border, in the Russian-backed breakaway provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk. As Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said on Friday, Putin may now be planning to cause a little more.

Kirby warned that Russia "has pre-positioned a group of

operatives to conduct what we call a false-flag operation, an operation designed to look like an attack on them or on Russian-speaking people in Ukraine, as an excuse to go in." He may be right - and he may be wrong. The satellites can see their location, but not their intentions.

Something has got into Putin, and he's seeking concessions that he should know he cannot extract, with threats that he cannot enforce.

It is possible that he could blunder into a local clash that would bring harsh sanctions down on Russia.

It is extremely unlikely that he would try to conquer all or even half of Ukraine.

It is almost inconceivable that this will end up with Second World War-style battles between large armoured forces.

Market selloff: Investors lose ₹10.36L cr in 4 days

New Delhi: Investors have become poorer by over ₹10.36 lakh crore in the last four trading sessions as the domestic equity benchmarks extended their losses amid weak global trends.

The Sensex and Nifty closed in the red for the fourth straight session on Friday amid continued selling by foreign institutional investors.

The BSE Sensex ended 427.44 points or 0.72 per cent lower at 59,037.18. The 30-share benchmark has lost 2,271.73 points in four sessions.

In line with the weak trend, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies plunged by a massive ₹10,36,636.17 crore in the last four trading sessions to stand at ₹2,69,65,801.54 crore.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms had reached a lifetime high of Rs 2,80,02,437.71 crore on Monday.

Barring FMCG, all BSE sectoral indices closed in the red on Friday, led by telecom, consumer durables, realty, capital goods and industrials, which shed as much as 3.03 per cent. "Indian equity markets corrected this week in

line with the global market sell-off. The rise in US bond yields and the expected tightening of monetary policy by Central Banks is weighing on investor sentiments," said Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Equity Research (Retail), Kotak Securities Ltd.

Most sectors saw profit booking. The IT sector performed poorly this week with

a negative return of around 6 per cent. "Inflationary pressure, monetary policy tightening, rising bond yields, higher crude oil prices are some key challenges for the global markets. In addition to global factors, the domestic markets would track the Q3FY22 results, management commentary and the Union Budget," Chouhan added. **PTI**

Rupee rises 8 paise to close at 74.43 against US dollar

Mumbai: The Indian rupee advanced by 8 paise to close at 74.43 against the US dollar on Friday, helped by some correction in crude oil prices and weaker greenback against key rivals.

However, the rupee's further recovery was restricted by continuous foreign fund outflows and sell-offs in domestic equities, analysts said. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 74.50 a dollar and during the day, it witnessed an intra-day high of 74.40 and a low of 74.55 against the American currency.

The domestic unit finally settled at 74.43 against the American currency, up 8 paise over its last close of 74.51. Meanwhile, the US dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against the basket of six currencies, fell 0.13 per cent to 95.61. "The Indian rupee appreciated on back of fall in crude oil prices, corporate dollar inflows along with exporters dollar selling and debt raising helped the rupee in trimming weekly losses," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities.

B2B spending in India expected to grow 10.3% in 2022: Report

New Delhi: The total business-to-business spending in India is expected to rise by 10.3 per cent in 2022 with the spend of the country's businesses growing three times faster than the expectations from its comparable peers in other countries in the third quarter of last year, according to a study.

The total business-to-business (B2B) spend for India rose 9.4 per cent in Q3 2021 on a year-on-year basis, as per the India Business Spend Indicator (IBSI) report by American Express, India and Invest India in partnership with the Centre for Business and Economic Research (CEBR).

Stating that the India spending is on the rise across nine key B2B categories, the report said, "it is expected to rise by 10.3 per cent in 2022."

The study, which interviewed 500 financial decision makers in India on how their business spending habits are changing, found bullishness and greater confidence with 74 per cent of businesses expecting to spend more on technology and 72 per cent planning to make more capital investments in 2022.

Manoj Adlakha, SVP and CEO, American Express Banking Corp, India said, "India saw the

highest B2B spending growth compared to expectations of six other major economies. This year, the total B2B spend for India is expected to rise by 10.3 per cent compared to 2021."

This, he said, "Shows that the Indian economy is very much in its bounce-back phase from the economic difficulties caused by the pandemic crisis."

The survey also reveals that some of the trends that have emerged or accelerated during the pandemic such as payments automation and new approaches to manage the supply chain are likely to stay, Adlakha added.

The trend includes benefits of digital payments, which 59 per cent of B2B sellers considered to be the speed of payment and ability to track spends, while 83 per cent of eligible respondents said that the government's 'Make in India' campaign has helped their business.

Invest India MD and CEO Deepak Bagla said the report attempts to facilitate understanding of the present state of B2B payments in the country and bring out businesses' positive response to major government policies. **PTI**

Govt launches portal to share key performance indicators of coal sector

New Delhi: The Government on Friday announced the launch of a portal, 'Koyla Darpan', to share key performance indicators related to the coal sector.

The portal was launched by Coal Secretary Anil Kumar Jain, the Ministry of Coal said in a statement.

As an initial step, the portal has key performance indicators like coal/ lignite production, coal/ lignite offtake, exploration data, central sector schemes, status of coal stock at thermal power plants, alloca-



tion of blocks, monitoring of major coal mines, and coal price, the statement said.

Senior officials of the coal ministry and PSUs (through videoconferencing) were present at the event.

Suggestions/ views were given by the officers to make the portal more user-friendly, it said. **PTI**

AIMA introduces 6-month management course for MSME promoters

New Delhi: The All India Management Association (AIMA) on Friday said it has introduced a six-month management course for promoters and managers of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

The special-purpose management training programme aims to align the knowledge and competence of MSME leaders with the new economy, AIMA said in a statement.

The launch of the course was announced at AIMA's 11th MSME Convention, which is

being held online. Addressing the Convention, AIMA President C K Ranganathan appreciated the Centre's support to the MSME sector during the COVID-19 crisis. He said that the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme for the MSMEs has saved 13.5 lakh firms from going bankrupt and saved 1.5 crore jobs. The scheme was the biggest component of the ₹20-lakh crore Atmanirbhar Bharat package of the government to help the Indian economy recover and rebuild. **PTI**

Most people feel I-T exemption limit could be raised from ₹2.5 lakh: Survey

New Delhi: A majority of respondents (64 per cent) feel that the Union Budget 2022-23, to be unveiled on February 1, will increase the basic income tax exemption limit from the current ₹2.5 lakh, according to a pre-budget survey by KPMG in India.

As many as 36 per cent of the survey respondents felt that the 80-C deduction limit of ₹1.5 lakh will be increased, while 19 per cent felt that the standard deduction could be increased for salaried class from the current ₹50,000.

Sixteen per cent of the respondents felt the Budget

could provide for tax-free allowances/ perquisites for salaried individuals keeping in mind the work from the home arrangement — provision of internet connection, furniture and earphones.

KPMG in India's pre-budget survey was conducted in January 2022. About 200 finance professionals participated in the survey.

As many as 64 per cent of the respondents said they expect the basic I-T exemption limit to be raised from ₹2.5 lakh a year.

With the government reducing the headline corporate tax rate for domes-

tic companies from 30 per cent to 22 per cent starting from the financial year 2019-20, the gap between the rates applicable to foreign companies and domestic companies has widened, the survey said.

Currently, Indian branches of foreign companies are subject to corporate tax at 40 per cent.

"A majority of respondents believe there is a need to reduce the rate applicable to Indian branches in line with the 2019 rate cuts, in order for India to remain a globally competitive investment jurisdiction," the survey added. **PTI**

Over 2,250 startups added in 2021, raised USD 24.1 bn in 2021: Nasscom-Zinnov report

New Delhi: More than 2,250 startups were added in the year 2021, over 600 more than what was added in the previous year, a report by Nasscom and Zinnov said on Friday.

The study titled 'Indian Tech Start-up Ecosystem: Year of The Titans' said with rising investor confidence, startups leveraging deep-tech, and tapping unexplored talent pool, the Indian tech startup base continues to witness steady growth. As per the report, startups raised USD 24.1 billion in 2021, a two-fold increase over pre-COVID levels.

In comparison to 2020, there was a 3X increase in number of high-value deals (deals more than USD 100 million), demonstrating investor confidence with a pool of active angel investors of more than 2,400 and a readiness to take significant risks, it said.

While the US remains the leading source of foreign direct investment in startups, worldwide involvement is also growing. About 50 per cent of the deals had at least one India-domiciled investor, it added.

The report said the startup ecosystem saw a 2X gain in cumulative valuation from 2020 to 2021, with an estimate of USD 320-330 billion, demonstrating the sector's development and recovery throughout the pandemic. It added that more than USD 6 billion has been raised via public markets with 11 startup IPOs in 2021.

In the last decade, the ecosystem has played a key role in growing direct and indirect job opportunities, providing 6.6 lakh direct jobs and more than 34.1 lakh indirect jobs. The indus-

tries that saw the most net new job creation were banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI), edtech, retail and retail tech, foodtech, SCM (supply chain management) and logistics and mobility.

On the back of internet commerce, freelancers, and service industries, indirect jobs have also recovered, it said.

"The performance of the Indian startup ecosystem in 2021 has proved the resilience and dedication being put by multiple startups across segments. The ecosystem has grown immensely and positioned itself as a vital contributor to the growth of India's digital economy," Nasscom President Debjani Ghosh said.

She added that with record-breaking funding, an increase in the number of unicorns, jobs being created in the near term, the Indian startup ecosystem's future looks even brighter going ahead in 2022. "When compared to the UK, US, Israel, and China, 2021 has been an outstanding year for the Indian startup ecosystem, with the highest growth rate in terms of deals, both in seed stage and late-stage funding, and number of startups," Zinnov CEO Pari Natarajan said.

Natarajan added that Indian firms have done an outstanding job of selling into global markets, notably in categories such as global SME and developer ecosystem.

"The fact that Indian startups are digitally native serves as an excellent model for digital native enterprises throughout the world. I believe that Indian startup ecosystem is just getting started. **PTI**

Digital healthcare services expanded

New Delhi: To provide quality healthcare services to consumers in tier 2 and beyond cities, digital healthcare platform MediBuddy launched its team of phlebotomy.

The healthcare services now include the provision of conducting various medical tests at home, along with doctor consultations and medicine delivery. "We hope our high-quality medical amenities reach more Indians at the comfort of their homes," said Satish Kannan, co-founder and CEO, MediBuddy.

Game changer management of type 2 diabetes

New Delhi: With a focus on innovating products that improve patients' lives, Novo Nordisk India launched the world's first and only "peptide in a pill", oral semaglutide, a gamechanger in diabetes management. "We are extremely proud and elated to launch oral semaglutide in India. Semaglutide in oral form will transform the management of diabetes," said Vikrant Shrotriya, corporate vice president and MD, Novo Nordisk India.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for notice of the general public that a political party is proposed to be registered by the name of **RAJYA SWARAJ PARTY**. (name of the party). The office of the party is located at **931, Indira Nagar, Dehradun - 248006 (Uttarakhand)** (give full address). This Party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951- Names/address of the office-bearers of the Party are as follows: President/Chairman : **Dr. Deveshwar Bhatt** General Secretary/Secretary : **Rameshwari Devi** Treasurer : **Satish Joshi**

If any one has any objection to the registration of **RAJYA SWARAJ PARTY** (name of the proposed Party) they may send their Objection with reasons thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party) Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice.

ASPIRe, AS-CFMS

(A Registered Society under Finance Department) Assam Society for Comprehensive Financial Management System F Block, Assam Secretariat, Dispur, Guwahati-781006 (Assam, India)

No. ASPIRe/95/2020/240 Dated: Dispur, the 20th January, 2022

Notice for Recruitment

Assam Society for Comprehensive Financial Management System (AS-CFMS) invites expression of interest from eligible candidates for employment on contractual basis.

Sr. No.	Position	CTP Range per month (in Rupees)
1	Procurement Support Specialist	1,50,000-2,15,000
2	IT Support Personnel	35,000

Detailed ReOI, Terms of Reference (ToR) and formats are available in the following link: <https://finance.assam.gov.in/portlets/as-cfms>

Sd/-
Project Director, ASPIRe (AS-CFMS)
JanaSanyog/DF/2464/21 Dispur, Guwahati-6

PUBLIC NOTICE
General Public is hereby informed that my client Sh. Mahesh Basista, S/o Rajendra Kumar and his wife Meenu, resident of 23, Sarai Kale Khan, Hazrat Nizamuddin, South Delhi, Delhi-110013 have served all their relations with their son Rohit Basista due to his bad habits and behaviour. My abandoned children have been disowned and debarred their son namely Rohit Basista from all their movable and immovable properties. Any body dealing with Rohit Basista or his wife will do so at their own risk and responsibilities. My clients will not be responsible for any act, deed or dealing done by Rohit Basista.
Yuvraj Singh (Advocate)
D/435/2016

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of ICICI Bank Ltd. that Mr. Rattan Singh Chauhan was the owner of Freehold Residential cum Commercial Property (bearing No. 77, (area measuring 100 sq. yds), situated at Panchsheel Park, Village-Jasola, Pargana Lon, Ghazabad, (U.P.); (the said property) by virtue of Sale Deed dated 14.09.2005 Registration No. 8622, and after demise of Mr. Rattan Singh Chauhan his widow Mrs. Maya Devi, & two sons namely Mr. Sandeep Chauhan & Mr. Prashant Chauhan is claiming ownership as legal heirs as per SMC dated 15.12.2018. All persons including other legal heirs if any are hereby notified that above mentioned claimants owners have to sell the said property to Mrs. Maya Devi who is taking Loan from ICICI Bank Ltd. for purchase of the said property. If anybody has any objection upon the ownership of Mrs. Maya Devi, Mr. Sandeep Chauhan & Mr. Prashant Chauhan upon the above property its Sale (Mortgage) litigation, in any kind of objection, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 10 days of the present.
Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
200, 3rd Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar, N. Delhi-15
No. 201, 4/11, 1/2027, 20, Anandapuri, New Delhi-110029

PUBLIC NOTICE
The general public is informed that my client Rajesh Saxena's S/o Late Shri Jagat Narayan Saxena and Smt. Shalini Saxena's wife, Shri Rajesh Saxena, gave their eldest son Ashwani Saxena was evicted from all movable and immovable properties and any financial transaction that our son does to someone will also be the responsibility of that person. It will make no sense to us.
—Rajesh Saxena
R/o B-282, Sector-26
Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.)

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE is hereby given that Laxmi Gupta is the absolute owner of Property bearing no. 1989/D-3/A, measuring 260 sq. yds built on Plot no. 253/2 & 254, in Narela Delhi having acquired by Sale Deed dated 23.10.03 (registration No. 24983) executed by Bhagwan Dei, whereas she have lost the following recital:
Registered Relinquishment Deed dated 6/10/2003 (registration no.23324) executed by 1.Rajinder Mangla, 2.Rajesh Mangla, 3.Meena Mangla, 4.Jugnu Mangla 5.Anurag Mangla, 6.Sushila Devi, 7.Hemlata Gupta, 8.Smt. Geeta Rani Goyal and 9.Manju Goyal relinquished their respective share in the aforesaid property in favour of Smt. Bhagwan Dei. FIR has already lodged in lieu of that dated 21/1/22.
All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage/ equitable/ registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.
Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Shop No. 5 & 6, Pkt-E, CSC, Mayapuri Vihar-I, Delhi-11, 011-43052622, 9610063351

N K Textile Industries Limited
Registered office: Omaxe Square, Plot No. 14, 5th Floor, Jasola District Centre, Jasola, New Delhi-110025
CIN: L17299DL1983PLC163230, Tel: +91 11 611 19313
Email Id: n.ktextiles123@gmail.com, website: www.nktil.com

NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that the meeting on 06/21-22 of the Board of Directors of the Company will be held on 11th February, 2022 (Friday) at the registered office of the Company at Omaxe Square, Plot No. 14, 5th Floor, Jasola District Centre, Jasola, New Delhi-110025 at 4.30 PM to discuss the following agenda items:

- To take on record the Unaudited Financial Results of the Company for the Quarter ended on 31st December, 2021 in terms of Regulation 33 of SEBI (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirement) Regulation, 2015.
 - To discuss any other business with the permission of Chair.
- By order of the Board For N K Textile Industries Limited
Dated: 21.01.2022 Sd/-
Place: New Delhi Balbir Singh
DIN: 00027438 Director

PUBLIC NOTICE

ICICI Home Finance Registered office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (East), Mumbai-400051
Corporate Office: ICICI HFC Tower, JB Nagar, Andheri Kurla Road, Andheri East, Mumbai-400059
Branch Office: 2nd floor, SCO-319, Sec -29, Gurgaon, Haryana -122001
Branch Office: Premises No. 14, 1st floor, Shankar Vihar, Vikas Marg, Delhi-110092

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from ICICI Home Finance Company Limited ("ICICI HFC") and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Anil Uniyal (Borrower) Roopal Sharma (Co-Borrower), 1093 65 A TF ST Lohns Church Compound, Ward No.1 Mehrauli Delhi-110030, Delhi, 110030. LHGU100001348294.	1942 Third Floor With Roof Rights Plot No 1942 Block J Chitrnanjan Park Delhi Chitrnanjan Park Delhi-110019. Bounded By- North: Service Lane, South: Road, East: 1941, West: 1943.	17-11-2021 Rs. 78,27,673/-	06-Oct-2021
2.	Sarvesh Sahu (Borrower), Kanchan Sahu (Guarantor), Flat Number 158 C Third Floor, Naya Khand 1 Indrapuram Near Sai Temple Sahibabad Ghaziabad Naya Khand 1 Indrapuram Near Sai Temple Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad, Ghaziabad-201010, Ghaziabad, 201010. LHLX00001302755	Plot No Gh 01A 26th Floor Block B Panchsheel Greens 1 Tower F2 Sector 16 B Noida-201307. Bounded By-North: Since Under Construction, South: Since Under Construction, East: Since Under Construction, West: Since Under Construction.	17-11-2021 Rs. 12,33,771/-	06-Oct-2021

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitization and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.
Date : January 22, 2022
Place: Delhi, Noida
Authorized Officer
ICICI Home Finance Company Limited

रजिस्ट्री सं. डी.एल.- 33004/99 REGD. No. D. L.-33004/99

भारत का राजपत्र
The Gazette of India

सी.जी.-डी.एल.-अ.- 12012022-232599
CG-DL-E-12012022-232599

असाधारण
EXTRAORDINARY
भाग II-खण्ड 3-उप-खण्ड (ii)
PART II-Section 3-Sub-section (ii)
प्राधिकार से प्रकाशित
PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY

सं. 155] नई दिल्ली, बुधवार, जनवरी 12, 2022/पौष 22, 1943
No. 155] NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY, 12, 2022/PAUSHA 22, 1943

MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
NOTIFICATION
New Delhi, the 12th January, 2022

S.O. 159(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 for Construction of Greenfield Connectivity to Jewar International Airport from DND-Faridabad-Ballabhgarh Bypass KMP Link- Spur to Delhi Mumbai Expressway under Bharatmala Pariyojana in the stretch of land from Km. 23.100 to Km. 31.195 in the District of GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR in the state of UTTAR PRADESH, 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, Additional District Magistrate, (LA) 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 this 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 in Greenfield Connectivity to Jewar International Airport from DND-Faridabad-Ballabhgarh Bypass KMP Link- Spur to Delhi Mumbai Expressway under Bharatmala Pariyojana in the stretch of land from Km. 23.100 to Km. 31.195 in the District of GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR in the state of UTTAR PRADESH.

State: UTTAR PRADESH		District: GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR			
S. No.	Survey / Plot Number	Type of Land	Nature of Land	Area (in Local Unit)	Area (in Hectare)
Taluk: Jewar					
Village: Amarpur Palaka					
1	1	Government	River	0.8822000 (Hectare)	0.8822000
2	1	Government	River	0.8822000 (Hectare)	0.8822000
3	337	Private	Agriculture	0.3030000 (Hectare)	0.3030000
4	339	Private	Agriculture	0.0164000 (Hectare)	0.0164000
5	340	Private	Agriculture	0.5513000 (Hectare)	0.5513000
6	341	Private	Agriculture	0.7118000 (Hectare)	0.7118000
7	342	Private	Agriculture	0.5617000 (Hectare)	0.5617000
8	344	Private	Agriculture	0.1063000 (Hectare)	0.1063000
9	345	Private	Agriculture	0.0299000 (Hectare)	0.0299000
10	345	Government	Banjar	0.0299000 (Hectare)	0.0299000
11	346	Private	Agriculture	0.9237000 (Hectare)	0.9237000
12	346	Private	Agriculture	0.9237000 (Hectare)	0.9237000
13	347	Private	Agriculture	0.6718000 (Hectare)	0.6718000
14	348	Private	Agriculture	0.0416000 (Hectare)	0.0416000
15	349	Private	Agriculture	0.1292000 (Hectare)	0.1292000
16	350	Government	Navin Part	0.0636000 (Hectare)	0.0636000
17	351	Private	Agriculture	0.3532000 (Hectare)	0.3532000
18	352	Private	Agriculture	0.7137000 (Hectare)	0.7137000
19	353	Private	Agriculture	0.4445000 (Hectare)	0.4445000
20	354	Private	Agriculture	0.0226000 (Hectare)	0.0226000
21	355	Private	Agriculture	0.0606000 (Hectare)	0.0606000
Village: Falaida Khadar					
1	327	Private	Agriculture	0.3572000 (Hectare)	0.3572000
				Total	8.7801
					8.7801

[F. No. NHA/CMU/MTR/DND/JewarInternationalAirport/2021/D-3A2]
RAJESH GUPTA, Director



Bollywood
 'Covid fatigue is a real thing and so is the weakness that it leaves.'
 —Swara Bhaskar

<https://www.dailypioneer.com/vivacity/>

SHORTCIRCUITS



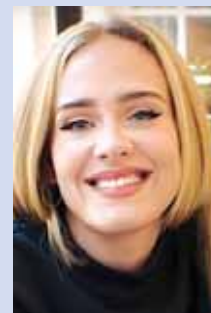
RANVEER SINGH
 My constant endeavour is such that you cannot put me in a box. I don't wish to be defined because I feel defining my fundamental nature would be limiting me. As a creative person I would like to believe that I have no limits. That the possibilities within my craft are limitless, that they be infinite.



PRATEIK BABBAR
Dhobi Ghat was a game-changer for me. Not only because it minted the fame that it did, but it also taught me a lot as an actor. There was a lot I could explore with my character, and it allowed me to learn more nuances of acting. I still can't believe it has been 11 years since the film. It feels surreal!



AMOL PARASHAR
Sardar Udham has received immense love and phenomenal response so far I am proud to be a part of this film and I am hoping that the love will continue to pour in from audiences. I thank Shoojit sir for his vision and guidance in humanising the legendary characters.'



ADELE
 I'm so sorry, but my show ain't ready. We've tried absolutely everything we can to put it together in time and for it to be good enough for you, but we've been absolutely destroyed by delivery delays and COVID.

CHRISTINA AGUILERA
 Miami is such a hotbed of incredible talent from all over the world and again, the Latin music is undeniable, there's nothing like it. So going there, when I start hearing it from all angles and everybody is speaking it, you catch up very quickly and many things are remembered from being a kid.



WILD WORLD

SNAKES SOS: GOA'S WILDEST

In their new show, wildlife activists **BENHAIL ANTAO** and **LOUISE REMEDIOS** embark on a quest to conserve the species and simultaneously bust myths around them by educating the audience that these reptiles are not the danger lurking in the dark. By **KHUSHBU KIRTI**

Wildlife activists Benhail Antao and Louise Remedios, in their new show, *Snakes SOS: Goa's Wildest*, were seen rescuing wild snake species and other undomesticated animals in Goa.

The 10-part adventure series is bringing in a spirit of adventure, thrill and adoration for wild animals. The power couple will face and rescue some of the wildest snake species in the most unusual of situations. It showcases the duo in action and giving an up-close and personal experience of their techniques in rescuing the varied snake species and other undomesticated animals through the city of Goa. It is understanding snake psychology 101, if you may.

Read on for excerpts from a candid interview with the adrenaline junkies and wildlife rescuers about insiders from their new series:

Q National Geographic has introduced an Indian avatar of the show, Snakes in the City. How is it going to be different or how are you Indianising it?

BA: *Snakes in the City*, or, for that matter, *Crocodile Hunter*, are extremely different shows. I think *Goa's Wildest* is an independent show and has everything unique about it. Right from the snakes — they are Indian species and behave differently — to the places where they're rescued from. It's more about the snakes in this programme and more about the people who are encountering the snakes.

I mean, snakes are a problem everywhere. And the way people respond, the culture shown promotes repulsion or aversion. The message that we give through this programme is subtle — I want people to watch this and find between the lines. It's pretty clear where we stand when it comes to snakes and, the term, conservation. You know, snakes are not that danger lurking in the dark anymore. Snakes never were the danger lurking in the dark. The ideology of the show is pretty different.

Q What is the aim of the show?

LR: So, first, we want to educate you about the kinds of snakes that

are in Goa because this show has been shot there specifically. And a lot of these snakes are also present in different parts of India. People assume we're either dealing with an anaconda or a rattlesnake or Black Mamba. No, you don't get those. It's cool that people are watching these programmes, but they are not aware of the many varieties of venomous, non-venomous and different kinds of snakes that exist here. We want to create awareness.

Besides that, we want people to understand that snakes are like any other animal. You don't look at them like you look at a dog or a cat, right? There's a lot of myth and mystery. In India, mythology, which is associated with a snake, makes people more intrigued and more scared of them. People are unable to distinguish between mythology and fact. So, we're trying to bust these myths. There are so many more questions associated with our mythology when it comes to snakes, which we will be answering in the show. You'll find that message in every episode.

We also want to set people on the right trend, which will be there maybe even 10 years from now, which is a conservation technique of very ethical snake-rescue, to try and impart empathy into people. Because when you can put yourself into another animal's shoe, and understand where they come from, you will then feel empathy towards them, you will then understand them, and you will start to admire them.

We want you to understand the difference between fear and danger. We're trying to conserve the ecosystem, too. If you want to conserve any kind of habitat, you need to protect the animals in them.

Q You've mentioned that there are so many myths around the species. I wanted to know, what are some myths and misconceptions around it?

BA: Yeah, that's super interesting. What most people know happens to be myths, like, for example, a very, very common myth is that a snake takes revenge. I've had people calling me up, like, you know, at three in the morning and saying, 'I



need help'. When I enquire why they say they can't sleep because they rode over a snake in the daytime and are scared it's going to come and take revenge. So, it's no longer any rescue call, it's more of a counselling call (everyone laughs).

LR: So, what happens is that there are possibilities that these snakes, during mating season, release certain kinds of pheromones and perhaps you know, another snake tracks that and comes looking for the dead snake. These are territorial animals, if they see an open territory, they might come. Also, if it's a female's hormones that are put onto your tire or tube, there's a very small chance that a male will sense that and follow. However, the snake is definitely not interested in you (chuckles). It can also be a coincidence.

BA: Funny how when people are given a choice, they will defer to the most supernatural explanation for it and the most expensive one. I heard of people who go around catching snakes and charging a huge sum of money. They feed people with all these myths, that snakes fly and coil around your neck, or that snakes dance to music.

Q Wait, snakes don't dance to music? I mean that's what the snake charmer (sapera) does, right?

LR: Haha, see! Okay, so, first of all, the snake needs to enjoy the music, right? So, when we enjoy it, we are not scared of it. The fact is that when a cobra spreads its hood, it signifies that it's scared. The hood is a form of defence. So, it is definitely not enjoying and second, most snakes do not have external ears and cannot hear audible music! They can hear very low-frequency



sound vibrations.

Now, why does it shake or give the impression that it's dancing? It's because it is scared of that flute. It is following the movement of the

hand of the snake charmer. Most of the time, the snake charmer will have a long needle with them to poke the snake so they're scared of them and their hands. It looks to us

like they're dancing, they're not.

BA: And they claim that there is a diamond in the head. I mean, that's not possible. There is no stone or precious stone. If that would've been the case, we would have been multimillionaire (giggles).

A lot of times they pluck out the teeth of these snakes. What happens is that there can be a lot of bacterial infections and the snake can die from that. So the charmers pluck out the teeth just in case they come too close to the snake. They stitch the mouth sometimes. It is extremely sad.

Q I always thought that snakes knew how to protect themselves. If somebody does something like this, don't they bite?

BA: Oh, yeah, they do bite. Even snake charmers get bitten all the time. I mean, there are snake charmers that die of snake bites and sometimes they pull out the snakes' fang but don't notice there is another fang and they've died of it.

LR: But usually a snake gets very exhausted. If you provoke the snake, initially it will try to stay away from you, you provoke it a little more, it is going to give you a warning, provoke it still further it is going to bite you with a fake bite. It doesn't want to waste its venom on you. And then you really provoke, it's going to severely bite you. When you do it repeatedly, the snake gets scared, almost traumatised and tired. They have no energy to even strike most of the time.

BA: Also, it's not that every time they strike you, there's going to be venom, they can control how much venom goes in or doesn't go. Because that venom is a very important resource. And to produce venom, it takes a lot of energy for that snake and it takes time for it to develop venom back.

Look, the snake doesn't want to bite you because it knows even if it does bite you with a full dose of venom, you can still kill it before you die. Right? It will still give you maybe like a fake strike, like a warning to leave it alone.

Q Makes sense. Tell us why did you choose Goa as the location, specifically?

BA&LR: We live in Goa. We love Goa (both laugh).

Q You are a power couple who are luxurious wedding planners in the day and deadly wildlife rescuers at night. How did this dynamic transpire?

BA: I can talk for myself. But we have been passionate about rescuing wildlife and spreading awareness. I've been doing this for the last 19 years now, spreading the message of conservation.

Over a period of time, I did engineering, I worked in a company, we joined event management,

then we got married and started our own event management company. So, all these happened along the way. But snake rescue has been the backbone. I mean, it's always been there. We never monetised it. But it's always been a passion.

LR: So, when my mom asked me about Ben, when we were dating, and what he does, I told them. My father was like, really? My mom surprised me. She said, 'you know, baby, I always thought you'll marry someone like this. You've always been one wild child. Now we're hashtag *Goa's wildest* (chortles).

Q That's one sweet story! How does it feel to have your entire passion turned into a show that the entire world is watching?

LR: I will say it's better than a dream because nobody dreams of such things as being associated with National Geographic. I remember my neighbour picked up about 50 magazines and I read them every single day because it is such a huge platform. So, when something like this happens, it is an incredible feeling — nobody plans for these things. And if you work hard, and you have a little bit of luck associated with it, as well, and you're passionate about something. I mean, this is a dream come true.

BA: This awareness programme that I've been doing for the last 15 years in schools, colleges, gatherings, and the most, I've taught like 1,000 people, but the most effective is when I'm rescuing the snake at somebody's house. If we can spread the knowledge to the entire world this way, I'm grateful and content.

Q Benhail, you said that you were in this for 19 years now. What intrigued you to get into the profession?

BA: Uhm... it never was a profession, always has been my passion. What intrigued me is I've always liked wildlife. I come from a background where in my grandfathers, my uncles were hunters. I was brought up in a way that the fear of any wildlife was not instilled into me.

When I was eight years old, I remember being called by a neighbour to go and kill a snake that had entered his bathroom. That's when I realised that killing was not the only option. I could handle the situation differently. There was no internet or books that could teach me the procedure. I've had my fair share of bites and stuff like that. Snakes don't appreciate that they are being rescued because they don't know they're being rescued. So, experimenting and not resorting to violence was how I learnt and I want to make others aware of the same.

(Watch *Snakes SOS: Goa's Wildest* on National Geographic at 8 pm, on Mondays and Tuesdays.

After a challenging two years, the film industry is once again dealing with the prospect of a possible third wave in 2022. However, given its intrinsic resilience, the industry is ticking along with many of its content creators all set to surprise the audiences with fresh themes. Here are some of the female producers and directors whose packed slates promise to bring something new to the cinema-scape this year.

Zoya Akhtar and Reema Kagti: These two powerhouse creators have already established their production house Tiger Baby as a clutter-breaker and in 2022, they are all set to bring *The Archies* on an OTT platform in a unique live-action musical



adaptation. Set in 1960s India, this project is directed by Zoya and recalls the nostalgia and innocence of *Archie* comics. This is also Tiger Baby's first solo project

Powerhouse women

Here is a pick of female producers and directors, expected to bring something new to the cinema-scape this year. By **TEAM VIVA**

though the duo will continue to collaborate with Excel Entertainment on future projects like *Made in Heaven 2*, *Jee Le Zara* (starring Katrina Kaif, Priyanka Chopra and Alia Bhatt), *Kho Gaye Hum Kahan* and *Dahaad* amongst others.

Deepshikha Deshmukh: Among the youngest female producers in the industry, Deepshikha started her career with the critically acclaimed film *Sarbjit* and even helmed big productions like *Bellbottom* which was shot and released during the pandemic. The year promises to be big for her as well, with two biggies lined



up for release. The much-awaited dystopian thriller, *Ganapath* will be released on December 23 and the yet-to-be-named *Production 41* will also release this year. This dystopian action bonanza is headlined by Tiger Shroff and Kriti Sanon while their untitled *Production 41* stars Akshay Kumar. Deepshikha has a strong foothold in the industry and her love for the environment has helped create greener film productions in India. She has also produced movies like *Jawaani Janeman*, *Coolie No. 1* among others.

Taapsee Pannu: The actor, who starred in some of the most acclaimed films in recent times, is now producing *Blurr*, a horror-thriller directed by Ajay Bahl. This official Hindi remake of the Spanish film *Julia's Eyes* is jointly produced by Pannu's Outsider Films along with Zee Studios and Echelon Productions. She also stars along with Gulshan Devaiah in this venture that promises to decisively



announce her foray into the production of unapologetically women-led themes.

Meghna Gulzar: Often described as a maverick filmmaker, Meghna Gulzar is all set to return with another unforgettable story in 2022. This time, with the biopic



Sam Bahadur which is based on the life of Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, one of India's greatest war heroes, who served as the chief of the Indian Army in 1971 during the Bangladesh Liberation War. She wields the directorial baton for this story which will see Vicky Kaul as Sam Bahadur along with Fatima Sana Shaikh and Sanya Malhotra. After *Raazi*, *Chhapaak* and *Talvar*, this is an entirely new genre for the director but she is expected to do full justice to it.

Charmme Kaur: In the post-pandemic world of borderless entertainment, the cross-pollination of talent continues across industries. The latest example is *Liger*, a sports action film, written and directed by Puri Jagannadh and produced by Karan Johar, Charmme Kaur, Apoorva Mehta, Hiroo Yash Johar and Jagannadh under the banners of Dharma Productions and Puri Connects. Charmme is already well-established as an actor across Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada cinema. To be shot simultaneously in Telugu and Hindi, the film stars Vijay Deverakonda and Ananya Panday in lead roles and is all set to release on August 25.





Sindhu enters semifinals

Sindhu will face fifth-seeded Russian Evgeniya Kosetskaya in the semifinals.

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu rallied from a game down to eke out a hard-fought win over Thailand's Supanida Katething to enter the semifinals of the Syed Modi International Super 300 tournament here on Friday.

The top-seeded Indian beat her Thai rival, seeded sixth in the tournament, 11-21 21-12 21-17 in a quarterfinal match that lasted one hour and five minutes.

Sindhu will face fifth-seeded Russian Evgeniya Kosetskaya in the semifinals.

In the men's singles, however, HS Prannoy crashed out of the tournament with a straight-game defeat to Arnaud Merkle of France in the quarterfinals.

The fifth-seeded Indian, a former top 10 player, lost 19-21 16-21 to his French opponent

in a 59-minute quarterfinal match.

Mithun Manjunath, however, advanced to the semifinals after beating Sergey Sirant of Russia 11-21 21-12 21-18 in a quarterfinal match that lasted one hour and one minute.

Manjunath will face Merkle in the semifinals.

In the mixed doubles event, the Indian pair of MR Arjun and Treasa Jolly beat the eight-seeded French duo of William Vileger and Anne Tran 24-22 21-17 in the quarterfinal match that lasted 42 minutes.

Arjun and Jolly will face compatriots and seventh-seeded pair of Ishaan Bhatnagar and Tanisha Crasto in the semifinals.

In the women's doubles quarterfinals, India's Ramya Venkatesh Chickmenahalli and Apeksha Nayak conceded a walkover to eight-seeded Malaysian pair of Anna Ching Yik Cheong and Teoh Mei Xing.

Milan, Juventus return to San Siro after recent losses

AP ■ MILAN

Both AC Milan and Juventus have recent bad memories of San Siro ahead of their eagerly-anticipated Serie A match at the iconic stadium on Sunday.

Juventus lost the Italian Super Cup to Inter Milan last week, when Alexis Sánchez scored the winner with the last kick of the match at the end of extra time.

Milan's last match at its home stadium was on Monday when a refereeing error cost it dearly in a dispiriting 2-1 loss to relegation-threatened Spezia.

"It's hard to lose like that. It's a missed chance that no one wanted, we've missed an opportunity," Milan coach Stefano Pioli said.

"Unfortunately we didn't manage to bring home the win, but now we'll think of the next matches."

"The season is still long, everyone can have an off day. It's good for us that now we have two difficult matches because that will give us great motivation and we'll find the strength to bounce back."

Milan could have moved above league leader Inter Milan with a win but Spezia scored in stoppage-time shortly after a potential winner from Junior Messias was disallowed for Milan because the referee whistled a foul on Rossoneri forward Ante Rebic in the buildup, just as Rebic was passing the ball to Messias. Referee Marco Serra apologized.

"Unfortunately we didn't manage to bring home the win, but now we'll think of the next matches."

Milan now finds itself two points behind Inter, which it plays the following weekend. Defeat to Juventus could see Milan head into the derby five points behind its bitter rival and having played a match more. Inter hosts relegation-threatened Venezia this Saturday.

Napoli is also only two points behind Milan and plays last-placed Salernitana. Pioli will be hoping Milan recovers its attacking prowess after uncharacteristically stuttering against Spezia. The Rossoneri missed several opportunities to put the game to



bed long before the controversial finale.

Milan has the second best attack in Serie A, having netted 47 times this campaign. Juventus has scored only 34 goals – fewer than any of the top 10 teams in the Italian league, apart from Torino – but there are signs the Bianconeri are beginning to get into their stride after struggling at the beginning of the season under returning coach Massimiliano Allegri.

In the top five European leagues, only Real Madrid has scored as many goals as

Juventus in 2022 (12) and Allegri's last loss in the league was back in November, against Atalanta.

That left Juventus seventh in the league, seven points behind fourth-placed Atalanta and the final Champions League spot. It has now moved to within one point of Atalanta.

"We are doing well and we have achieved many good results," Juventus forward Paulo Dybala said.

Simeone losing magic touch in his 10th year at Atlético

AP ■ BARCELONA

This season was supposed to be Diego Simeone's chance to firmly establish Atlético Madrid as Spain's top team and cap his incredibly successful decade as its coach.

While Barcelona lost Lionel Messi and Real Madrid had to replace coach Zinedine Zidane, Atlético strengthened its championship squad with the return of Antoine Griezmann and the signing of attacking players Rodrigo de Paul and Mathew Cunha.

It looked like the perfect scenario to repeat as Spanish league champions for the first time since 1950 and maybe even win the Champions League title which Simeone has twice come oh-so-close to grasping. It has-



games across all competitions.

It was dumped from the Copa del Rey's round-of-16 in a 2-0 loss at Real Sociedad on Wednesday, following a 2-1 loss to Athletic Bilbao last week in the Spanish Super Cup played in Saudi Arabia.

In December, it lost four in a row in the Spanish league, falling to Mallorca, Madrid, Sevilla and Granada. Previously, Atlético had never lost more than two consecutive league matches since Simeone became its coach in December 2011.

"Last season was magnificent and this one is proving to be very difficult," said Simeone, who has led Atlético to two Spanish league titles, one Copa del Rey, two Europa League titles, and two Champions League final appearances.

"We still have opportunities in the league and the Champions League."

"I am not going to just sit still. I can promise you that."

Most surprisingly, Atlético has lost its formidable defense. Loyal to Simeone's vision of building a team on a strong defense, it is accustomed to leading the league in fewest goals allowed. This season, eight league teams have allowed fewer goals than the 24 conceded by Atlético. Atlético has also faltered up front. Except for a goal against a third-tier opponent in the Copa del Rey, Luis Suárez hasn't scored since a 3-3 draw at Valencia on Nov. 7. Griezmann was playing well enough until a muscle injury sidelined him for all of but one match since mid-December.

NCAA adopts new policy for transgender athletes



AP ■ INDIANAPOLIS

The NCAA has adopted a sport-by-sport approach for transgender athletes, bringing the organization in line with the U.S. And International Olympic Committees.

Under the new guidelines, approved by the NCAA Board of Governors on Wednesday, transgender participation for each sport will be determined by the policy for the sport's national governing body, subject to review and recommendation by an NCAA committee to the Board of Governors.

When there is no national governing body, that sport's international federation policy would be in place. If there is no international federation policy, previously established IOC policy criteria would take over.

"Approximately 80% of U.S. Olympians are either current or former college athletes," NCAA President Mark Emmert said in a release. "This policy alignment provides consistency and further strengthens the relationship between college sports and the U.S. Olympics." The NCAA policy is effective immediately, beginning with the 2022 winter championships.

NCAA rules on transgender athletes returned to the forefront when Penn swimmer Lia Thomas started smashing records this year. She was on the men's team her first three years, but she is competing for the women this season after transitioning. The Board of Governors is suggesting NCAA divisions allow for additional eligibility if a transgender student-athlete loses eligibility based on the policy change.



Terrific attack has Strasbourg in rare air in French league

AP ■ PARIS

As Paris Saint-Germain waits for the trio of Lionel Messi, Neymar and Kylian Mbappé to reach its full potential, another combination is taking the spotlight in the French league.

Ludovic Ajoroux, Habib Diallo and Kevin Gameiro aren't global names but together with midfielder Adrien Thomasson — whose clinical efficiency has bagged seven goals and four assists — they have made Strasbourg one of the most potent teams in Europe this season.

The Alsatian quartet has 31 goals out of the team's total of 41 in 21 matches. Only PSG has done better, with a total of 42 goals.

This attacking verve has brought dividends, with Strasbourg sitting in fourth place after winning at Clermont 2-0 in a rescheduled match midweek. It's the club's best league position at this stage since 1997.

Ahead of a trip on Sunday to struggling Bordeaux, Julien Stephan's team are just two points behind Marseille, with qualification for a European tournament in sight. Marseille plays at Lens this weekend, with second-placed PSG traveling to Metz, and runaway leader Nice hosting Reims. Stephan became the coach when he replaced Thierry Laurey following a season of struggle.

"Being fourth doesn't change much, but it does validate the players' hard work," Stephan said. "Above all, it's our third victory in 2022, all of them won in different contexts, and that is extremely promising. We remain very humble."

Strasbourg has 15 goals in its last six matches while conceding just five, with Stephan widely credited for the team's metamorphosis.

In his previous stint, Stephan secured Rennes' first trophy in 48 years and led the Brittany club to the Champions League.

He preaches a fluid passing game.



Medvedev withstands Kyrgios, crowd to advance in Australia

AP ■ MELBOURNE

Daniil Medvedev faced a hostile crowd and a full array of Nick Kyrgios' outbursts and tricks, and still remained calm for long enough to reach the third round at the Australian Open.

The 115th-ranked Kyrgios worked up the crowd, hit "tweeners and drop shots, mixed up the pace of his groundstrokes and tossed in an under-arm serve in a bid to ruffle the second-ranked Russian.

Medvedev kept his composure, taking a quick trip to the locker room after losing the third set and recovering to win 7-6 (1), 6-4, 4-6, 6-2 Thursday on a rowdy Rod Laver Arena.

In an on-court TV interview with former champion Jim Courier, Medvedev was asked how he managed to stay so composed.

"That's the only choice when you get booed between first and second serve," he said, triggering some boos from the crowd. "It's not easy.

The (service) games I lost, on the break points, it was the case.

It's tough to play." Kyrgios usually likes to play on John Cain Arena,

known locally as the People's Court because fans with ground passes can get in and the singing and chanting is always less restrained than the two main show courts.

He managed to turn the all-ticketed stadium court into something more akin to a soccer stadium.

In the seventh game of the third set, Kyrgios got two break-point chances when he bunted away a backhand from Medvedev directed at his body and then took off on a circular run behind the baseline to celebrate like he had scored a goal.

When he converted the break, he danced in the change-over and worked up the crowd. Medvedev managed to lower the volume with two service breaks in the fourth set.

It was Medvedev's first win over Kyrgios following two losses in 2019.

And there were cheers later when Courier suggested a new crowd favorite for the rest of the tournament.

Medvedev was the runner-up last year but avenged that loss by beating Novak Djokovic in the U.S. Open final.

He's the quasi No. 1 now, anyway, because Djokovic was deported on the eve of the tournament for failing to meet

Australia's strict COVID-19 vaccination regulations.

Another contender in his half of the draw had a more routine run to the third round, with fourth-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas beating Sebastian Baez 7-6 (1), 6-7 (5), 6-3, 6-4 in a match featuring two former top-ranked junior players.

Five-time runner-up Andy Murray only lasted two rounds. Two days after winning his first match at the Australian Open in five years, the former No. 1 lost to 120th-ranked Taro Daniel 6-4, 6-4, 6-4.

Other winners among the men included No. 5 Andrey Rublev, No. 15 Roberto Bautista Agut, No. 20 Taylor Fritz, 2014 U.S. Open champion Marin Cilic and No. 32 Alex de Minaur. No. 24 Dan Evans moved on when the player he was supposed to face in the second round, Arthur Rinderknech, pulled out with an injured wrist.

Australian wild-card entry Chris O'Connell upset 13th-seeded Diego Schwartzman 7-6 (6), 6-4, 6-4.

There were surprises in the women's draw on Day 4, with No. 3 Garbiñe Muguruza becoming the highest-seeded player to exit only minutes after No. 6 Anett Kontaveit lost.

Friday's ISL game between Mumbai and Jamshedpur postponed

PTI ■ BAMBOLIM

The Indian Super League match between Jamshedpur FC and Mumbai City FC, scheduled for Friday, has been postponed as many players representing the teams are down with the COVID-19 virus.

"Hero Indian Super League (ISL) Match No. 67 between Jamshedpur FC and Mumbai City FC scheduled for Friday, January 21, 2022, at Athletic Stadium, Bambolim, stands postponed," the league organisers said in a statement.

"The decision was taken considering advice from the League's medical team on Jamshedpur FC's inability to safely field a team and prepare for the match," the ISL added in its statement.

On Monday, the ISL match between Hyderabad FC and Jamshedpur FC was also postponed



due to COVID-19, and so was Thursday's game between Kerala Blasters FC and ATK Mohun Bagan due to unavailability of enough players in the former's ranks after being hit by COVID-19 inside the bio-bu-

ble. Three days back, Jamshedpur FC's match against Hyderabad FC was postponed hours before kick-off after the Jharkhand-based club failed to field a team due to COVID-19 cases in its ranks.

Dominant India waste chances galore to play out goal-less draw

PTI ■ NAVI MUMBAI

The Indian women's team wasted innumerable chances in a completely dominating performance as Iran held them to a goal-less draw in their Asian Cup opening match here on Thursday.

Head coach Thomas Dennerby will be disappointed with the outcome of the match as a win against lower-ranked Iran would have put his side in a comfortable position in its bid to qualify for the quarterfinals.

But he must be happy in part as his wards dished out some fine display of possession and passing football, especially in the second half, at the DY Patil Stadium.

He will hope that his team continues in the same vein and score goals in the second match on Sunday against Chinese Taipei, who were thrashed 0-4 by China in the day's earlier match, to keep their quarterfinals prospects alive.

The Indians would have expected Iran to be defensive in their approach but it turned out to be the opposite in the initial period.

Iran, ranked 70th as against India's



55th, were the better side in the opening minutes during which they got two scoring chances, including a hit on the crossbar, but the home team took control of the Group A match midway into the first half and dominated till the end.

Iran had two chances in the period they dominated with captain Behnaz Taherkhani's header off a Samaneh Chahkandi free-kick ricocheting off the crossbar after beating goalkeeper Aditi Chauhan in the 12th minute.

Though captain Ashalata Devi was rock solid at deep defence, Iran almost took the lead in 19th minute when an Indian defender's header went backward and fell before Negin Zandi, who, however, sent the ball wide under pressure.

header six minutes later also sailed over the bar.

But the best chance for India came in the 32nd minute. Pyari Xaxa's scuffed shot fell kindly for Indumathi, but her toe-poke took the ball over the bar.

India dished out a fine display of passing football in the second half and they were all over a rattled Iranian side who had nothing to do but defend desperately.

Dennerby's side were unlucky not to have scored any goal and win the match easily, Iranian goalkeeper Zohreh Koudaei made saves after saves to deny the Indians full three points.

As India pressed for a goal, Iran defended doggedly while facing a deluge of attacks. The Indians were all over — crosses, shots, toe-pokes, headers — all inside Iran box but a goal still eluded the home side.

In the 51st minute, Manisha Kalyan sent a fine low cross from the left but Pyari Xaxas toe-poke went just wide. A minute later, Xaxa again could not reach the ball off a lovely pass from Sandhya Ranganathan, as an Iranian made a last-ditch defending.

SOUTH AFRICA HAND 'OUT OF SYNC' INDIA SERIES DEFEAT



PTI ■ PAARL

A young South Africa punished a jaded Indian team for its outdated approach, handing it one of the most comprehensive series defeats in recent times with an easy seven-wicket victory in the second ODI here on Friday.

A target of 288 was below-par on a flat track and the seasoned Quinton de Kock (78 off 66 balls) in the company of rising sensation Janneman Malan (91 off 108 balls) added 132 for a match-deciding opening stand.

The home team eventually reached the target in 48.1 overs to take an unsailable 2-0 lead in the three-game series.

KL Rahul's captaincy ambitions and head coach Rahul Dravid's wish to see him being anointed in the long run, however, suffered a rude jolt following back-to-back defeats in 50-over games on a track, which was more Indian than South African in nature.

India's archaic approach, a very '90s safety first mind-set, hurt the team as has been the case for a while now in the white-ball format.

INDIA'S ARCHAIC APPROACH, A VERY '90S SAFETY FIRST MIND-SET, HURT THE TEAM AS HAS BEEN THE CASE FOR A WHILE NOW IN THE WHITE-BALL FORMAT.

A tour that started with a great Test win at the Centurion is now in tatters and the Indian contingent would be looking to board the charter flight back home on Monday after the inconsequential third ODI at the Newlands, which would be a spicier track compared to the one at Boland Park.

The batting, save Rishabh Pant's cavalier style, was too defensive starting with skipper Rahul, whose 55 off 79 balls was an innings of bygone era, which cannot align with the fearless cricket that teams want to associate with now.

The match slipped away from India's grip during their innings once Pant was gone as the others simply failed to get going when the ball didn't come on to the bat and it was not a track that offered firm and even bounce.

It's not a new malaise to plague Indian cricket but what should be worrying is that nothing has been done to address the issues.

A veteran like Bhuvneshwar Kumar (8-0-67-0) was swept as well as pulled for sixes by De Kock while Malan would come down the track to hit him through the covers signalling that his early 130 kmph speed, with lack of variations, was simply not working.

For Shardul Thakur (40 not out and 5.1-0-36-0), the quality batting show won't save him if he doesn't curtail the number of bad balls that he is bowling per spell.

And Ravichandan Ashwin (10-1-68-0)'s second coming in white ball cricket might end in a whimper even before it gathers enough wind to sail through.

Yuzvendra Chahal (10-

0-47-1) tried his best but his confidence, after being unceremoniously dumped from the T20 World Cup final squad, has been in tatters.

Venkatesh Iyer (22 off 33 balls and 5-0-28-0) is still a work in progress and his fast-tracking in the limited overs set-up is less of pragmatism and more desperation to find a fresh version of injury-plagued Hardik Pandya.

Iyer might develop into a good cricketer but he is a far from finished product and may be some time away from being a success at the international level in all conditions.

As of now, he is not a natural No.6, who can be a finisher like Pandya was in his best days before injury. Had Pant not played the role of an enforcer to perfection, even a target of 288 wouldn't have been possible. And this was after it seemed India would score close to 315 when he was having a steady stand of 115 with his skipper.

But there dismissals in quick succession saw Proteas make a comeback on a Boland Park strip where stroke-making wasn't an easy proposition for a new batter.



Not surprised at Kohli's decision to quit captaincy: Pietersen

PTI ■ MUSCAT

Former England skipper Kevin Pietersen has suggested that the "harsh" bio-bubble life could be one of the reasons for Virat Kohli's stunning decision to quit Test captaincy and backed Rohit Sharma to lead India in all formats of the game going forward.

Kohli stunned the cricketing world by stepping down from the Test captaincy following India's 1-2 series loss to South Africa. He had relinquished T20 captaincy after the World Cup last year, and was subsequently removed from ODI leadership, leading to a war of words with the BCCI on the sequence of events leading to these developments.

"People who are critical of the modern day sportsmen I think are foolish because these bio-bubbles are very hard to play in," the former England star batsman told PTI in a group interaction on the sidelines of the Legends League Cricket here.

"It will be very unfair to be too harsh, to be critical. Because you have not looked at Virat Kohli.



Kohli needs crowds, he gets going from it), he is an entertainer.

"I think it's very difficult for his personality to perform to the best of his (Kohli's) abilities (in the bubble)," he reasoned as he reflected on sportsmen's life in a COVID-scared world.

The 33-year-old Kohli held the record for most Test wins by an Indian captain (40) with only Graeme Smith, Ricky Ponting, and

Steve Waugh having won more matches than him.

Pietersen said he was not surprised when Kohli quit captaincy from all formats.

"A lot of players have suffered. It is the greatest job in the world. But when you put them in a bubble, it's certainly not the greatest job because there is no fun," the 41-year-old said.

"I'm actually not surprised that

Virat wants just a little bit of a break from that extra pressure because it's damn difficult playing in these bubbles," he said.

"It's very difficult to judge all International sportsmen, be it premier league footballers or any sportsman around the world, playing in a pandemic," Pietersen said from his perspective, he would not have performed well for two years without any crowd in the stadiums.

"As a batter, I feed on the energy of fans, and there are a lot of these players, be it in football, rugby or tennis."

Vice-captain KL Rahul is leading India in the ongoing ODI series in South Africa with Rohit Sharma injured. Pietersen backed Rohit to captain India across all formats once he regains fitness. The big-hitting batter is expected to be back for the home limited-overs series against the West Indies next month.

"I've always loved 'Hitman' Rohit Sharma. He's a fabulous player, every time he's batting I've got to watch. His captaincy is great for the Mumbai Indians too. So he's probably next in line," Pietersen said.

West Indies U-19 get two COVID-19 replacements



PTI ■ PORT OF SPAIN

The ICC's Event Technical Committee of the U-19 World Cup has approved Kevin Wickham and Nathan Edward as replacements for Onaje Amory and Jaden Carmichael in the West Indies squad.

Wickham and Edward are temporary replacements for Amory and Carmichael who have tested positive for COVID-19 and are undergoing isolation.

"A COVID replacement can be temporary, in that once the player has recovered he would be eligible to return to the squad in position of the player that replaced him," said the ICC in a statement.

The replacement of a player requires the approval of the Event Technical Committee.

Devoid of options, Covid-hit India to take on Uganda

PTI ■ TAROUBA (TRINIDAD)

Rattled by a COVID-19 outbreak but through to the last-eight stage, India will have just 12 players to choose from in their final Under-19 World Cup group B clash against Uganda on Saturday as five of their six isolated squad members returned positive for COVID-19 in RT-PCR tests, here.

Only Vasu Vats came out negative but it is likely that the team management will field the same playing XI that thumped Ireland by 174 runs on Wednesday and secured a place in the quarterfinals. Skipper Yash Dhull, his deputy Shaik Rasheed, and Aaradhya Yadav, all of who tested positive in the Rapid Antigen Tests (RAT), have been confirmed positive in the latest RT-PCR reports along with Manav Parakh, who had tested negative in RAT.

Sidharth Yadav had already tested positive in the RT-PCR test before the Ireland game. Fortunately, India already have two victories in pocket and an easy opponent to tackle in the final Group game on Saturday.

Considering that Uganda is not a strong team, India, despite limited options, is expected to steamroll the minnows from the African region and finish on top of Group B. If the team does that, all the infected players, including the worst-affected Dhull, are expected to be back in the reckoning for selection for the January 29 quarterfinal.

National Cricket Academy Head VVS Laxman had lauded the players for the way they responded to the situation ahead of the Ireland game.

"Tremendous show of character and maturity of the U-19 team. With just 11 players available, to go out and express themselves the way they did was phenomenal. Can't say how proud I am of them! The Ireland match is one they will cherish for life," Laxman had tweeted.

The game against Uganda is inconsequential mathematically for India but it would have been ideal if the affected players got some time in the middle to be ready for the knockout stage.

The team would have obviously preferred to have all its best players on the park as it eyes a fifth trophy.

So far, openers Harnoor Singh and Angriksh Raghuvanshi have shown terrific form and are likely to continue in the same vein but the following middle-order batters need to score at better pace.

Stupid to blame IPL for England's Ashes debacle

PTI ■ MUSCAT

Former captain and batting star Kevin Pietersen has said that it's "stupid" to blame the Indian Premier League for England's embarrassing 0-4 loss to Australia in the recently-concluded Ashes series.

England great David Gower was "annoyed" after their Ashes defeat and said current skipper Joe Root had players who were "unavailable" because of the IPL.

Pietersen, an Ashes winner in 2005, 2009, 2010-11 and 2013, laughed at the remark.

"It is stupid. You can't blame the IPL for the demise of Test cricket in England. It's crazy. I've commented on it quite a lot. It's the system, it's the county cricket system, which is poor. So there's no blame," Pietersen, who is representing World Giants in the Legends League Cricket here, said during an interaction here on Thursday.

"It's crazy to blame the Indian Premier League because if you have a look at the Test team, there's only maybe (Ben) Stokes (Jonny) Bairstow and (Jos) Buttler who play the IPL..."

"Hardly any of the Test team players play the IPL... So how can you blame the IPL? You can't blame the IPL. It's crazy," a former captain of the IPL's Delhi franchise added. Off-



the-field, the English cricketers were also mired in a controversy after a report claimed that there was a "drinking culture" in the team with the players and coaches drinking late into the night before police broke up the session. Pietersen said there was no harm in it as the players are affected by the strict bio-bubble restrictions.

"It's stressful. It's incredibly stressful. I've never played in a bubble. I can't imagine but I think it must be very lonely.

"You're not allowed to go to coffee shops. You're not allowed to go down to the restaurants, you're not allowed to do anything. And what else do you do?"

India to open T20 WC campaign against Pakistan

PTI ■ DUBAI

In a blockbuster T20 World Cup opener for India, the team was on Friday drawn to clash with arch-rivals Pakistan on October 23 at the iconic MCG as the International Cricket Council (ICC) released the fixtures.

India had lost to Pakistan for the first time in an ICC tournament when the teams clashed in last year's T20 World Cup in Dubai.

India's second Super 12 match in Group 2 will be on October 27 in Sydney against a qualifier (runner up of Group A) and will be followed by matches against South Africa (October 30 in Perth) and Bangladesh



(Adelaide Oval on November 2). The Men in Blue's last Super 12 match is scheduled for November 6 against the winners of Group B at the MCG. The Super 12s -- round two of the tournament, with two groups -- will begin on October 22 with hosts and defending champions Australia playing New Zealand at the SCG on

October 22 in a re-match of last year's men's T20 World Cup final. The Black Caps will also face England at The Gabba on November 1 in a re-match of their epic semi-final encounter at the 2021 event. In Super 12s, Australia are in Group 1 with world number one England, New Zealand, Afghanistan plus the

winner of Group A and the runner-up in Group B from the first round.

The semi-finals will be played at the SCG and Adelaide Oval on November 9 and 10, respectively. It will be the first time the Adelaide Oval will host a World Cup semi-final.

The MCG will host the final, which will be contested under lights on November 13.

In the first round, 2014 champions Sri Lanka and Namibia will play the opening match at Kardinia Park, Geelong on October 16. They'll be joined by two qualifiers in Group A.

Two-time champions West Indies will also start in the first round, joined in Group B.

U19 World Cup Updates

England, Pakistan cruise to quarterfinals, Bangladesh bounce back with win

PTI ■ BASSETTERRE (ST KITTS)

Skipper Tom Prest smashed an Sunbeaten 154 as former champions England cruised to the Super League quarterfinals of the ICC U-19 World Cup with a thumping 189-run win over the UAE here.

Continuing his incredible run of form, Prest powered England to a mammoth 362 for six after electing to bat.

The English bowlers, led by leg-spinner Rehan Ahmed (4/30), then

put up a disciplined effort to bowl out UAE for 173 in 38.2 overs.

Prest blasted 13 fours and four sixes in his scintillating 119-ball innings, while Jacob Bethell (62), William Luxton (47) and George Thomas (41) also chipped in as the 1998 edition winners England put up an imposing total.

Bethell and Thomas gave England a blistering start, adding 69 runs in 11.5 overs.

The Young Lions' total always looked like it would be a big ask to overhaul and the UAE were reeling



when they were reduced to 61 for five in the 15th over.

Ali Naseer's counter-attacking 54 off 44 balls helped reverse some of the momentum as he put on 59 with Nilansh Keswani for the sixth wicket. But when Nilansh departed, the last four wickets fell for 53 runs as leg-spinner Rehan excelled in his first outing in the West Indies with four for 30 from his allotted ten overs. Pakistan qualify for quarterfinals with win against Afghanistan.

Pakistan too booked their place in the Super League quarterfinals with a 24-run victory over Afghanistan.

Afghanistan did well to restrict Pakistan to a modest 239 for nine in the group C match at Brian Lara stadium in Tarouba, Trinidad.

However, the Afghans got the pace of their innings all wrong in

reply, managing 215 in the designated 50 overs.

The top three soaked up far too many balls in pursuit of the target.

It took them 170 balls to bring up 100 runs with Bilal Sayedi (42 off 81), Nangeyalia Kharote (12 off 32), and Allah Noor (28 off 49) managing strike rates under 58.

Despite the slow start, Afghanistan took the contest deep although their innings was characterised by some wild running between the wickets, with three run outs as well as a number of near misses. Noor Ahmad blasted three sixes to leave his side in with a chance of a shock victory, needing 28 off the last two overs with two wickets in hand.

Reigning champions Bangladesh bounce back against Canada

Bangladesh bounced back from defeat with a dominant eight-wicket triumph over Canada.

Off-spinner SM Meherob and pacer Ripon Mondol snapped four wickets each as Bangladesh bowled out Canada for a lowly 136 in a group A match at Conaree Sports Club in Basseterre.

Bangladesh then galloped to the target in 30.1 overs to register their first win of the tournament.

Iftekher Hossain anchored the chase for the defending champions with a well-made 61 off 89 balls while Prantik Nawrose Nabil (33) and Aich Mollah (20 not out) also chipped in.

Earlier, opener Anoop Chima stood amid the rains with a 117-ball 63 as Canada's decision to bat backfired with only four of their batters reaching double digit figures.