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ADOPTION OF NETAJI'S
VISION BY NEW INDIA**MONEY 10**
SENSEX SKIDS FOR 3RD
DAY TO CLOSE BELOW 60K**WORLD 11**
RUSSIA ACCUSES WEST OF PLOTTING
'PROVOCATIONS' IN UKRAINE

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TO MAKE
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14 SPORT**

Cong poster girl, MSY's brother-in-law join BJP

'Ladki hun, lad sakti hun' face says Cong's slogan farce; Mulayam brother-in-law claims 20 SP MLAs ready to shift loyalty to BJP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A day after Samajwadi Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav's daughter-in-law Aparna Yadav joined the BJP, Mulayam's brother-in-law and former party MLA Pramod Gupta and the former Congress leader and poster girl of the party "Ladki Hun, Lad Sakti Hun" campaign Priyanka Maurya joined the BJP.

Maurya was the face of the "Ladki Hun, Lad Sakti Hun" campaign spearheaded by Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in Uttar Pradesh.

"Congress slogan is just a farce. The party has no strategy to promote women. They have already decided whom they will give tickets and the rest is all a big drama," Maurya, told reporters after she joined the BJP.

Maurya had asked for a ticket from the Auraiya constituency but the Congress

didn't oblige her. Congress leaders claim that the party's internal survey showed that it cannot win the election.

"The Congress used my face to launch the 'ladki' campaign. Then they found virtue in my face but now the leadership is saying that I cannot win the election," Maurya said.

Mulayam's brother-in-law Pramod, who was the SP MLA from Auraiya in 2012, a folk singer from Ayodhya Vandana Mishra, and the BSP's candidate from Govind Nagar seat of Kanpur, Sunil Shukla, too joined the BJP in the presence of State BJP joining committee chairman Dr Laxmikant Bajpai here at the State party headquarters on Thursday.

After joining the BJP, Pramod Gupta made very serious charges against Akhilesh Yadav alleging that Akhilesh has taken Netaji (Mulayam) hostage. "In the Samajwadi Party, only goons call the shot," Gupta said, adding Akhilesh is surrounded by sycophants.

"Mulayam has become old. Neither Akhilesh nor party leaders listen to him. Today his condition is only because of Akhilesh," he said.

Pramod claimed that around 20 SP MLAs are ready to join the BJP if the party allows them to take them.



Ravan to challenge Yogi on his home turf

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Bhim Army chief B Chandrashekhar Azad, alias Ravan, has announced that he will challenge Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in his home turf — Gorakhpur Sadar constituency — in the upcoming Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh.

Azad Party's chief election in-charge Mohammad Aquib said in a statement that Azad

has decided to challenge the biggest Hindutava face in UP and would contest election against Yogi.

The polling of Gorakhpur would be held in the second last phase on March 3 where nominations will commence from February 4. Gorakhpur is the home turf of Yogi and he was elected MP from this city five times in a row before he was made the CM in 2017.

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Akhilesh to contest from Karhal seat in Mainpuri

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party national president Akhilesh Yadav will contest the assembly election from Karhal constituency in Mainpuri district, the party announced on Thursday.

Polling in Karhal is scheduled for February 20.

At present, Akhilesh Yadav is Lok Sabha MP from Azamgarh constituency. He has never contested a state election. When he became the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh in 2012, he took the Legislative Council route.

On Wednesday, Akhilesh Yadav had said he would decide whether to contest the polls after talking to the people of his constituency.

The Samajwadi Party has won this seat seven times since 1993. In the 2002 election, the Bharatiya Janata party had bagged the Karhal seat.

Samajwadi Party founder Mulayam Singh Yadav represents Mainpuri constituency in Parliament.

In 2017 assembly polls, SP candidate Sobran Yadav had secured 1.04 lakh votes from Karhal, defeating the BJP's Prem Shakya by 38,405 votes.

515 dists report over 5% +vity; Kerala, K'taka lead

3 lakh cases a day first time in 3rd wave of Covid-19

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Kerala, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu saw a massive spike in Covid-19 cases during the last 24 hours on Thursday even as the situations seem to stabilise in Mumbai and Delhi. India logged more than 3 lakh cases for the first time during the third wave on Thursday.

The Union Health Ministry said that at least 515 districts in the country are reporting a positivity rate of over 5 per cent in the last one week, while Maharashtra, Karnataka, Goa, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh remain the "States of Concern" reporting high positivity rate.

Both Karnataka and Kerala reported a record surge in the last 24 hours. Kerala's count of 46,387 fresh cases on Thursday is the highest-ever single-day spike. During the peak of the second wave, Kerala reported 43,529 Covid cases in a day.

Kerala Health Minister Veena George said both Delta and Omicron are responsible for the surge in the State.

Similarly, Karnataka too saw a huge surge Thursday recording 47,754 fresh cases. Out of these cases, 30,540 are



A medic walks inside the Shehnai Banquet Hall, a Covid-19 care centre, in New Delhi on Thursday PTI

from Bengaluru.

Tamil Nadu on Thursday reported as many as 28,561 new Covid cases and 39 deaths.

While Delhi reported 12,3036 cases on Thursday, less than half it reported a week ago, the national Capital saw 43 Covid deaths, the highest number of deaths due to Covid-19 since June 10 last year when 44 people had died.

The positivity rate in Delhi has declined to 21.48 per cent from 23.8 per cent a day before.

Continuing with its declining trend, Mumbai on Thursday reported 5,708 new Covid-19 cases and 12 deaths. Meanwhile, the State Government has decided to open schools across Maharashtra for all classes from January 24.

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Delhi caps RT-PCR test to ₹300 at lab

New Delhi: The Delhi Government on Thursday capped the maximum price for the RT-PCR Covid-19 test at private laboratories at ₹300 amid rise in virus cases leading to increased testing in the national Capital. Along with that, it also fixed ₹500 for RT-PCR samples collected from home. The Rapid antigen test will now be done at ₹100.

"The rates for conventional RT-PCR and RAT test for Covid-19 in Delhi by private labs has been reduced. The cap for the RT-PCR test has been set at ₹300 and for the home collection of samples has been set at ₹500," said Health Minister Satyendar Jain.

Parrikar's son missing from Goa BJP first list

Utpal insists on Panjim, party offers 2 options

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Thursday released its first list of 34 candidates for the upcoming Assembly elections in Goa. An important name missing from the list is that of former Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar's son Utpal Parrikar.

Utpal wanted to contest from Panjim but the party has given him two other options. So far Utpal is insistent on contesting from Panjim itself.

Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday tweeted that Utpal is welcome to join and fight elections on a AAP ticket. "Goans feel very sad that the BJP has adopted use and throw policy even with Parrikar family. I have always respected Manohar Parrikar. Utpal is welcome to join and fight elections on AAP ticket," Kejriwal tweeted.

People close to the Parrikar family told news agency ANI that it is unlikely that Utpal will budge and agree to contest from any other seat as it is more

of a sentimental and emotional issue for him than a political one. In the last one month, several top leaders of the party, including Amit Shah and JP Nadda, tried to convince him.

The BJP has fielded Scheduled Tribe candidates from three general seats and one Scheduled Caste candidate from a general seat in the 40 strong Goa Assembly.

The party has fielded 11 Other Backward castes candidates and nine from the minority community.

Six new faces have been included in the list.

Incumbent Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant would contest from Sankhli.

Jointly addressing a Press conference with BJP general secretary Arun Singh, former Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis said the BJP will return to power as it has brought "stability" and development in the State.

He said people will reject other competitors as Congress has "disgraced" the State by corruption and the new entrants TMC is trying to "buy" politicians and the cadre of the MGP with which it has struck an alliance are disenchanted with it.

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BJP names 59 of 70 seats in Uttarakhand; Dhami from Khatima



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Thursday announced the names of candidates for 59 out of the total 70 Assembly constituencies of Uttarakhand.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has got the party ticket from Khatima constituency in the State.

Out of the 59 names announced, five are women candidates, said Prahlad Joshi, BJP's election in-charge of Uttarakhand, while addressing a Press conference.

Former Congress rebel like Umesh Sharma Kau has been fielded from his traditional seat of Raipur. He was earlier speculated to return to the Congress fold.

The name on the list, seen

as surprise, is Kunwarani Devyani Singh, the wife of four-time MLA Kunwar Pranav Singh "Champion". Devyani Singh has been named for the Khanpur, a constituency held by her husband currently.

Other major women candidates include Sarita Arya, who recently defected from the Congress after she was denied a ticket. She will fight from the Nainital reserved seat.

Rekha Arya, the Woman and Child Development Minister, has been fielded from the Someshwar Assembly constituency.

The polling for Uttarakhand Assembly Election will take place in a single phase on February 14. The counting of votes will take place on March 10.

Booster dose neutralises Omicron: Lancet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A "booster" dose of the Covid-19 vaccine successfully raises antibody levels that neutralise the Omicron variant, according to laboratory findings, published in The Lancet.

Researchers from the Francis Crick Institute and the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) UCLH Biomedical Research Centre found that antibodies generated in people who had received only two doses of either the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine or the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine were less able to neutralise the Omicron variant as compared to the Alpha and Delta variants.

They also found that antibody levels dropped off in the first three months following the second dose but that a third "booster" dose raised levels of antibodies that effectively neutralise the Omicron variant.

In people who had received the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine for all three doses, antibody levels against Omicron after a third dose were similar to those previously reached against Delta after only two doses. Overall, antibody levels were nearly 2.5 times higher against Omicron after three doses compared to after two. Higher levels of anti-

bodies against the Omicron variant were found in people who received two doses of either vaccine and also reported previously having Covid-19 symptoms, compared to those who had not previously had Covid-19 symptoms. Whilst levels of antibodies alone do not predict vaccine effectiveness, they are a very good indicator of protection against severe Covid-19. This study confirms that three doses of Covid-19 vaccine are essential to boost antibodies to quantifiable levels and maximise the amount of protection against severe disease and hospitalisation.

Researchers have submitted their findings to the Genotype-to-Phenotype National Virology Consortium (G2P-UK), the New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group (NERV-TAG) and the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI).

The researchers found Xevudy (sotrovimab), a recently-approved synthetic monoclonal antibody used to prevent and treat high risk Covid patients was able to neutralise the Omicron variant.

The Legacy team analysed 620 blood samples from 364 people who enrolled in the study. They used robust high through

put viral neutralisation assays, developed at the Crick, to test the ability of antibodies to block entry of the virus into cells, so called "neutralising antibodies", against different variants of SARS-CoV-2, including Omicron.

"This new variant can overcome the immune blockade put in place by two vaccine doses, but thankfully following the third dose, neutralising activity is robust in the vast majority of people. A third dose builds our defences higher, making it harder for the virus to cause severe Covid-19."

David LV Bauer, Group Leader of the Crick RNA Virus Replication Laboratory and member of the G2P-UK National Virology Consortium, said: "While the Omicron variant has considerably more mutations than other recent variants, such as Alpha and Delta, our data show that the boosters push our immune system to make a broad response capable of tackling it."

Charles Swanton, Legacy Chief Investigator at the Crick and Consultant Oncologist at UCLH said: "Our results are an estimate of protection in the community and as boosters are rolled out at record speeds, many can be confident in their level of vaccine protection after three doses."

CAPSULE

BREATHING FOR MAMATA'S AGENT IN MURDER CASE

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday granted interim protection from arrest to Trinamool Congress leader SK Supriya, who was the election agent of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in Nandigram, in connection with a murder case being investigated by the CBI.

INDIA SUCCESSFULLY TEST-FIRES BRAHMOS



Balasore: India successfully test-fired supersonic cruise missile Brahmos off the Odisha coast here on Thursday, DRDO sources said.

BHAGWANT MANN TO CONTEST FROM DHURI

Chandigarh: Aam Aadmi Party's chief ministerial face Bhagwant Mann will contest the Punjab Assembly elections from the Dhuri Assembly seat in Sangrur district.

Country creating system where discrimination has no place: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said that the country is creating a system in which there is no place for discrimination and building a society that "stands firmly on the foundation of equality and social justice".

Delivering the keynote address at the national launch ceremony of "Azadi Ke Amrit Mahotsav se Swarnim Bharat Ke Ore", Modi also flagged off seven initiatives of Brahma Kumaris.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses a programme organised by Brahma Kumaris as part of national launch ceremony of "Azadi Ke Amrit Mahotsav se Swarnim Bharat Ke Ore" via video conferencing, in New Delhi PTI

Patel, Union Ministers G Kishan Reddy, Bhupendra Yadav, Arjun Ram Meghwal, Parshottam Rupala, and Kailash Choudhary were among those present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister said the programme by Brahma Kumaris Sanstha, in the "Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav" celebration, exemplifies the feeling, spirit and inspiration for a golden India.

He said that there is no difference between personal aspirations and successes on the one hand and national aspirations and successes on the other.

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27% OBC quota in NEET is not at odds with merit, says SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday upheld the Constitutional validity of providing twenty-seven per cent quota to OBC in NEET All India quota seats for UG and PG medical courses, saying "reservation is not at odds with merit."

The bench led by Justice DY Chandrachud observed that "merit" could not be narrowed to the limit of success in open competitive exams. The merit of a person was a sum

total of "lived experiences" and his or her struggle to overcome cultural and social setbacks.

"Merit cannot be reduced to narrow definitions of performance in an open competitive examination, which only provides formal equality of opportunities. Current competencies are assessed by competent examinations but are not reflective of excellence, capability and potential of an individual, which are also affected by lived experiences, individual character, etc," said the verdict.

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Army contacts PLA as Arunachal youth lost in woods untraceable

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Army is in touch with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of China to find a missing youth from Arunachal Pradesh.

While some reports said the 17-year-old boy was abducted by the Chinese army, other versions indicated that the youth lost his way in the thick jungles and could not be located so far.

"Regarding the incident of the missing youth named Miram Taron from Arunachal Pradesh, it is informed that on receipt of the information, the Indian Army immediately contacted the PLA through established mechanism of hotline



informing that an individual, who was collecting herbs and hunting, has lost his way and cannot be found. Assistance from the PLA has been seeking to locate the individual on their side and return him as per established protocol," sources in the defence establishment said here on Thursday.

The teenager, a native of Zido village in the Upper Siang district, went missing on Tuesday. The district authori-

ties said the youth along with others were hunting in the border area.

Earlier on Thursday, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi targeted the Centre over the missing boy. "Just a few days before Republic Day, the future of India is kidnapped by China. We stand with the family of Miram Taron and we will not give up hope, will not give up, won't accept defeat. PM's stupid silence is his statement - he doesn't care!" Gandhi tweeted.

Incidentally, the PLA had detained five youths in September 2020 from the Upper Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh and released them after a week.

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Houses to be built for poor, Dalits on land freed from mafia: CM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday assured to construct houses for the poor and Dalits on the land freed from the mafia in every urban body of the state, adding that the work had started in Prayagraj.

He also said that the Anti-Land Mafia Task Force of the Uttar Pradesh government was active and action would be taken by marking such land in every urban body.

The chief minister said this while having a virtual interaction with the representatives of all the municipal corporations, municipalities and nagar panchayats of the state.

Reiterating his resolve towards the policy of zero tolerance towards crime and criminals, Yogi said that the construction on the land freed from mafia in Prayagraj was an example and similar houses would be built in every urban body of the state.

Maintaining that several governments came after Independence but none of them thought about the devel-

opment of the state as a whole, the Chief Minister said that none of the previous governments provided housing, drinking water, electricity, toilets and other such facilities.

"Today, the state is undergoing a huge transformation," he said.

The chief minister further said that today about 25 per cent of the population of UP, which was about six crore, lived in urban areas. "Before 2017, there were 14 municipal corporations in the state, today there are 18 along with 200 towns, 517 nagar panchayats along with 84 new nagar panchayats. All this is an attempt to expand the facilities of the common man," he said.

He said the government was working in a planned manner for facilitating 'Ease of Living' in Uttar Pradesh. "In the last five years, 43 lakh houses were built for the poor with the joint efforts of the Central and state government, while AMRUT scheme was implemented in 60 cities for pure drinking water. The construction of toilets in every house is a symbol of women's dignity



and cleanliness," he added.

Expressing satisfaction over the development of UP cities, the chief minister asserted, "The cities of UP are getting 'smart', be it in terms of traffic management or any such things. The smart cities are the hallmark of the New Uttar Pradesh of New India."

Appreciating the contribution of the mayor, chairman and corporators in successful-ly tackling the last two waves of

COVID-19, he urged them to cooperate in containing the third wave.

"Experts believe that this third wave of Omicron variant is not as dangerous as before, but we cannot neglect it. The work done by the surveillance committees in the villages has made a big contribution in controlling the spread of the virus. Now in the urban wards, the surveillance committees will have to be activated under the

chairmanship of a corporators or a senior citizen," he said.

He recommended screening of every person and provision of medical kits as per their need. He also insisted on testing, adding that no person should be deprived of vaccination in the wards. "Eligible people should get precautionary doses. If someone has symptoms, get a test done, give a medical kit," he said.

Referring to the challenges faced by the state during the pandemic, the chief minister said that his priority was to save both lives and livelihood. "The Central government and the state government are making arrangements for the maintenance of all. Today 15 crore people are being given free ration. Mayor, chairman and corporators must ensure that not a single eligible person is deprived of ration."

He also asked the public representatives to make proper arrangements of food, night shelters among others.

During the interaction, about 10 public representatives spoke directly to the chief minister and narrated the condition of their areas.

People ready to give a befitting reply to Akhilesh: Keshav

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya on Thursday said that the people of the state were ready to give a befitting reply to Akhilesh Yadav's patronage of mafia elements and for his fake promises.

Slamming the Samajwadi Party chief, Maurya predicted that the SP, which had invited corrupt and criminals to come to power, would find it hard this time to even cross 27 seats in the assembly elections this time.

Maurya said that instead of forming a gang of mafia and criminals at the time of elections, had Akhilesh Yadav gone in the midst of the public in the past five years and been with them through the thick and thin, he would have known what actually was the ground reality and that people were very happy with the development and the inclusive politics of the Bharatiya Janata Party government.



"Had he ventured out of the comfort of his home he would have been aware of the schemes running in the interest of the Backwards and the poor along with employment, business, health, development of farmers," the deputy chief minister said while taking a dig at the SP chief. For five years, however, Yadav was busy preparing a list of criminals and corrupt, he added.

Maurya said that Akhilesh Yadav, who planted the seeds of corruption, hooliganism and appeasement while in power, had again bared his ill-intentions by fielding those who oppose 'Maa Bharti' in the elections.

Challenging Akhilesh Yadav, the deputy chief minister said that the people of UP had given him 47 seats last time, but this time SP would find it difficult to cross even the figure of 27.

The deputy chief minister went on to say that the Akhilesh Yadav-led party had a long list of candidates with criminal backgrounds. He said that the kind of professional criminals and mafia to whom SP had given tickets in its list was being watched closely by the people of the state.

"Whereas the BJP has given priority to development, good governance and nationalism as agenda for the elections," Maurya underlined, "Dynasty and family politics have always been promoted in the SP, which has consigned socialism to the bin. More than public welfare, the SP leadership only and only thinks for the well-being of their family," the deputy chief minister added.

Nadda to visit Agra, Bareilly today

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Bharatiya Janata Party National president Jagat Prakash Nadda is coming on a day's visit to Uttar Pradesh on Friday when he will attend several election meetings and programmes in Agra and Bareilly.

According to party officials here on Thursday, Nadda will reach Agra on Friday at 10 am and at 10:20 am, he will offer prayers at the famous Rauli Mahadev temple located at the collectorate.

After this, at 10:50 am, he will hold a meeting with the office-bearers of the assembly constituencies of Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Mathura, Firozabad regions at Gold

Resort in Agra.

Thereafter, at the same place at 11:50 am, he will hold an important meeting with party officials of the legislative assemblies of Aligarh, Hathras, Etah, Mainpuri areas.

Thereafter the BJP president will reach Bareilly at 02:30 pm and hold a meeting with key party functionaries at IIM Hall at 02:50 pm.

At 4:45 pm, Nadda will launch a door-to-door campaign of the party in Bareilly while complying with the guidelines of the Election Commission.

At 7:15 pm he will hold a meeting with the heads of the legislative assemblies of Bareilly district and other people.

Virtual election campaigns a Herculean task for RLD

PRABHA SHANKAR ■ LUCKNOW

To strike a dialogue with the voters of west UP through social media platforms for election campaigns will be a Herculean task for the Rashtriya Lok Dal which claims to have a strong support base in the region.

With the trend of using social media in election campaigns since the 2014 parliamentary election, different political parties have switched to social media platforms to reach the voters who are mainly youths. The Bharatiya Janata Party undoubtedly is heading the race with a strong presence on social media platforms followed by Samajwadi Party and Congress.

The RLD also started a membership drive in the past in 2017 and made a huge number of members.

"The problem with the campaign by social media platform is that most of the voters in west UP are not much familiar with the use of android phones. The youth voters, however, are aware of the use of the android phones and also have their social media accounts," the party insiders said.

They said the RLD was trying to overcome this and was making plans to get connected with the voters through easy means in the coronavirus times. "Among one of such plans is holding nukkad sabha and chaupals but Covid protocol violation may be an issue as it

is practically difficult to control the number of participants in such meetings. The ECI is constantly issuing directives asking political parties to discourage crowding in meetings or any events as per the Covid protocols. In the recent past, a case was registered against the party workers of a political party for violating the Covid norms and the SHO Gautampalli was suspended for failing to implement the provisions of Covid protocol," they said.

They said the ECI ban on holding rallies and gatherings was till January 23. "It is still unclear where the restrictions will be lifted or continue with some relaxation," they said.

RLD leader Anupam Mishra admitted that connecting the voters through social media was a great challenge due to voters' not being android phone savvy. "We are hiring agencies to make us reach the voters. Besides we plan to hold e-chaupals in which a mobile user will get linked with the programme which will be telecast during the chaupal," he said.

He said the party also planned to deploy mobile vans on which RLD's programmes and leaders' speeches would be displayed. "We plan to allow some 50 people at one time to attend such functions. We will ensure Covid protocol during all our political campaigns," he said.

Nirbhaya case lawyer joins BSP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Senior lawyer Seema Kushwaha joined the Bahujan Samaj Party here on Thursday in the presence of party's national general secretary Satish Chandra Mishra.

Kushwaha said that inspired by the policies and ideas of BSP national president and former chief minister of UP, Mayawati, she decided to join the party.

Kushwaha, who bravely fought the Nirbhaya case, also took a pledge to make

Mayawati the chief minister of UP for the fifth time.

Earlier on Thursday, Seema Kushwaha had said that she was joining the BSP to ensure justice to the weaker section of society. Kushwaha also fought for justice in the Hathras rape case. She is also the founder of Nirbhaya Jyoti Trust and has launched a campaign to ensure justice for the victims of rape.

The Nirbhaya rape case had shaken the country in 2012 when a 23-year-old paramedic student, referred to as

Nirbhaya, was brutally gang-raped and assaulted by six men in a moving bus in Delhi in December 2012 and was thrown out on the road. She succumbed to her injuries at a Singapore hospital on December 29, 2012. It took seven years to deliver justice to the victim.

The four convicts in the Nirbhaya case were hanged to death at 5:30 am in Delhi's Tihar jail on March 20, 2020, after a three-judge Supreme Court bench rejected the final plea by the convicts' lawyer.

Parties asked to make criminal record of their candidates public

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

To check criminalisation of politics, the Election Commission of India on Thursday all the political parties to make public the selection of candidates with criminal background in newspapers, social media platforms and on the party's website within 48 hours.

List of all contesting candidates and affidavits filed by them are available in the KYC app.

The responsibility of making the information of candidates with criminal background accessible to the general public has been put on both the candidate and the political party concerned, according to an official communiqué of the ECI.

Those with criminal background will have to publish it in newspapers, TV channels, etc. about themselves at least three times from the last date of withdrawal of candidates till the date of expiry of the campaign period.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer Ajay Kumar Shukla said that in view of the sanctity of the election, and as per the directives of the Supreme Court, the Election Commission of India has issued instructions that if a political party selects candidates with criminal background, then within 48 hours of the selection of candidates, the political party will have to publish in newspapers, social media platforms and on the party's website that the candidate has been selected and why does the party want to field him/her.

This information will have to be given by the political parties to the Election Commission of India. Notification for the first phase of UP assembly election-2022 was issued on January 14, 2022 and the last date for nomination is January 21, 2022.

The KYC App has been developed by the Election

Notification for 2nd phase polls to be issued today

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Even as the political parties are grappling with the new concept of virtual election rallies, the Election Commission of India (ECI) will set the election rolling for the second phase of assembly polls on Friday, covering 55 assembly constituencies of nine districts of the Rohilkhand region.

Friday is also the last date for filing nomination s for the first phase polls in 58 assembly constituencies in 11 districts of western UP. State Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Ajay Kumar Shukla here on Thursday said that notification for the second phase would be issued at 1100 hours on Friday.

In the second phase, polling to be held on February 14, filing of nominations will

commence from January 21, the last date for filing of nominations will be January 28, scrutiny of nomination papers will be done on January 29 and the last date for withdrawal will be January 31.

Altogether 55 assembly constituencies will go to the polls in the second phase covering nine districts of Saharanpur, Bijnor, Amroha, Sambhal, Moradabad, Rampur, Bareilly, Budaun and Shahjahanpur.

In the 2017 elections, BJP had won from 40 of these 55 assembly constituencies. Samajwadi party had won 13 of these seats and Bahujan Samaj Party two.

"Already over 120 companies of Central forces have reached UP to maintain law and order during the polls," Shukla said.

Commission of India and it can be downloaded from the Play Store on both Android or I-phones. In this app, the list of all the contesting candidates and affidavits filed by them are available.

It has also been arranged in the app that whether or not each candidate has a criminal background is clearly marked in Yes or No.

According to the order of the Supreme Court, efforts are being made by the Election Commission of India and the chief electoral officer of Uttar Pradesh to ensure that the general public can get information regarding the candidates. Provision has also been made by the Election Commission of India that all such candidates who have criminal background, they themselves should publish it at least three times in newspapers from the last date of withdraw-

al of candidates till the date of expiry of the campaign period.

Thus, in view of the criminal background, the responsibility of making this information accessible to the general public has been put on both the candidate and the political party.

Information regarding the selection of 28 candidates with criminal background in the first phase by Samajwadi Party, Rashtriya Lok Dal and Bharatiya Janata Party has been given to the office of the chief electoral officer.

The office of the chief electoral officer has also informed the parties that information has been published by them in various newspapers. To obtain this information from the remaining parties, a request has been made by the chief electoral officer's office through a letter.



सूचना

मेरे पिताजी के आर्मी रिटायर्ड में मेरा नाम NISHAN KUMAR SINGH लिख गया है। मरिथिया में मुझे NISHANT KUMAR SINGH पुत्र श्री रंजीत कुमार सिंह (सही नाम) से जाना व पहचाना जाय। निवासी-छपरा, भेल्टी, सारन, बिहार 841402

NOTICE

Alok Swarup Gupta s/o Shri sharad kumar R/o B1/L4 Park Mahanagar Ext. Lucknow, Have Actually Lost allotment letter of my property, unit 606 Eldeco corp. tower vibhuti Khand Gomti Nagar lucknow. Any use of the said paper will be considered illegal and will be dealt with accordingly

NOTICE

Be it known to all firm M/s Badrinath Partnership firm regt. address :- Plot No. 36/37, situated at Kanchanpur Matiyari, Lucknow. According to that Firm these are Smt. Kokila Omer Resign from the Firm. Partner Smt. Kokila Omer M/s Badrinath Partnership Firm

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be inform that my client Indostar Home Finance Pvt. Ltd intends to finance to one of its client Mr. Ankaj S/o Mr. Chetay Lal to Mortgage a property part of Plot Kharsa No. 198 area 425sq. ft. (55.053 sq. mtr.) situated at Village-Paharpur, Pargana-Bijnor, Tehsil-Saraini Nagar, District-Lko, U.P. sale deed duly registered in the office of Sr. Saraini Nagar, Lucknow, as Document No-28764 Book No-1 Volume No-7127 Page No-387 to 400 Dated 20.09.2021. If any person has any right title or interest over the said property he may approach to the undersigned within seven days in writing along with the evidence of his such right, title or interest and if no such objection will be received within the said period it will be presumed the property in questions free from all encumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against purchase shall be void and ineffective.

Naveen Kumar Verma-Advocate
Ch.No.8, LGF-3, Krishna Tower,
Chakbast Road, Gaisarbagh, Lucknow, U.P.

PARADIP PORT TRUST

E-TENDER NOTICE

The tenders in three bid system i.e. (1)EMD Bid (2) Technical Bid (3)Price Bid are invited from manufacturer authorized representative of manufacturer for supply of 11KV Grade XLPE HT Power Cable. The last date and time of submission of the tender is 17.15 Hours on Dt.02.02.2022. For details, log on to website www.eprocure.gov.in/ eprocure/app

Sr.Dy. Materials Manager
PPT/PR/141/21-22 Dt.20.01.2022

Public Notice

Reliance Industries Ltd

Notice is hereby given the Certificate for the undermentioned Equity Shares of the Company Reliance Industries Ltd have been lost/misplaced and the holder/purchaser of the said Equity shares have applied to the Company to issue duplicate share Certificate.

Folio No.	Name of Shareholder	No. of shares	Dist No. FM. To	Cert.No
70783487	Neelam Arora	60	2191067069-2191067128	62281976
Date-21-01-2022 Lucknow				Neelam Arora (Name of Shareholder)

Notice Inviting e-Tender

No. SSA/Pre-Primary/Procurement/445/2020/8582 Date: 19.01.2022

Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission (Samagra Shiksha), Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam invites tender through e-Tendering process from reputed manufacturer of Teaching Learning Materials (TLM)/Authorised dealer of the manufacturer/Supplier of Teaching Learning Materials (TLM) for supply of Teaching Learning Materials (TLM).

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

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

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

Janasanyog/CF/2961/21

Re- Notice Inviting Expression of Interest (EOI)

No. SSA/MDM/NABL-Testing/332/2021/8559 Date: 18.01.2022

Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam invites re- Expression of Interest (EOI) through e-procurement process from National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) for testing of dry and cooked MDM Food .

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

The applicants who have downloaded the EOI schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>. The EOI should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.

Sd/-Mission Director
SSA, Assam
cum State Nodal Officer-MDM

Janasanyog/CF/2967/21

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

Recoveries continue to outnumber fresh cases

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh reported 18,554 fresh COVID-19 cases on Thursday though the number of patients who recovered was more than 19,328 during the last 24 hours, said Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Amit Mohan Prasad here.

However, UP added another feather to its cap by administering over 24 crore Covid vaccine doses to date.

The number of active novel coronavirus positive cases in the state now stands at 97,329, with maximum patients in home isolation, Prasad said, adding that 90 per cent of the infected people were recovering at their homes.

He said to control the spread of coronavirus, establishment of Covid Help Desks in all the offices and industrial units had been made mandatory.

“The chief minister has also instructed to maintain constant communication with the people under treatment in home isolation and to deliver medical kits to them as required,” he said.

On Wednesday, 2,47,845 samples were tested for coronavirus infection out of which

3,643 test +ve for Covid in city, 2,745 recover

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

As many as 3,643 people tested positive for novel coronavirus infection while 2,754 patients recovered in the city which reported one COVID-19 death during the last 24 hours.

Yogesh Raghuvanshi, the spokesperson at the CMO office, said that among those who tested positive were 2,192 males and 1,335 females

Aliganj was the most infected area of the city with 530 people testing positive in the last 24 hours. It is followed by Chinhat with 490 fresh cases, Alambagh (474), NK Road (275), Silver Jubilee (262), Indiranagar (252), Sarojininaragar (203), Red Cross (158) and Aishbagh 137 new cases.

The fresh cases included 117 travellers, 1,267 contacts, 512 with Influenza-like illness, 136 health workers, 88 pre-surgery cases, and 38 who were admitted to the Command Hospital.

Meanwhile, some doctors said that if one had an irritable sore throat, cough,



A health worker collecting samples at Charbagh Railway station on Thursday

headache and body ache then the person should treat it as an Omicron infection. A 35-year-old government employee who got herself tested for COVID-19 because she was running fever tested negative.

However, when her irritable throat did not improve, she went to the doctor who told her that she was COVID-19

suspect and should isolate herself.

Piyalli Bhattacharya, a senior doctor of the city, said that even if there was a slight cough or a slight irritability in the throat, one should go Covid test.

Meanwhile, Organised Medicine Academic Guild secretary Ishwar Gilada said that

a slight symptom was indicative of Omicron infection.

“It was in Delta that one had to be symptomatic but not in case of Omicron where people can be asymptomatic or have slight symptoms,” he said.

Gilada said that people should not panic because cases across the country would rise in large numbers in the coming week.

“The cases will double in a week or so but the numbers will not be real because they are reduced due to several reasons. However, the trajectory of the numbers in hospitals and numbers who had died is low hence the rise in the number of cases should not be much a matter of concern. Secondly, different states will have varied trends of rise in the number of cases but it is a matter of 3-4 weeks only and then it will settle down,” he said. He said that all the age groups were being affected by the Omicron variant of novel coronavirus and it was not that children were disproportionately affected across the country as they were not vaccinated.

18,554 were found positive.

The overall positivity rate is 1.95 per cent and the recovery rate is 93.7 per cent.

In a major triumph against the COVID-19 pandemic, Uttar Pradesh crossed the 24 crore Covid vaccine doses milestone on Thursday. This is another major landmark as the state continues to run one of the most successful vaccination campaigns in the country since the rollout of the mass immunisation drive.

Terming it as a symbol of ‘solidarity and strength’ of the most populous state against the pandemic, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath thanked the health workers, frontline workers, people associated with the administration, and every citizen who took the vaccine cover voluntarily. It is noteworthy that over one crore doses of the vaccine were administered in the state in a span of just four days. Prasad said 95.86 per cent of the eligible adults in the state had received the first dose of the Covid vaccine and 62.06 per cent had received the second dose. Till Wednesday, 66,86,070 people were vaccinated in the 15-17 age category and 5,88,149 people had received the precautionary doses so far.

UPMRC warns against fake notice inviting tender

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A fake tender notice on UPMRC’s official letterhead is being circulated on social media and other web platforms by fraudsters.

UPMRC officials said that this fake tender notice carried the name and signature of UPMRC’s senior official which had been inserted through illicit graphical manipulation.

“This notice carries false information related to pre-bidding procedure inviting tenders from all those agencies who can hire RFP for ticket counter, station controllers, senior section engineers, customer service executive and many more through licensing at various metro stations. The notice further reads that for any further modification/changes bidders are advised to stay updated on e-tendering portal for information,” a senior UPMRC official said.

He said that UPMRC would like to inform all

concerned that the aforementioned document was fake and it did not have any authenticity.

“The information pertaining to notice inviting tenders or recruitment is being published on its official website. Similarly, notices for inviting tenders are also being published in local and national level newspapers. Therefore all concerned are cautioned not to fall prey to such fake advertisements, tenders or any other such information,” he said.

UP Metro Rail Corporation has been reiterating time and again that all notices inviting tenders are being done through a proper procedure.

“UPMRC requests everyone to immediately file a complaint in the police station if in case any fraudster, web-link or a notice makes such claims. In case anyone is a false victim of such fraudsters, UPMRC or any of its officials shall not be responsible in any manner” he said.

Woman anaesthetist accuses nephrologist of harassment

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A woman anaesthetist accused a nephrologist working in a private hospital of sending her an indecent proposal and charged the owner of the private hospital with patronising the accused, in Talkatora police station area.

In her complaint, the victim, who has a super specialty degree in anaesthesia from Chicago, said she started to work with the hospital in 2020 and was in the team of the nephrologist.

She alleged that the doctor developed a crush on her and used to make obscene comments off and on and she complained about this to the owner of the hospital.

“The hospital owner did not take any action and this emboldened the accused who started sending obscene messages to me. He used to send invitations to join parties which he threw to celebrate the successes of transplants but I never attended any

such. One day he sent me a message asking me to meet him at a hotel room and have a relationship,” she said.

She was shocked by this and complained to the owner.

“The owner rebuked me and asked me not to spread this information among my acquaintances and the hospital staff. He threw me out of the job. They are threatening to frame me in some case,” she said and asked police to help her.

The police registered a case under Section 354 of the Indian Penal Code and on other counts. The police also slapped section 67 (a) of IT Act on the accused.

DUPED: A man accused three persons of forgery and criminal breach of trust in Gomti Nagar Vistar police station area on Thursday.

The victim identified as Jamshed Ahmad, named Raj Kumar Yadav, who is owner of a construction company and prime accused, Deepak Singh who is an

employee of Raj Kumar Yadav and one Arvind Tiwari in his complaint.

In his complaint, he said he purchased a SUV in 2016 on finance from a private financier to get it attached with Ola or Uber taxi services.

He said he failed to get his SUV linked and contacted Deepak for help. Deepak got the SUV sold to Raj Kumar for Rs 65,000 on condition that the latter would deposit the instalments of the SUV.

But Raj Kumar did not pay a single instalment and the financier pressured Jamshed to pay the instalment. Left with no option, he paid all the instalments and asked Raj Kumar to give him the money he paid to the financier. Raj Kumar gave him a cheque which was dishonoured.

In the meantime, Raj Kumar sold the SUV to Arvind Tiwari who is yet to get the SUV transferred in his (Arvind Tiwari’s) name.

Three killed in road accident

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a tragic incident, a BLO along with two others died while two other sustained injuries after a speeding four-wheeler collided with a motorcycle near 1090 crossing on Thursday.

The 40-year-old booth level officer (BLO) was crushed by the speeding four-wheeler, while the driver and co-passenger of the car were also killed in the tragic accident.

The deceased were identified as Bared Alam 40 of Kannauj (BLO), Ramnivas 28 of Azamgarh and Manish Dubey 30 of Basti.

The speeding car coming from Gomti Nagar area hit the bike-borne Bared (BLO) who was standing at the side of the road and crushed him to death and injured a pedestrian.

The driver along with his co-passengers got stuck inside the car. Police managed to rescue one of the passengers, Arun, and rushed him to RML Hospital.

Police had to use gas cutters to cut the gate of the car to extract the bodies. Driver Ramnivas along with his co-passenger Manish was rushed to hospital, where both were pronounced dead.

The police said they were yet to receive a complaint in this case.

SP will restore old pension scheme, Yash Bharti awards in UP: Akhilesh

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Making an important announcement, Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav on Thursday said if his party comes to power in Uttar Pradesh, it will restore the old pension scheme, benefitting lakhs of state government employees who have been agitating for the same for long, as well as the Yash Bharti awards.

With another relative of SP patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav joining the BJP after Aparna Yadav, Akhilesh Yadav took a swipe at the ruling party, thanking it for ending “parivarvaad” (dynastic politics) in his party.

“On coming to power, the Samajwadi Party will restore the old pension scheme, which will benefit the teachers, employees and officers of the state government. I have already held discussions with the employees and economic experts and have found out that we will be able to arrange funds for it by creating a corpus,” he told reporters here.

“We will seek the support of the state government employees in the upcoming Assembly election on the issue of pension,” the SP chief said.

The leaders of the employees’ union have met several times and made a demand to this effect. The BJP government had brought a new manual through which the employees appointed after April 2005 were denied this support and security on retirement, Yadav said, adding that restoring the pension scheme will be part of his party’s poll manifesto.

The employees have held agitations demanding the restoration of the old pension scheme. They have alleged that the new pension scheme depends on the share market and therefore, has uncertainty attached to it.

According to Rajiya Karamchari Sanyukt Parishad president J N Tiwari, the number of employees appointed after 2005 is around 10 lakh and most of them are teachers.

The SP president also said his party is against privatisation and termed outsourcing a wrong practice



that denies the poor and the deprived sections of the society their rights.

“The rights given by the Constitution of B R Ambedkar are being snatched by outsourcing. The SP is thinking about this as well, wait for the manifesto,” he said, adding that the party will release its manifesto after the BJP, “which has been working with a double engine for the last over four years and practising discrimination”.

Later, in a tweet, the SP chief said on coming to power, his party will also restore the Yash Bharti awards.

“The old pension scheme and the Yash Bharti samman will be restored on the SP and its allies coming to power and ‘Nagar Bharti’ awards will be given to outstanding social workers, litterateurs, journalists, artists, sportspersons and entrepreneurs, professionals who create jobs. Bicycle in 22,” he said in the tweet in Hindi.

Instituted in 1994, the Yash Bharti award was the highest civilian award given by the Uttar Pradesh government. The recipients were awarded a letter of commendation, a shawl, Rs 11 lakh and a monthly pension of Rs 50,000 on demand. However, after the process of selecting the recipients received flak from the media and activists, the awards were discontinued by the Yogi Adityanath government.

When his views were sought on

Pramod Gupta, another relative of Mulayam Singh Yadav who joined the BJP on Thursday after Aparna Yadav, the SP chief took a swipe at the ruling party, saying it should be happy now.

“The BJP should be happy about this. The allegation of parivarvaad that it levelled against us, at least it is ending our parivarvaad and I thank the BJP for this,” he said.

The saffron party, which has been opposed to dynastic politics, wants to move forward by hatching conspiracies, the former Uttar Pradesh chief minister alleged.

“The SP does not instigate differences in any family. This is the work of the BJP,” he said.

Gupta is said to be the brother-in-law of Mulayam Singh Yadav’s second wife. Aparna Yadav, who joined the BJP on Wednesday, is the SP patriarch’s daughter-in-law.

“The manner in which leaders with a wide support base like Swami Prasad Maurya and Dara Singh Chauhan have defected from the BJP and joined the SP, the way the SP has brought different parties together, the BJP has lost this fight of perception and the SP is way ahead,” Yadav said.

The Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls are scheduled to be held in seven phases from February 10 to March 7 and the counting of votes will be taken up on March 10.

UP to witness rains and thunderstorms between Jan 22-23

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The spell of chill which the state of Uttar Pradesh is witnessing is likely to continue for some more time as the Met officials have forecast light to moderate rain and thunderstorms in Uttar Pradesh from January 22 to 24.

Met officials said that a western disturbance as a cyclonic circulation lay over north Pakistan and neighbourhood which would be the cause of the rains

“An induced cyclonic circulation lies over central parts of Rajasthan and extends up to 0.9 km above mean sea level. A fresh active western disturbance is likely to affect northwest India from January 21. Isolated rainfall is very likely over west Uttar Pradesh on January 21 and it will increase thereafter with fairly widespread rainfall on January 22 and 23. Scattered to fairly widespread rainfall is very likely over east Uttar Pradesh during January 22-24,” an official said.

He pointed out that isolated hailstorms were likely over west Uttar Pradesh on January 22 accompanied with lightning at isolated places and also light to moderate thunderstorms accompanied with lightning at isolated places. Thunderstorms accompanied with lightning were also likely at isolated places over the state on January 22 and 23, he added.

Stray animal menace a key issue for farmers

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Farmers in the Lucknow district have many issues on which they will vote in the forthcoming elections but the primary one is that of the stray animals destroying their crops in a major way.

Gurmeet Singh, who is the district president of Bharatiya Kisan Union and a farmer from Bakshika-Talab, said that stray animals coming in huge herds was such a big problem that farmers had to hire labourers to protect their crops.

“We are still unable to save the crops and the numbers of the stray animals have increased to a vast extent. The sheds constructed for these stray animals only see them dying because the animals do not get fodder and there is no arrangement for them in the cold winters. There is no one to monitor these sheds,” he said.

When asked where these animals come from, Singh said that most of the farmers had left their animals to stray. “These include cows which are not giving enough milk, calves and bulls. In the current times, blue bulls don’t create as much of a problem as these animals do. The blue bulls simply eat some

portions of the crops and then move away but these stray animals which come in groups start eating the crop from one side of the farm and destroy the entire crop,” he said. He further pointed out that it appeared that these animals were coming from the side of the cities also.

He said that they had always raised the issue of stray animals destroying the crop and arrangements had been made for the same but they were hardly working. He said that they had not been able to decipher how these animals had increased in the recent years.


Singh said that there were several issues which the farmers were battling such as the high rates of electricity, no proper value for the sugarcane crop and even though promises had been made to double the farmers’ incomes, they were not able to sell the paddy crop.

Bharatiya Kisan Union Lucknow district vice-president Anar Singh from Mohanlalganj said that the issue of stray animals destroying crops was a big one.

“We have suffered a lot because of the destruction of crops. We fence the fields with wires and also keep a man to watch the crops because if he is absent then the ani-

“WE ARE STILL UNABLE TO SAVE THE CROPS AND THE NUMBERS OF THE STRAY ANIMALS HAVE INCREASED TO A VAST EXTENT. THE SHEDS CONSTRUCTED FOR THESE STRAY ANIMALS ONLY SEE THEM DYING BECAUSE THE ANIMALS DO NOT GET FODDER AND THERE IS NO ARRANGEMENT FOR THEM IN THE COLD WINTERS. THERE IS NO ONE TO MONITOR THESE SHEDS”

mals break the fence and enter the farm. Getting fertilisers is an issue and rice is not selling, these are issues which we are facing,” he added.

 बैंक ऑफ बड़ौदा Bank of Baroda ॐ वाचं धेनुमुपासीत		POSSESSION NOTICE [Rule 8 (1)] (For Immovable Property)	
<p>Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Bank of Baroda under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (Second) Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 issued a Demand Notice calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of Receipt of the said notice.</p> <p>The Borrower/Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantor/Mortgagor and the public in general, that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on below mentioned date.</p> <p>The borrower/Guarantor/Mortgagor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Bank of Baroda. The Borrower's/Guarantor's/ Mortgagor attention is invited to provisions of Section 13 (8) of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.</p> <p>DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY</p>			
Sr. No.	Name & Address of Borrower/Guarantor	Details of Immovable Property	Dt. of Demand Notice
			Dt. of Possession Notice Outstanding Amount
Branch- Sandila, Distt. Hardoi			
1.	Borrower: Kapil Jaiswal S/o Ram Chandra Jaiswal, R/o Galla Mandi Opp Hanuman Mandir Post & Tehsil Sandila Distt- Hardoi G u a r a n t o r : Ramchandra Jaiswal S/o Late Roop Chandra Jaiswal, R/o Galla Mandi Opp Hanuman Mandir Post & Tehsil Sandila Distt- Hardoi	1. All the Part & Parcels of property (Land & Vacant Plot) situated at Mohalla Sinduriya Bagh Mahatwana, Sandila, Distt-Hardoi, Reg in Book No. 1, Khand No. 552, Page on 53 to 62, SI, No. 2991 Dated 25.08.1998, at SRO. Sandila, Hardoi, Total Area- 63.65 sq. mts. In the name of Ramchandra Jaiswal S/o Late Roop Chandra Jaiswal, Bounded as under:- East- Rasta West- Plot of Shamshad Ali, North- Plot of Tulshi Ram South- Plot of Purchaser 2. All the Part & Parcels of property (Land & Vacant Plot) situated at Mohalla Sinduriya Bagh Mahatwana, Sandila, Distt-Hardoi. Reg in Book No. 1, Khand No. 498, Page on 99 to 130, SI. No., 1077 Dated 02.04.1998, at SRO- Sandila, Hardoi, Total Area- 110.10 sq. mts. In the name of Ramchandra Jaiswal S/o Late Roop Chandra Jaiswal, Bounded as under- East- Rasta West- Plot of Shamshad Ali, North- Plot of Seller, South- Plot of Sanjeev Sahay	24.08.2021 17.01.2022 Rs. 9,50,443.59 and interest thereon
Place : Sandila, Date: 21.01.2022			Authorised Officer, Bank Of Baroda

Suresh Khanna's popularity on the rise in Shahjahanpur

SHARMILA KRISHNA ■ LUCKNOW

Minister Medical Education Suresh Khanna is standing for the ninth time from Shahjahanpur for the Vidhan Sabha elections this year, a seat which he has won for a record eight times.

Incidentally, he has been with the Bharatiya Janata Party and contested from the same seat all these years.

Born in Shahjahanpur in 1953, Suresh Khanna did his graduation from Agra University and LLB from Lucknow University. An advocate by profession, he was elected to the tenth Vidhan Sabha for the first time in November 1989. He was elected to the UP assembly in 1991, 1993, 1996, 2002, 2007, 2012 and 2017.

He has also handled the portfolios of Urban

Development, Awas, Finance, Tourism in his political career

A member of Suresh Khanna's family said that his connection with the general public was strong and he had carried out the maximum number of developmental works in the constituency, bringing in electric buses, traffic signals and elevating Shahjahanpur to an extent where it got a nagar nigan in 2018.

"His success is remarkable in the light of the fact that when it is stated that Indian politics runs on caste and creed there are only 2,500 members of the community to which Suresh Khanna belongs in Shahjahanpur which means that people of other communities are voting for him" he said and added, "The minister does not have any intermediary and meets all the people of his constituency directly whether it is

for a small work such as getting a ration card."

According to BJP spokesperson Harish Srivastava, normally the behaviour of an individual plays an important role in establishing a connection with the people. "Minister Suresh Khanna's behaviour with the people is very easy and he has an easy personality, he is accountable to the aspirations of the people which is the reason that he has a continuous winning spree from the same seat and his popularity has always been on the increase" he said.

Talking about his agility even at this age, he said that most of the leaders who had high energy levels were self disciplined, "They also get their energy from the people with whom they connect and hence such leaders are those who never get tired and have bountiful of energies," he said.

CITYBRIEFS

CMS TABLEAU

City Montessori School will present a tableau on the subject 'Blessed is the spot where prayers in praise of God are offered' at this year's Republic Day parade. Explaining various aspects of the tableau, CMS founder Jagdish Gandhi said that this tableau would resonate with praises to the Almighty God, call for unity, peace, brotherhood and spread awareness about the ancient Indian ethos of Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam and Article 51 of the Indian Constitution among the general public. The tableau is divided into five portions, each giving the message of welfare of humanity in a unique way.

LAUNCHED

Indian Para-badminton coach Gaurav Khanna launched a Para-Badminton Academy in Lucknow. The state-of-the-art, high-performance centre with advanced equipment and facilities aims to improve India's medal chances at the 2024 Paralympics. Khanna also unveiled the Ageas Federal 'Quest for Fearless Shuttlers' programme to spot and nurture new talent for the 2028 and 2032 Paralympics. The high-performance



centre consists of four courts, two with BWF-approved synthetic mats for standing athletes and two wooden courts for wheelchair athletes. In addition to this, players will have access to qualified coaches, physios, physical trainers, nutritionists and other support

staff under one roof.

KISAN MELA FROM TODAY

The CSIR-Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CSIR-CIMAP) is organising a 10-day farmers' fair from Friday. Considering the

COVID-19, situation about 200 farmers will be allowed to take part in the fair every day through advance registration. The main features of the fair will be market data on medicinal and aromatic plants, sale of improved planting material and institutional publications, display of improved varieties and CIMAP products, live demonstration of distillation units processing, training in making incense sticks and rose water and demonstration of advanced agricultural techniques. The CIMAP director will inaugurate the Kisan Mela at the CIMAP premises.

IET SECURES 3RD PLACE

The Institute of Engineering and Technology has secured third place in the state and 27th in the country in NPTEL ranking. Director Vineet Kansal said that various certification courses were being conducted by the NPTEL platform for the students and the ranking was issued on the basis of good performance by the students in NPTEL courses. The institute also got autonomy from UGC recently. He said that the institute was working with commitment for the entrepreneurship development of the students.

Congress announces 2nd list of candidates

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Congress on Thursday released its second list of 41 candidates for the Uttar Pradesh assembly elections which includes 16 women candidates.

Congress has fielded 25-year-old national level shooting player Poonam Pandit from Siana constituency of Bulandshahr district. Pandit, known for giving effective speeches in Haryana, had powerfully raised her voice against the three agricultural laws that were later repealed.

The Congress has fielded Sangeeta Tyagi from Sahibabad seat in Ghaziabad. Sangeeta Tyagi is the wife of late Congress leader and national spokesperson Rajiv Tyagi who died of heart attack at his residence in Vasundhara on August 12, 2020. At that time he was part of a debate in a TV channel.

Sangeeta Tyagi has been a teacher of DAV School. She has also filed a petition in the Supreme Court against the increasing hate speeches in TV debates.

Congress has fielded Usha Gangwar from Nawabganj constituency in Bareilly district. She has

been the chairperson of zila panchayat several times. She vigorously raises issues related to women. Inspired by the Congress' 'I can fight' campaign, she left the Bahujan Samaj Party and joined the Congress.

Congress has given ticket to Sikandar Valmiki of Valmiki constituency from Agra Cantonment reserved seat. He is fighting for the rights of the Valmiki samaj. Recently, a 31-year-old youth, Arun Valmiki, was killed inside the jail in Agra. After this, Congress national general secretary Priyanka Gandhi went to Arun Valmiki's house to meet his family members. She had consoled the family, and given financial assistance of Rs 30 lakh to them from party funds. Priyanka Gandhi had also promised the Valmiki community that Congress would field a member of the community in the assembly elections with the consent of the community.

Tukki Mal Khatik has been nominated by the Congress from Kharja seat in Bulandshahr. Tukki Mal Khatik has been continuously raising voice on the issues of social justice.

To avert resentment, Congress changes 29 district city chiefs

Lucknow

Apprehending revolt by over two dozen Congress district and city chiefs to whom the party has denied ticket in the assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh, UPCC president Ajay Kumar Lallu on Thursday changed 29 local chiefs.

Surprisingly, the changes were made even when the process of polls is already on and is likely to hit the party's campaign trail.

UP Congress Committee spokesperson Ashok Singh on Thursday confirmed that on the recommendation of the All India Congress Committee, working presidents of district/city Congress committees had been appointed in many districts of Uttar Pradesh with immediate effect. In the letter issued by the party on Thursday, it has been said that the working presidents of the district/city Congress committees of the respective districts

(PNS):

are expected to join immediately and faithfully discharge the responsibilities assigned to them in the interest of the organisation.

The new working presidents announced on Thursday include Sanjay Srivastava (Lucknow South), Harikishan Bharta (Kanpur South), Kripashankar Tripathi, (Kanpur South), Dileep Kumar Singh Munna (Kanpur Dehat), Ramesh Rajbhar (Azamgarh), Rajesh Singh Gautam (Varanasi), Jaideep Tripathi (Deoria), Farid Ahmed (Sonbhadra), Misbahul (Kaushambi), Yusuf Malik (Pilibhit), Pawan Singh (Shahjahanpur), Lal Saheb Yadav (Ghazipur), Yousuf Farooqui (Unnao), Kartik Kaushik (Ghazabad), Yogesh Sharma (Baghpat), Prashant Tripathi (Amethi), Gopal Kulshrestha (Mainpuri), Tej Bahadur Pathak (Sultanpur), Ram Singh Verma (Pasi) (Hardoi), Amarjeet Singh

At the time of the coronavirus pandemic, he continuously provided food and water to the workers going on road and distributed food grains to thousands of needy. Tukki Mal Khatik is the youth voice of Congress and was also the party's district president of Bulandshahr.

Rahul Kashyap will be the Congress candidate from Baraut in Baghpat. Rahul Kashyap comes from Kahar community and has been continuously raising his voice for the rights of his community. He also contested the zila panchayat elections. In the second list released by the Committee, women, youth fighting against inequality and injustice have been made prominent candidates.

The list includes 16 women and 25 men, fulfilling the Congress promise of giving 40 per cent of the tickets to women.

The average age of the candidates of these 41 assembly seats is 46 years. The average age of women in this list is 42 years and that of men, 49 years. The list includes 12 members of general category, nine Muslims, 12 OBCs, seven SCs and one Sikh.

Triple murders rock Auraiya

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a sensational triple murder in Auraiya, the manager of SGS Inter College in Bidhuna Kotwali police area and his wife were found dead on Thursday morning. Both were strangled to death.

Mystery, however, shrouds their killing as the body of a youth was also found on the school campus 40 metres away from the spot. The youth was missing since last Monday.

Local police rushed to the spot and sent all the bodies for post-mortem and were probing the incident.

The killing spread panic in the area and the local residents staged a protest, demanding arrest of the killers.

Reports said that 85-year-old Gandharv Singh Yadav, manager of SGS Inter College in Mohalla Naveen Basti East, had been the principal of an inter college in Lulua Balanpur, Kannauj. After retirement in 2000, he established the school in Bidhuna. He lived with his wife Kamala Devi, 77, on the school premises. The bodies of both were found in the room on

Thursday morning when a college employee went to deliver milk to them.

He called the couple but when the channel gate was not opened, he went inside to enquire and was shocked to find the old age couple murdered. He immediately informed the local residents who called the police.

As the police started the investigation, they were shocked when they found the body of a 27-year-old youth lying on the same school campus. The youth was later identified as Vimal Kumar, son of Chandrabhan of Kaska Mohalla Jawahar Nagar. His father Chandrabhan is working in the tehsil.

Chandrabhan later informed the police that his son had returned from Pune on January 17 with his wife Preeti.

Vimal was in a private job in Pune. He left the house at around 10 pm on Monday night but did not return. The family launched a search for him but after failing to trace his whereabouts, they reported his disappearance to the local police and also lodged his missing report.

IAS (CADRE) RULES AMENDMENT

Didi to PM: Rethink 'draconian' plan

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA



Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has dashed off yet another letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi requesting him to reconsider the decision to amend the service rules of the Indian Administrative Services officers.

Claiming that the amendment to IAS (cadre) Rules, 1954 would "destroy" the federal fabric and basic structure of the Constitution by creating a "fear psychosis" among the offices Banerjee wrote that the proposed amendment — seeking to pull out any IAS officer without one's consent and the "agreement of the State Government", putting both at the mercy of the Centre — was "draconian" in nature and hinted at "centralization of power."

"It is completely going to render them and the State Governments at the mercy of

the Central Governments since the all-India service serves as the backbone of a State's administrative machinery," Mamata said in her second such letter in a span of eight days.

The Centre earlier proposed an amendment to the IAS Rules, which would empower it to post IAS officers on Central deputation, ignoring reservations of State Governments.

Apprehending a drastic misuse of the proposed changes she further wrote "the proposed changes are very much prone to be misused by the party ruling at the Centre. We

at the helm of governance in the country should not get misled by immediate gains which may sound tempting but have the potential of causing damage for all times to come... This will essentially nullify India's constitutional scheme in letter and spirit."

The issue started last year when BJP national president JP Nadda's convoy was attacked by alleged Trinamool Congress men in the Diamond Harbour area of South 24 Parganas.

Amid subsequent war of words between the State Government and the Centre over the issue ahead of the Assembly elections repeated attempts by the Union Home Ministry to summon the IPS officers responsible for Nadda's security was thwarted by the State Government.

In another incident the Centre had summoned then Chief Secretary Alapan Bandopadhyay to Delhi for fail-

Amendment will be another nail in coffin of Indian federal structure: Omar Abdullah

Srinagar: National Conference leader Omar Abdullah on Thursday said the Centre's plan to appropriate powers of transferring IAS and IPS officers will be "another nail" in the coffin of the country's federal structure.

He was reacting to media reports that the Union Government is planning to acquire for itself overriding powers to transfer IAS and IPS officers through central depu-

tation, doing away with the requirement of taking the approval of the State Governments.

"This would be another nail in the coffin of India's federal structure. How would CM Modi react if PM Modi summarily removed his DG or CS? J&K lost all its powers of appointment in 2019, now it looks like the rest of India's states will go the same way," Abdullah tweeted. **PTI**

ing to attend Prime Minister's meeting at Kaalika. But the State Government refused to release him.

The BJP has been of the opinion that the tight strangle-

hold of Mamata Banerjee Government on the IAS/IPS brass had made the babus partisan towards the ruling Trinamool Congress.

PIL filed in Calcutta HC over dropping of Netaji's tableau from R-Day parade

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Amid raging controversy over the Centre's refusal to accommodate Bengal's tableau themed upon Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in the Republic Day parade a Public Interest Litigation has been filed in the Calcutta High Court. Advocate Rama Prasad Sarkar filed a PIL in the Division Bench of the Chief Justice seeking to know why Netaji's tableau was dropped. The matter is likely to be heard on Monday.

Earlier clarifying the Centre's stance Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had written a letter to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee saying "this time the tribute is being paid on the occasion of the 125th. This is being done on behalf of the country. This is a special moment for each State. I hope."

Earlier the Chief Minister had written a protest letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi wondering why Netaji's tableau was dropped.

Incidentally the country has been celebrating Netaji's 125th anniversary and the country's 75th year of Independence.

Kejriwal invites Parrikar's son to join AAP in Goa

Panaji: After Utpal Parrikar, son of late Goa chief minister Manohar Parrikar, failed to make it to the BJP's list of candidates for the next month's Goa assembly polls, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday accused the saffron party of adopting a "use and throw policy even with the Parrikar family".

Kejriwal invited Utpal Parrikar to join the AAP and contest the assembly election on its ticket.

"Goans feel v sad that BJP has adopted use and throw policy even with Parrikar family. I have always respected Manohar Parrikar ji.

Utpal ji is welcome to join and fight elections on AAP ticket," the Delhi Chief Minister said in a tweet minutes after the saffron party announced the list of candidates.

Utpal Parrikar, who had been demanding the BJP's ticket from the Panaji seat, did not get the party's candidature as per its list of 34 candidates which it announced on Thursday.

Manohar Parrikar, who died in March 2019 while serving as the chief minister of the coastal state, had represented this constituency for more than two decades. While announcing the list of candidates for the February 14 Goa polls, BJP's state election in-charge Devendra Fadnavis said in Delhi that the party had given four other options to Utpal Parrikar, which he did not accept. **PTI**

Uproar over auction of farmers' lands in Raj; CM asks officials to stop it

Jaipur: BKU leader Rakesh Tikait on Thursday met in Rajasthan's Dausa farmers whose lands have been auctioned by commercial banks over the non-payment of loans, while peasants led by BJP MP Kirodi Lal Meena protested against the action outside the chief minister's residence.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot asked officials to stop the auction of agricultural land of farmers.

Land attachment and auction is being undertaken by banks that are controlled by the Reserve Bank of India, he said, urging the Centre to waive farmers' loans. Notably, many instances of land auction notices being issued to farmers who have been unable to pay back their loans have come to the fore recently.

Tikait, who is the

spokesperson of the Bharatiya Kisan Union, met farmers in Ramgarh Pachwara in Dausa district whose lands were auctioned by banks after they failed to repay their loans.

Talking to reporters, Tikait said, "Why was the auction done? An investigation should be carried out against bank officials and a case registered. You cannot auction a farmer's entire land for a small loan. It was an illegal auction. The land mafia have their eyes on prime land."

He claimed several farmers have received land auction notices. "We will meet bank officials on the issue and decide the future course of action," the BKU leader said. Separately, a group of farmers from Dausa led by BJP MP Dr Kirodi Lal Meena managed to reach the high-security zone near Gehlot's residence. **PTI**

Maha Vikas Aghadi bags 75 out of 106 Nagar Panchayat seats

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Though the Opposition BJP emerged as the single largest party in the Nagar Panchayat elections in Maharashtra declared on Thursday, the Congress captured on its own in three urban local bodies — of Korchhi, Chamroshi and Dhanora — out of the total nine bodies that went to polls in the naxalite-infested district. The BJP captured power in one urban panchayat of Kurkheda. In Etapalli Nagar Panchayat, the Congress and NCP are poised to come to power as an alliance.

Though the Nagar Panchayat elections were held on individual party lines, the MVA — as a collective entity and the ruling alliance in the state — has emerged stronger in the polls. In terms of seats, the NCP (381), Congress (344) and Shiv Sena (296) have collectively won 1021

tracts of the state..

In the results for the nine Nagar Panchayats in the remaining one district of Gadchiroli in eastern Maharashtra declared on Thursday, the Congress captured on its own in three urban local bodies — of Korchhi, Chamroshi and Dhanora — out of the total nine bodies that went to polls in the naxalite-infested district. The BJP captured power in one urban panchayat of Kurkheda. In Etapalli Nagar Panchayat, the Congress and NCP are poised to come to power as an alliance.

Though the Nagar Panchayat elections were held on individual party lines, the MVA — as a collective entity and the ruling alliance in the state — has emerged stronger in the polls. In terms of seats, the NCP (381), Congress (344) and Shiv Sena (296) have collectively won 1021

seats out of the total Nagar Panchayat seats. In essence, the MVA has won 56.81 per cent of the total Nagar Panchayat seats that went to polls.

In terms of power captured in urban local bodies, the Congress (17), NCP (16) and Shiv Sena (11) — have gained control over the 44 local bodies out of the total 106 Nagar Panchayats. As a ruling entity in the state, the MVA — which will cobble a post-poll alliance with its constituents -- is poised to capture in nearly 75 out of 106 urban self-local bodies that went to polls in 32 districts of the state in two phases.

On its part, the BJP — which has emerged as the single largest in the Nagar Panchayat polls in the State — has captured power in 25 urban self bodies, while it expects to capture power in six other Nagar Panchayats.

Govt's order to cancel title deeds triggers row in Kerala

Thiruvananthapuram/Idukki: The Kerala Revenue Department's recent order to cancel title deeds, allegedly issued illegally in high range Idukki district, has triggered a political row with ruling CPI(M) strongman M M Mani openly expressing displeasure, even as Revenue Minister K Rajan justified it but assured that no one would be evicted from their land over the order.

Indicating that the department would go ahead with the cancellation move, the minister said the order was issued as part of continuation of procedures of a government decision taken in 2019 and its objective was to give authentic title deeds to deserved persons and to cancel those possessed by underserving individuals.

CPI(M) state secretary Kodiyeri Balakrishnan also came in support of the minister saying that no one would be

evicted from their land and new title deeds would be issued after conducting a legal scrutiny.

Known as "Raveendran Pattayam" in general, the controversial title deeds, which the government has decided to cancel now, were allegedly issued illegally by M A Raveendran, the then Devikulam Taluk Additional Tahsildar, during the rule of the Left government in the 1990s.

The Raveendran title deeds have been at the centre of a political row here since then as critics allege that they have no legal validity as they had been issued flouting all legal norms.

Justifying the decision to cancel them, the minister said those title deeds were just "useless" as its holders were facing difficulty to avail loans over the land, sell it or remit tax as the deeds had been issued illegally. **PTI**

In deep snow, jawans patrol forward areas to check infiltration

Poonch: Back-deep into a tapestry of heavy snow, Indian jawans brave extreme weather and inhospitable terrain to conduct patrolling and keep a hawk's eye on infiltrating terrorists ready to sneak into this side of the Line of Control (LoC) in the Poonch sector.

Sepoy Surinder Singh (named changed), walks through deep snow daily to man the listening post in forward area at a height of 7000 feet along LoC in Poonch sector to keep vigil on the movement of infiltrating terrorists camped in launching pads across the border ready to sneak into this side, if they get slightest opportunity on the surveillance front. "Snowfall or no snow---chilly winters or dangerous gorges---threat of attacks - our morale is high to keep round the clock vigilance along LoC", a soldier said. **PTI**

Task for ‘Aurangabad House’ not easy to revive its lost glory

RAMESH K SINGH ■ VARANASI

The task for ‘Aurangabad House’, a parental house of former union minister late Pt Kamla Pati Tripathi, which not only dominated the politics in the city but also in the adjoining districts, especially in Chandauli and Mirzapur, during the most of the period in the 20th century, is not easy to revive its lost glory. During the 21st century, this leading political centre saw just one happy moment when its fifth generation representative Lalitesh Pati Tripathi won the Marihan assembly in 2012 despite Samajwadi Party(SP) wave. Marihan is the same constituency which covers a sizable area of old Rajgarh assembly in Mirzapur prior to delimitation of constituencies and Rajgarh and its adjoining seat in Mirzapur were represented by Lalitesh’s grandfather Pt Lokpati Tripathi five times.

If Lalitesh contests assembly polls this time, his task will not be an easy one. After over a century long relations with the Congress, some months ago Lalitesh had quit the party. At that time, there were speculations that he might go to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) but Lalitesh joined Trinamool Congress, which has virtually no political base in the state but as its president and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamta Banerjee is scheduled to visit the state to address a virtual meeting in favour of SP, it may be possible that if Lalitesh contests this time from Marihan seat, he may be supported by the SP. Only in that case, there may be chances of Lalitesh to contest strongly from the Marihan seat, which he lost in 2017. Seeing his popularity in his area, the Congress had also fielded him from Mirzapur parliamentary seat in 2014 but he lost to National



Lalitesh Pati playing Holi along with his supporters.

(File Photo)

Democratic Alliance (NDA) candidate Anupriya Patel of Apna Dal (Sonela).

The history of the family is more than 400 years old when the ancestors of Tripathis came to the city during the regime of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. The forefathers of the family taught Sanskrit to Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Mughal Emperor Shahjahan. It was Dara Shikoh who had donated the entire Aurangabad to Tripathi’s family as ‘Guru-Daksina’. During the time of Pt Kamlapati Tripathi, the family reputation reached a climax when he not only became Chief Minister but also a strong Union Minister. More than a century ago, the family associated with the Congress when Pt Narayan Pati Tripathi, father of Pt Kamla Pati, worked for the party. However, the domination

of Aurangabad House was seen during the time of seventh CM of UP Pt Kamla Pati.

The family always remained close to Congress despite all ups and downs since 1905 when Pt Narayan Pati Tripathi was member of reception committee when Congress Conference was convened by Gopal Krishna Gokhale in this holy city. He was close to Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Pt Madan Mohan Malviya. Aurangabad House was centre of Congress politics during climax days of Kamla Pati when top party leaders like Pt Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Dr Sampurnanand, Indira Gandhi and others often visited there but since 1989, the family members had contested almost nine elections but succeeded in winning just two. In 1990 when Pt Kamla Pati died, former

Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi walked a long distance to join his huge funeral procession till Manikarnika Ghat here.

After a long gap of 16 years, this house had tasted its last win in 2012 assembly election. In the meantime, there was a single win but that was in an indirect contest when Lalitesh’s father Pt Rajesh Pati Tripathi became MLC (from Mirzapur). Rajesh Pati contested many Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha polls unsuccessfully. Lalitesh won the assembly election from almost the same area which was represented in 1996 by his grandfather Pt Lokpati Tripathi, a former UP Minister, was also elected to assembly in 1972, 1974, 1980 and 1985. His wife Chandra Tripathi had once represented Chandauli parliamentary constituency.

Water level of Ganga continuously rising in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

The water level of Ganga in Prayagraj is continuously increasing. On Thursday, again 24 thousand cusecs of water was released from Kanpur barrage. Earlier, 20 to 22 thousand cusecs of water was being released from there. By reaching Prayagraj, that water has put the people of the Mela area in trouble. In Magh Mela, water has entered the camps of organisations situated on the banks of the Ganga. There is a stir in the Kalpavasi camps. People are taking shelter in safe places here and there with their belongings.

Irrigation department’s arrangements are insufficient to ensure that water does not enter the Kalpavasi camps. An attempt was made to stop the water from the sand but that too has been washed away. The Irrigation Department has tendered to stop the erosion from Geo Tube but till now they have not used it. Whereas they should have already used Jio Tube.

Due to the negligence of the officers of the Irrigation Department, water is continuously inundating in the camps. Due to their carelessness, instead of doing penance, the



Water enters tents after increase in level of Ganga river at Magh Mela in Prayagraj

Pioneer

people of Kalpawasis are busy collecting their belongings. The settlement of the fair has been disturbed due to the rise in the water level of the Ganga. The Kalpwas are troubled, one is the havoc of winter and corona, now the flood of Ganga has increased the crisis on them. Most of the Tirth Purohit

camps have been set up on Triveni and Kali Marg on the banks of the Ganga towards Jhansi. All of them were settled in it. Now they are being shifted to Sector 5. So far, about five hundred Kalpwas have been shifted from Sector 2 and 3 to Sector 5. This sequence is still going on. The water level of

Ganga may rise further in the coming days. Therefore, other organisations on the banks of the river are also being removed from there. Due to the rise in water, the activity of the water police has also increased. The water police team is continuously monitoring the bathing ghat.

Cold wave forces denizens to stay indoors in Prayagraj

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Denizens of the Sangam City continued to shiver all day through Thursday even though the day witnessed mild sunshine. After witnessing cold conditions on Tuesday and Wednesday when Prayagraj was even colder than Shimla –Thursday failed to bring any respite as the cloud also covered and cool westerlies continued to force people to stay indoors.

Apart from the common man and commuters, the main problem was amongst the devotees who have come to Magh Mela. Despite the fact that the authorities have made

provision of a bonfire for them and facilities like Rainbasera, the cool conditions made people shiver all day.

The minimum temperature on Thursday was recorded at 10.2 degree Celsius. Although it was over four degrees more than what the city recorded on Tuesday, when the minimum temperature was recorded at four degrees Celsius, it was the low value of maximum temperature which made things worse. The maximum temperature on Wednesday was 14.4 degree Celsius.

Earlier on February 12 last year, the city had recorded the minimum temperature of 3.7

degrees. Adding to the problem was dense fog in the morning. The brief sunshine that came out in the afternoon failed to provide any respite. According to head of the department of Geography, Allahabad University, Prof AR Siddiqui, “The cold will remain dominant for now and there is a possibility of thunderstorms by the end of the week. The condition would improve on Friday followed by rains or overcast conditions on Sunday and the day after”.

To beat the cold, common man were seen lighting the bonfires, even during the day time. Although there was some movement in the markets and

localities during noon, in the evening, the situation again reduced to only essential movement as people avoided going out in the open and remained confined to their houses. Situation at the Magh Mela was no different wherein groups of devotees and visitors were seen sitting around a bonfire and somehow trying to keep themselves warm.

“We are observing Kalpwas and following all the religious practice but because of the intense cold conditions, these are testing times as heaters or fire is not allowed in the tents”, said Ram Narain Mishra, a resident of Raniganj, Pratapgah.

No relief from cold wave in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

There was no relief from cold wave in the city as well as in the adjoining region of Purvanchal (eastern UP), which not only affected the normal life badly but also put a brake on the individual contact campaign of many political parties, though the dates of assembly polls are inching close. Due to restrictions imposed by the Election Commission (EC) in view of a surge in corona cases, the political parties are giving more focus on voters’ contact drive these days.

After a slight relief a day ago when the minimum temperature had increased from 5 to 7 degree Celsius, Thursday also witnessed a sharp decline in mercury. Despite sunshine during day hours, the residents have been forced to sit near bonfires or heaters. Even in markets, at several places the



People getting relief from cold wave standing near a bonfire at Nagar Nigam in Varanasi on Thursday.

Pioneer

vendors and others were seen sitting around the bonfires.

Due to foggy conditions especially during the morning

hours, the speed of train and road transportation has been slowed down. It is expected that the region may be hit by rain in the coming days. The cold wave also affected the activities at internationally famous Ganga ghats while roads started wearing a deserted look by the evening. The foggy conditions have forced several flights to be cancelled and according to the report from the Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Babatpur, the flights 68-404 from Delhi, G8-188 from Lucknow and G8-188 from Delhi were cancelled while some flights including SG-201 (Mumbai), G8-349 (Mumbai), 6E-6613 (Delhi) and 6E-915 (Hyderabad) landed late. The same condition was also seen as many long distance trains were running late. Similarly, the speed of Roadways and other buses was sharply slowed down during the night and morning hours.

DM directs ROs to expedite distribution of voter slips

VARANASI (PNS): To ensure the cent per cent voting in assembly elections, the district administration has started the work to make available the voters’ slips to voters at their homes so that they could not face any inconvenience in finding out their polling booth numbers on the polling day. The District Election Officer Kaushal Raj Sharma has directed the returning officers to speed up the work. It may be mentioned here that the polling in Varanasi is scheduled in the last and seventh phase of election on March 7. The District Magistrate/District Election Officer Kaushal Raj Sharma has directed the returning officers to expedite the door-to-door distribution of voter slips to the concerned voters and ensure that 100 per cent voter slips are made available to the voters. While giving the voter slip, the concerned voter should be informed about his booth and if any booth has been changed, it must be informed to him especially, he added while chairing a meeting at his camp office on Wednesday last to review the preparations for the assembly elections and added

that it should also be ensured that no eligible voter’s name is left out in the voter list.

The ROs must conduct on-site inspection of all the polling stations, especially the critical booths, in their respective areas and whatever problems come to light, they must be resolved in time, Sharma directed and added that the ROs must inspect the vulnerable booths. The list of minority voters of all sections should be prepared and it should be ensured that on the polling day, they can vote without fear, he directed further.

Sharma directed the ROs and police officers that the model code of conduct should be followed in letter and spirit and added that hooters should be removed from the vehicles of political parties. The ROs should inspect the government arms shops and reconcile the registers, he directed adding, during the reconciliation of the register of arms shops, it must be ensured that fake receipts are not issued under any circumstances as it had come to knowledge that arms holders collected receipts without depositing the license

arms. Cartridges should also be counted and it should be ensured, he directed further.

Sharma expressed displeasure over not taking action against illegal liquor so far and directed the District Excise Officer to ensure action against illicit liquor by campaigning on a war footing and during surprise inspection of shops, the stock must be matched. Sharma He also directed to ensure arrangements for training work of the personnel to be done from February 1 to 6 as the training of micro observers is proposed on February 7 while the training counting personnel will be held on February 8. Necessary barricading work should be done before February 6 at the nomination site. The Deputy District Election Officer Ranvijay Singh, Additional District Magistrate, City Gulabchand, ROs, police officers and others were present in the meeting.

FRONTLINE, POLL WORKERS TO GET AYUSH KITS: Frontline workers and polling personnel will increase their immunity by consuming Ayurvedic medicines included in the AYUSH Raksha Kit as

these kits will be distributed free-of-cost to them by the Department of AYUSH. Regional Ayurveda and Unani Officer Dr Bhawna Dwivedi said that preparations have been started to provide such kits to the frontline workers and officers/ employees engaged in election duty and the same will be made available to them soon. Dr Bhavna told that Director (Ayurveda) Prof SN Singh, in a recent virtual meeting with all regional Ayurveda officers, had directed that AYUSH Raksha (defense) kits should be provided to all frontline workers and poll personnel. In response to the direction, she added, the lists of beneficiaries have been sought from the concerned departments and as soon as these lists are received, the distribution of kits will be started. She said that the consumption of Ayurvedic medicines available in these kits will not only increase immunity, but they are also very effective in the treatment of corona. It is also very beneficial for patients living in home isolation to recover from corona infection, she added.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ ALLAHABAD

Keeping in view the increasing cases of Covid-19 due to the surge of a new variant of coronavirus, the Allahabad high court has extended all interim orders passed by the High Court at Allahabad as well its Lucknow bench, all the district courts and other courts across the state, which were subsisting on December 31, till February 28, 2022.

Hearing a suo motu PIL, a division bench comprising Chief Justice Rajesh Bindal and Justice Priyush Agrawal further directed that the criminal courts in the state, which granted bail orders or anticipatory bail for a limited period which are likely to expire on or before February 28, 2022, shall stand extended for a period till February 28, 2022.

“In cases of eviction, dispossession or demolition, already passed by the high court, district court or civil court, if not executed till the date of passing of this order, shall remain in abeyance for the period till February 28, 2022,” the court added.

The court further directed

that the state government, municipal authorities, other local bodies and agencies and instrumentalities of the state government shall be slow in taking action of demolition and eviction of persons till February 28, 2022. Besides, any bank or financial institution shall not take any action for auction in respect of any property or an institute or person or party or anybody corporate till February 28, 2022, the court added.

However, the court made it clear that in case of extension of interim orders as per the present order, any undue hardship and prejudice of any extreme nature is caused to any of the party to such proceedings, the said party/parties would be at liberty to seek appropriate relief by moving appropriate application before the competent court, tribunal, judicial or quasi-judicial forum and the general direction issued by this order shall not be an embargo in considering such application and deciding the same after affording an opportunity of hearing to all the parties to said case.

The court directed to list this PIL on February 24, 2022

for the next hearing.

PRAYAGRAJ REPORTS 444 NEW CASES: Sangam City reported a total of 444 cases including four cases on the mela campus here. Nodal Officer (Covid 19) and additional chief medical officer Dr Rishi Sahai told the newspapers that as many as four persons tested positive for Covid-19 infection on mela campus through RT PCR method.

He added that health teams have been collecting samples of seers, saints, kalpwas and others from different camps and spots with an aim to check the spread of the coronavirus infection. Moreover, as many as 440 people have tested positive for coronavirus infection in the district on Wednesday.

Officials said that health teams have also intensified collection of samples and the department is working on a 3T formula including testing, tracking and treatment to check the spread of the disease.

ADWAIT VAAD IS THE REAL REFLECTION OF SANATAN DHARMA: The description of ‘Adwait Vaad’ by Swami Vivekananda is the real reflection of Sanatan Dharma and only this can bring world

peace and goodness to mankind, said Prof DN Dwivedi, former head of the philosophy department, Allahabad University while addressing a virtual seminar on ‘Nationalism of Vivekananda and Youth Awakening’ organised by Bharat Vikas Parishad, Prayagraj. He said that all should dedicate themselves for the cause of Nation, and no religion is bigger than Nationalism.

Swami Vivekananda could realise the presence of the Almighty not only in human beings, but in all creatures, flora and fauna. This philosophy impelled Prof Jagdish Chandra Basu to discover life in plants, said Prof Dwivedi and added that to know the Almighty, one should know himself. Real worship of God is the service to every living being, so Swamiji always laid emphasis on serving the poor and the needy. Chief guest on the occasion was the judicial member of the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal Mr Bhuvanesh Saini, who discussed Swami Vivekanand in detail and said that a strong India can be built only by following the path shown by Swamiji

DC reviews progress of Mega Sports Indoor Infra

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Kanpur Divisional Commissioner, Dr Raj Shekhar, reviewing the progress of ongoing Mega Sports Indoor Infra of Uttar Pradesh instructed CEO, Kanpur Smart City Limited to prepare a proposal for the installation of solar panels on roof structure of the complex so that lighting can be done from the solar panels and the building not only be illuminated aesthetically but made energy efficient as well. He also directed the officials to complete all pending works of Zone Two and Zone Three by the end of April, 2022. He was accompanied by Kanpur Municipal Commissioner, ACEO Kanpur Smart City Ltd and the Nodal Officer as well.

He said Zone One I, which consisted of the Sports Convention Complex (STC), had been completed within the time frame. He said in this section sports-related seminars, exhibitions, lectures and pre and post sports events can be organised. He said the new upcoming infra would be unique and first of its kind in the entire state. He said the prominent features were Multi-level, Multi-Indoor sports arena which will be helpful for amateurs, professional and community players. He added that the complex will have two glass squash courts. He added that it will also have an indoor shooting range of 10 meter five bays with a seating arena. He said similarly it will also have facilities for Para Olympics Games with easy access for differentlyabled sport persons and almost 22 type indoor games out of 28 Olympic games which can be played in this complex.

The DC said Zone Two



Divisional Commissioner, Dr Raj Shekhar reviews the progress at Mega Sports Indoor Infra under construction on Thursday.

Pioneer

will comprise sports activities for all age groups community having a large gym, male and female separate spa, sauna steam and jacuzzi along with physiotherapy room, kids playroom with differently abled kids playroom on the ground floor and billiards room, TT room, Yoga-cum-aerobics room and sports academic room and added that all will be fully airconditioned and of high finish. He said the first covered swimming pool of semi-Olympic size of Kanpur had added attraction with a kid splash pool for full-day use even in hot summer and late-night uses. He said these facilities were complemented with a fine dining restaurant along with an open poolside cafe-

ria.

Dr Shekhar informed that Zone Three had one of the largest indoor sports halls which can accommodate seven badminton courts at a time or alternatively other games like TT, handball, basket ball, judo, karate, wrestling etc can be held. He said there will also be a spectators gallery of 500 pax. He said it will have four dressing rooms for team players which can be accessed from outside also and will cater to cricket and other outdoor games.

He issued orders that a Sports Educational Hub should also be developed so that players and students can get proper training where lectures, academics and seminars can be

held.

He said overall development of players can be done. He also directed the Nodal Officer to make Return on Investment (ROI) with Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Module and it should by duly vetted by IIM Indore. He also issued instruction to get the survey of boundary wall of entire campus be done by HBTU team after which estimate for rectification and construction of the new boundary wall should be made.

He also instructed the Nodal Officer to get a proposal made for parking under the Metro tracks so that the complex had sufficient two and four-wheeler parking facility.

IIT-K ESummit'21 to kick off today

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

ESummit'21, the three-day flagship event of the entrepreneurship cell of the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur will kick off on Friday.

A first of its kind, the event is expected to have a four-fold audience from its previous editions.

In the past, it had some eminent personalities like Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Dr Hamid Karzari, former president of Afghanistan, Rajat Sharma and Saurabh Goel (president, Havells) and has been a successful mentor and platform to over 250+ startups.

The three-day event, to be held online, will consist of lecture series from Srikanth Gopalakrishnan, MD, CIO-HR, Deutsche Bank; Tapan Singhel, MD CEO, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance; Alok Bansal, Founder Director, PolicyBazaar; Rahul Garg, Co-Founder, Pharameasy among a dozen others, who will share their valuable knowledge with the audience.

ESummit'21 will also comprise various workshops like introduction to blockchain and cryptocurrency, app development with low-code, digital marketing through RL, networking with a purpose, among a few others which give the audience the platform to hone the necessary skills required in an entrepreneur.

With a prize pool of over Rs 7.50 Lakh, competitions like BizQuiz, Decrypt, PitchPrime, Pitchers 2.0, and many others will give the participants a dose of entrepreneur zeal and test their entrepreneur mindset with a holistic approach.

Upstart'21, competition for startups provides a one-shot platform to startups to scale their ideas from thoughts to reality by bringing VCs, marketing agencies, fundings, mentors, and investors on the same platform.

Being online, the event will transcend all geographical and age barriers, with an expected audience from students, academia, experts, industrialists, and all startup enthusiasts of all ages.

The registrations for the events are now live on their website, www.ecelliitk.org/esummit/ where more information about the event can also be found.

OXYGEN CONCENTRATORS: With a noble objective to play an instrumental role in strengthening the preparedness and support UP government in its endeavour to ensure adequate oxygen provision during the ongoing Omicron crisis, Servotech Power Systems Limited secured another project for providing medical-grade oxygen concentrators in a call for tender by Uttar Pradesh Medical Supplies Corporation Limited (UPM-SCL), a nodal organisation for centralised procurement and distribution of drugs and equipment to government health facilities in Uttar Pradesh.

3 mobile phone thieves arrested

KANPUR (PNS): The SWAT team of DCP (South) busted a gang of mobile phone thieves of Jharkhand and arrested its three members, including a minor, on Thursday. Police recovered 102 stolen mobile phones from the accused. Addressing media persons, Station House Officer of Barra, Dinanath Mishra, said he had been receiving information about theft of cell phones in the vegetable mandi. The local residents had caught a thief red-handed stealing the cell phone of a professor's wife in Sabzi Mandi, Barra-5 on Tuesday night and handed him over to police. During questioning, the arrested person disclosed that he was a native of Jharkhand and revealed the names of his two accomplices as Gautam and Rehan. They were living in a rented room in Barra and posed as labourers. Late on Wednesday night, on a tip-off, the SWAT team of DCP (South) Ravina Tyagi along with Barra police arrested Gautam and Rehan near Barra-7 and during search of the room recovered 102 stolen cell phones. During questioning, all the three accused disclosed that they used to steal cell phones in crowded places including vegetable mandi and disappear in the crowd.

Regenerative braking system saves revenue

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

With the electrification of the railway track, the facility of high-speed, pollution-free and economical rail movement has become available. Along with this in modern technology 3-phase electric locomotive arrangement for regenerative braking has been done due to which the kinetic energy generated during braking is converted into electric energy and there is a reduction in the cost of rail movement.

Regenerative braking is a general braking system, in which the kinetic energy generated during braking in a train by converting in the form of electrical energy reaches the Over Head Equipment (OHE), which is used in the form of energy used in rail movement. In this system, the locomotive is braked without physical use of the brake block of the wheel. Due to brake block not getting on the wheel, there is no rub-

Trains to be cancelled

CORRESPONDENT ■ GORAKHPUR

In the context of doubling line electrification work between Jaithari-Nigaura-Chulha stations of Bilaspur Division of South East Central Railway (SECR) due to line connectivity the cancellation of trains will be as follows, CPRO Pankaj Kumar Singh said.

DURG-NAUTANWA EXPRESS: The 18201 Durg-Nautanwa biweekly Express will remain cancelled on January 21, 26 and 28.

NAUTANWA-DURG EXPRESS: The 18202 Nautanwa-Durg biweekly Express will remain cancelled on January 23, 28 and 30.

bing on the wheel and brake block, this also saves railway revenue. In regenerative braking the traction motor acts as the generator. In the current financial year 2021-22, till the month of November last year, a total of 2,464 million units traction energy has been consumed. Regenerative braking produced a total of 15.4 million units of energy through which

railway revenue worth ₹7.08 crore was saved. This type of braking system is available only in three-phase electric loco.

On an average, 285 electric locos are working in North Eastern Railway (NER), out of which 180 are three-phase electric loco, Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) Pankaj Kumar Singh said.

Flag march staged

CORRESPONDENT ■ CHANDAULI

In view of the assembly elections a flag march under the leadership of Joint Magistrate

During the march, the police along with paramilitary force visited the town area and Sikandarpur, Shikarganj, Hetimpur, Gaighat, Newajganj,



Prem Prakash Meena and Circle Officer (CO) Ramveer Singh, along with police and paramilitary force personnel was conducted under Chakia Kotwali area on Wednesday.

Bhishampur villages etc.

TWO ARRESTED: In continuation of intensive drive against crime and criminals under the leadership of inspector incharge Vinay Prakash

EC provides additional facility for filing nominations online

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The District Magistrate, City, Vishak G Iyer while addressing a meeting at NIC Collectorate on Thursday held for training the different political parties representatives for filing nominations said the Election Commission had provided an additional facility of filing nominations online and said those keen on filing nominations online can do so on <https://suvidha.ecigov.in/login>. He said if candidates were keen on filing online they can use this site by taking out the print and in Format-I can file it as per the directive of the Returning Officer.

He said similarly the candidates can also file affidavits and after notification can be presented before the Returning Officer. He said not only this arrangements have also been made for depositing the fixed amount. He said once if successfully done then the deposit money can be made on 'Pay' and once clicked on it the payment will be made. He said apart from this the candidates file their nominations in the



District Magistrate, City, Vishak G Iyer chairs the training camp of political parties at Collectorate on Thursday.

Pioneer

tradition pattern in which they had been doing it. Prominent present on the occasion were Dayanand Prasad, Kamal Kishore and representatives of various political parties.

CHUNAV PATHSHALA: The Additional City Magistrate (I), and Returning Officer, Rajesh Kumar addressing the meeting of the entire supervisors on Thursday said the Election Commission of India had issued orders to conduct

'Chunav Pathshala' at every polling centre so that the process of voting can explained to the voter.

He said the Pathshala will take off from January 21 simultaneously at all the polling centres and held between 12.30 and 2 pm by BLO concerned. He said the BLO need to invite all teachers, staff and the prominent people of the area.

He said a framework for

the meeting and it need to be mentioned what all had been informed to the gathering. He said photography and videography of the meeting was mandatory and details all forwarded by 5 pm through Whatapp.

He also directed that DIOS and officials at his level that this 'Chunav Pathshala' should be conducted for principals and vice principals and take all possible help from them.

Campaign to woo students into CS profession to be launched

KANPUR (PNS): The Company Secretary, Kanpur Chapter has decided to launch a special campaign to woo students into the profession and for this it had worked out a strategy to counsel students of class XII in schools and apprise them the role of a CS and the benefits of taking up the profession. The Chapter will motivate students and open a special placement cell as well. It has also been decided to impart special coaching to Backward section students. The foundation course exam will be held in June 2022 and interested students can apply till April 15, 2022.

This was informed by the newly elected Chairman of the Company Secretary, Kanpur Chapter, Arvind Kumar Katiyar while addressing a press conference on Thursday.

He said a big section of the studnets were unaware of the role of CS and said the CS was one of the legal representatives of a company who performed and managed various regulatory functions like carrying incorporation of the firm, sufficing preparation and audit of business reports, filing annual returns, dealing with amended regulations on a steady basis. He said the first and the foremost quality of a CS aspirant should be able to communicate with people from various other departments in the organisation to ensure that company practices were only legal and financially pleasing at the same time. He said the main purpose of the corporate secretary was to ensure that the organisation complied with all legal requirements by performing the duties often assigned to

legal counsel. He said umpteen company secretaries worked for the organisation and the role in focus was to gain practice in certain areas of the company and to ensure that they operated in accordance with state laws.

Katiyar said role of the Company Secretary was to carry out assigned duties, which was very important. He said at the entry level salary was a bit in the middle, but the increase was good. He said between Rs 20,000 and Rs 40,000 was the range for newer CS who qualified. He added that they were required in a commercial or other office, in big cities and corporate areas, SEZs (Special Economic Zones) offer more opportunities for the same area. He said it was true that there was more competition in the corporate

secretary sector, but the demand in this area was much greater because of the higher profit and the different benefits of people looking for jobs in the CS field. Others present in the press meet were Vaibhv Agnihotri, Sneha Bajpai, Gopesh Sahu, MK Yadav and MK Shukla.

CSJMU LAUNCHES PORTAL: Vice Chancellor of Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University, Prof Vinay Pathak, on Wednesday said that the university had set up its own portal so that students could avail themselves of facilities like registration, degree, marksheet.

He said this had been done by ending the contract of the outsourced firm and now the complaints/requests which appeared on the portal were handled exclusively by the university staff.

Awareness campaign conducted

PNS ■ VARANASI

At Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) under the guidance of General Manager Anjali Goyal and leadership of Principal Chief Medical Officer (PCMO) Dr Devesh Kumar and Chief Electrical Engineer (CEE), Loco, Anant Sadashiv, Additional Chief Medical Superintendent (ACMS) Dr Sunil Kumar, Dr SK Sharma, Work Manager Mukesh Karidhal and Public Relations Officer (PRO) Rajesh Kumar a massive awareness campaign was conducted at the Loco Assembly Shop and Truck Machine Shop of BLW workshop. Dr Devesh Kumar explaining the rules of Covid



protocol, made everyone aware about taking all necessary precautions to prevent the spread of this deadly virus, following Covid appropriate behaviour and encouraging others to do so, always wearing mask properly and maintaining physical distance from others. On the other hand,

CEE (Loco) Anant Sadashiv while explaining the importance of safety to the employees related to production considering safety as paramount encouraged them to always use all the safety related equipment such as safety helmets, safety shoes and gloves during the work.

BHU to start first-ever Hindu Dharma course

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI/VARANASI

In a first of its kind in the country, the Centre has given the go ahead for a two-year postgraduate programme in 'Hindu Dharma' to be taught at the famous Banaras Hindu University (BHU), which is a Central University.

"This programme will help in making the world aware of many unknown aspects of 'Hindu Dharma' and take its teachings to more and more people," BHU Rector Professor V K Shukla said after inaugurating the Hindu Dharma PG programme. He said that this would be the first such course in the country.

The course will be conducted in collaboration with the departments of philosophy and religion, Sanskrit and ancient Indian history, culture and archaeology of the faculty

of arts of the 'Bharat Adhyayan Kendra'.

The programme was conceived right at the inception of the BHU but could not be initiated over the years, sources in the Ministry of Education said.

University sources said that so far 45 students including a foreign student, have expressed their interest to seek admission in the first session of the course. Sadashiv Kumar Divedi, the coordinator of the 'Bharat Adhyayan Kendra', said that this two-year course will have four semesters and 16 papers.

Director of the Varanasi Center of the Indira Gandhi National Center for the Arts Vijay Shankar Shukla said that the idea of starting such a course was first given by scholars Pandit Ganganath Jha and Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya but due to some reasons this course could not be started at that time.

The very idea of a Hindu University was made known to the world by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji in 1904 at Varanasi. Thereafter Congress of Hindu Religion (Sanatan Dharma Mahasabha) met at Allahabad in January 1906, during the Kumbh fair, under the presidency of Jagadguru Sri Sankaracharya of Govardhan Math and considered and approved the scheme.

The objectives of University were formulated as to promote the study of the Hindu Shastras and of Sanskrit literature generally as a mean of preserving and popularizing for the benefit of the Hindus in particular and of the world at large in general, the best thoughts and culture of the Hindus and all that was good and great in the ancient civilization of India besides keeping in mind other educations demands of the time.

Brahmos supersonic cruise missile new variant test-fired

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

With the objective of constantly updating the indigenous missile systems, scientists on Thursday successfully conducted a test of the new variant of the Brahmos supersonic cruise missile. The latest test came days after the missile system was selected for induction into its navy by the Philippines.

The Pioneer had reported about the first ever export order of a sophisticated weapon system on January 15. The government to government deal for three batteries of the Brahmos jointly designed and produced by India and Russia is worth over 375 million dollars. The contract is likely to be inked shortly.

The export will propel the Indian industry into the top league of nations having this capability. Moreover, India is aggressively pursuing the target of exporting weapon systems worth over five billion

dollars by 2025 and making it an attractive manufacturing hub for defence systems.

Giving details of the latest test, officials said here the missile with increased indigenous content and improved performance was successfully test-fired from Integrated Test Range, Chandipur off the coast of Odisha at 1030 hrs.

The launch was conducted by Brahmos Aerospace in close coordination with the teams of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). In this text-book flight, the missile followed the predicted trajectory meeting all mission objectives.

The flight test is a major milestone in the way forward for BrahMos programme. The highly manoeuvrable missile cruised at supersonic speed for its maximum range and all mission objectives were met.

The missile was equipped with the advanced indigenous technologies and followed a modified optimal trajectory for enhanced efficiency and



improved performance. The missile with the modified control system has been fine tuned to achieve an enhanced capability.

This flight test was monitored by all the sensors of the range instrumentation including telemetry, radar and electro-optical tracking systems deployed across the eastern coast and the down range ships.

Teams from the DRDO and Russia participated in the test. BrahMos Aerospace has been continuously upgrading

have already inducted the highly versatile missile.

Given the effectiveness of the missile capable of hitting targets at a range of more than 350 kms, operational commanders have deployed the Brahmos at various critical points along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) facing China.

While the Philippines will acquire the Brahmos missile having a range of hitting a target at 290 kms, India has other variants of this missile also having a range of more than 400 kms. Incidentally, India had successfully test-fired a naval variant of the advanced supersonic BrahMos cruise missile from a stealth guided-missile destroyer of the Indian Navy on January 11. The DRDO had said the missile hit the designated target "precisely".

"Advanced sea to sea variant of BrahMos Supersonic Cruise missile was tested from INS Visakhapatnam today. Missile hit the designated target ship precisely," the DRDO had tweeted.

Air India's six Boeing 777 aircraft cleared to fly to US

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After keeping several hundred passengers on tenterhook for two days, Air India on Thursday resumed six India-US flights on Boeing B777 aircraft on Thursday after Boeing gave the clearance to operate them.

The airline released a statement saying Boeing has issued a clearance to operate flights on its B777 aircraft. The airline also said all flights to the US will normalize from Friday.

The decision by Air India came after US aviation regulator Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) gave approval which includes most Boeing Co. and Airbus SE models, including Boeing 777,

which was left off of the list on Sunday, saying radio altimeters fitted in certain types of aircraft, including B777, will not be affected by 5G services. Several foreign carriers had canceled flights to the U.S. on the 777 after Boeing issued a warning to its operators.

"Boeing has cleared Air India to operate in the USA on B777. Accordingly, first flight left this morning to JFK. Other flights leaving in the day are to Chicago & SFO Arrangements to carry stranded passengers are being worked out. Matter regarding B777 flying into the USA has been sorted," according to a statement issued by Air India.

Later during the day, Air India said on Twitter that while flight operations to and from

destinations in the US were affected during last two days, normal flights operations will commence to and from the US 'effective 0001 hrs of January 21'.

The Air India flights that have resumed their operations from Thursday are Delhi-New York, New York-Delhi, Delhi-Chicago, Chicago-Delhi, Delhi-San Francisco and San Francisco-Delhi. Along with these six flights, two other flights — Mumbai-Newark and Newark-Mumbai — were cancelled by Air India on Wednesday.

Air India had cancelled eight flights on India-US routes on Wednesday due to deployment of 5G internet in North America which could interfere with aircraft's radio altimeters.

Bring price parity between cigarettes, other forms of tobacco: FAIFA to Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Federation of All India Farmer Associations (FAIFA), which claims to represent commercial crop farmers and farm workers across Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka and Gujarat, on Thursday urged the Government to bring price parity between cigarettes and other forms of tobacco to check the illicit cigarettes market, which has hit the livelihoods of tobacco farmers.

The farmers' body said the consumption price of legal cigarettes in India has reached "the maximum limit to what the purchasing capacity of consumers can absorb against the backdrop of cheaper and fast growing illicit cigarettes and alternatives".

"...Any further increase in taxes would lead to a severe reduction in FCV (flue-cured Virginia tobacco) cultivation and impact the livelihoods of farmers," it said in a statement. The above situation is stressing the farm community as consumers shift to smuggled cigarettes that do not use domestic tobacco, FAIFA Vice President Gadde Seshagiri Rao said.

"Given that India has a huge and widespread dependence on the tobacco crop for livelihood, the government must act reasonably and responsibly to bring price parity between cigarettes and other forms of tobacco to check the illicit cigarettes market which has grown exponentially at the cost of legal cigarettes jeopardizing tobacco farmer's inter-

Citing Euromonitor International data, FAIFA said illicit cigarette volumes in India registered a 44 per cent increase in a decade from 19.5 billion sticks in 2011 to 28.1 billion sticks in 2020

est and government's tobacco control goals," Rao added.

Citing Euromonitor International data, FAIFA said illicit cigarette volumes in India registered a 44 per cent increase in a decade from 19.5 billion sticks in 2011 to 28.1 billion sticks in 2020. This takes the market share of illicit cigarettes in the country from 21.3 per cent in 2015 to 27.6 per cent in 2020.

"This increase has resulted in shrinkage of FCV crop size by a sharp 39 per cent from 316 million kg per annum to 194 million kg per annum between 2013-14 to 2021-22. "The FCV cultivation acreage in India has also witnessed a huge drop from 2,21,385 hectares in 2013-14 to 1,22,257 hectares in 2020-21 leading to 35 million mandays of employment loss," FAIFA said.

ED arrests one in ₹84 cr money laundering case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday arrested Anas Ahmed in a money laundering case connected to fraud committed through Power Bank and other such fraud mobile applications and illegally collecting over Rs 84 crore from the gullible public.

Anas Ahmed has Chinese links and is suspected of being the mastermind of the whole racket. The ED had initiated money laundering investigation into the operations of accused entities that induced the public to invest a certain amount through Power Bank and other such fraudulent apps by assuring to remit interest on daily or weekly basis on the investments made, the ED said in a statement.

"The accused entities closed their purported business after collecting huge sums of money from gullible public and went incommunicado. The accused entities neither paid interest nor returned the principal amount to the public and withheld the investment made by the public which has resulted in commission of cheating," it said.

Ahmed is a partner in two accused firms — H & S Ventures Inc and Clifford Ventures. These two partnership firms are responsible for collection of approximately Rs 84 crore from the public.

"Ahmed indulged in corrupt and illegal activities through his partnership firms by deviating from the declared line of business/activity of gaming and has collected money from the public under the guise of investment schemes through fraudulent apps. The proceeds generated through criminal activities have been layered through a number of shell entities to remit out of India and also invest in crypto currencies," it said.

Presently, Anas Ahmed is in judicial custody and lodged in Puzhal Central Prison, Chennai, in the subject offence registered by Crime Branch Crime Investigation Department (CID), Chennai. The Principal City Civil and Sessions and Special Judge for PMLA Cases, Bengaluru has granted 6-day of custody of Anas Ahmed to ED on Thursday for probe into the fraud committed.

The agency, in a separate case, carried out search oper-

ED had initiated money laundering investigation into the operations of accused entities that induced the public to invest a certain amount through Power Bank and other such fraudulent app

ations on Monday at the residential and business premises and godown of Pawan Kumar Jajodia, Cuttack-based businessman under PMLA at three places in Cuttack, Odisha.

Documents related to land properties and buildings worth Rs 23 crore have been seized.

The ED had initiated money laundering investigation on the basis of an FIR registered by the State Vigilance Cell and Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Odisha State under IPC sections relating to cheating and criminal conspiracy against Jajodia.

In the FIR, it was alleged that Jajodia has caused loss to Government exchequer to an extent of Rs 21.86 crore by using false billings, using non-existing addresses for firms/companies under different names and style and also using fake and untraceable IDs, it added.

Rahul attacks Modi over alleged abduction of Arunachal youth by PLA

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Thursday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the reported abduction of a teenager from Arunachal Pradesh by China, and said his silence shows he does not care. Rahul Gandhi said he is with the family of the missing boy Miram Taron, and will not lose hope. The party also hit out at the BJP government saying, "China's audacity is increasing and so is BJP government's shamelessness".

"A few days before Republic

Day, an Indian has been kidnapped by China. We are with the family of Miram Taron and will not lose hope, will not give up. PM's cowardly silence is his statement - he does not care," Rahul said in a tweet message.

Arunachal MP Tapir Gao said on Wednesday that the China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) has abducted a 17-year-old boy from inside Indian territory in Upper Siang district, Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala questioned the prime minister as to how the Chinese dared to transgress in Indian territory and abduct its citizen. "Dear PM, How dare Chinese

Army transgress into our territory again? How can GOI permit abduction of our citizens," he asked on Twitter. "How can GOI remain mum? Why is Govt not listening to the earnest appeal of its own MP," he also asked.

"Please don't say again - 'No one has come and no one has been abducted'," he said using the hashtag 'China'. The latest incident came at a time when the Indian army continues to be engaged in a stand-off with the PLA in eastern Ladakh since April 2020. India shares a 3,400 km-long Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh.

Kerala logs highest-ever daily Covid cases

46,000 out of 1L people test +ve for Covid-19 in 24 hrs

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Kerala on Thursday recorded the highest ever daily Covid-19 cases as 46,387 persons were diagnosed with the pandemic out of 1.15 lakh samples tested during the last 24 hours.

The State Government ordered the closure of all schools and asked the education department to opt for on-line classes but remained non-committal with regard to colleges. A late evening release by the administration said heads of educational institutions were free to order the shut down taking into consideration the situation prevailing in the districts.

The next two Sundays (January 23 and 30) will see a total lock-down like situation across the State as only essen-

tial services would be allowed to function on these days.

A Review Meeting was held at Thiruvananthapuram presided over by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan who is undergoing treatment for a serious ailment in a US Hospital. It was decided to open a war room in the Government Secretariat to monitor the Covid-19 situation, according to health minister Veena George. The Test Positivity Rate in the State reached 40.21 per cent as on Thursday evening, said George.

The review meeting accepted the fact that situation in the districts of Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam and Kozhikode was grave and serious. A senior doctor, an authority on contagious diseases, told The Pioneer on condition of anonymity that the Government should declare the State out of bounds for people from other States. "Situation in Kerala is dangerous as the figures which have been released by the

Health Department are deceiving. There will be four times more Covid-19 patients than what has been disclosed officially," said the doctor who insisted that tourists and travellers should not be allowed in the State as they were vulnerable to get afflicted with the disease. "There is no system to monitor whether the hotel employees are positive or not. Many persons afflicted with the pandemic are roaming free in the roads throwing the safety protocols to the winds. Why should we cover it up from the general public," asked the doctor.

K Sudhakaran, KPCC President, issued a scathing letter to chief minister Vijayan lambasting the latter for the lopsided policies being followed by the administration which resulted in the shooting up of the Covid-19 situation. "The holding of the CPI(M) meetings across the State to sing peans to the chief minister has led to the present position. The KPCC president

begins with what was spoken by Vijayan in Thursday's cabinet meeting. "I have been hospitalized and am fine," Sudhakaran quoted Vijayan as telling which proves that the proceedings of the cabinet meeting has reached the former.

"Though you are happy and fine in the USA, dear Vijayan, people in Kerala are suffering the worst and undergoing the hardest of times. The persons whom you have entrusted with the responsibility of running the administration and party, your son-in-law and Kodayeri Balakrishnan, have proved their incapability and inefficiency. Those who attended the district meetings of the CPI(M) have been afflicted with Covid-19 despite the unanimous declaration passed in these meetings that they would tame the pandemic," said Sudhakaran in one of the harshest letters ever written by a KPCC president to the chief minister of the State.

Telangana Govt to undertake door-to-door survey for

Hyderabad: The Telangana government would undertake a door-to-door fever survey in the State from Friday as part of measures to check the spread of COVID-19.

The survey would help in controlling the spread by identifying those suffering from fever and others, State

Health Minister T Harish Rao told reporters here on Thursday.

Some people are asymptomatic despite testing positive for the infection, while some others are not getting themselves tested in spite of having symptoms like fever, he said.

The survey would help

address such issues.

He said a home-isolation kit, comprising medicines and others, would be provided to those with symptoms.

Observing that a similar survey and the provision of the same kits helped save many lives during the second wave of COVID-19, he said this has

received appreciation from the NITI Aayog.

The State Government is geared up to deal with the third wave as Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao had ordered procuring two crore testing kits and one crore home-isolation kits, he said.

Eastern region. He informed that tests like Mammography and Vision-testing can be added with the mobile laboratory and will prove hugely beneficial to the people of the region.

A team from AMTZ (Andhra Pradesh MedTech Zone) is credited to build this unique, innovative facility. The DBT has also established a manufacturing facility in AMTZ for indigenously manufacturing various healthcare technologies which are hugely imported.

Speaking on the occasion, Zoramthanga said that this will help bridge the gap in COVID testing in border districts and remote areas lacking in RT-PCR testing facility while Dr R. Lalhangliana, Health Minister of Mizoram said that

pandemic has taken a huge toll on health infrastructure, particularly in the North-Eastern States. He said, the I-LAB will go a long way in reaching out to people of difficult and inhospitable terrain for COVID test and cure.


Dr Rajesh Gokhale, Secretary DBT said that Mobile Diagnostic Laboratory (I-LAB) will remain relevant round the year even after COVID for testing of infectious diseases like Tuberculosis, HIV.

MD, AMTZ, J.K. Sharma said that within a year, the premier medical technology park has emerged as one of world's largest medical technology manufacturing cluster with over 100 companies working on research, development and production of life saving medical devices.

FIRST COLUMN

BUDGET SHOULD FOCUS ON TRADE AGREEMENTS

Keep FTA in centre of budget theme to keep the money inflow intact



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

When Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman presents the budget on February 1, she will have a tough balancing act to negotiate. First, she will be up against her previous year's 'dream' budget which was called reformist, bold and visionary by most economists. It may be argued that given the pulls and pressures of a noisy democratic process and fatal impact of Covid waves, many of the proposed reforms remained in the budget document. Secondly, this year's budget will be presented on the eve of crucial state elections, including Uttar Pradesh, which will decide the contours of the Rajya Sabha, and therefore the government's ability to push through reforms in the coming months. A reformist policy document is not necessarily populist and therefore has little voter appeal. Thirdly, she will be speaking to a huge section of the population many of whom have lost their livelihoods due to the pandemic even as they battle inflation driven by fuel prices and increased spend on life-saving pandemic medicines. Against this backdrop are external trade relations, bilateral or free trade, that India has decisively steered towards, to keep the money inflow intact. India is currently trying to negotiate 16 free trade agreements while upgrading on seven existing ones, with trading blocs.

UK's international trade secretary Anne Marie Trevelyan was in India a few days ago when India and the UK announced the launch of free trade agreement negotiations. The target for completion is middle of next year. India wants removal of access restrictions on free movement of professionals between the two countries, reduction in visa fees, have guardrails for protecting India's agricultural interests and better access for its vaccines, pre-mixed tea and coffee, yarns, etc. The UK in return wants a significant strip down of the excruciating duties, imposed by India on British whiskies and cars. However, the trick lies in selling the benefits of such trade deals to domestic constituencies or voters. In the run up to the budget, India has for the first time in several years shed its protectionists image and is willing to engage with powerful trading blocs for ensuring future prosperity. The NDA government had so far focused on domestic reforms such as uniform GST, insolvency and bankruptcy code, labour codes, etc., to bring a competitive edge for India, when it comes to external economic relations. However, the failure to rally all the constituents together on the potential benefits of the now-withdrawn farm sector reforms is a bellwether of what lies ahead. If the finance minister has to unveil a future trade agreement friendly budget, she will have to open up locked doors on high customs duties and other taxes faced by many imported goods in India. These high duties or taxes on most imported products create a huge burden on domestic consumers or, they settle for many a times low quality domestically manufactured similar items. Most of this is done to protect the interest of the local manufacturers and businesses. Any move to open these doors, allowing free movement of certain goods and services from a robust economy at near zero input duties and taxes, while having concurrent benefits in the partner country, is definitely not a populist move and can lead to a push-back. For instance, the attempt to privatize Centra Electronics Limited, announced in last year's budget and worth under ₹300 crore has run into a legal challenge and the Government seems not in a hurry to push for a favorable verdict. The message, therefore, for the finance minister is to make way for enriching trade agreements silently, while making loud announcements on the populist measures.

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


Raise tobacco tax to heal economy and people's health

Many tobacco users also favour tax hikes as they want to get rid of their habit

As it prepares for the next Budget, the Union Government will be looking for ways to generate more revenues to heal the economy battered by COVID-19. But it must ensure that its moves do not add to the woes of the common man already reeling under Covid-induced health worries, inflation and skyrocketing prices of essential commodities in the face of salary cuts and widespread job losses.

In such a gloomy scenario, one of the areas which the Government can explore is enhancing tax on 'sin products' — cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars and smokeless tobacco churned out by the tobacco giants blatantly at the cost of lives of the youth. This also puts a burden on the economy.

The tobacco industry has



RIO JOHN

(The writer is a health economist and adjunct professor, Rajagiri College of Social Sciences, Kochi.)

Final line-up of the CM faces in Punjab

Charanjit Channi, Bhagwant Mann, Sukhbir Badal and Capt Amarinder Singh: It is now almost certain that there would be no parachute candidate in Punjab

With the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) naming comedian-turned-politician Bhagwant Mann as its chief ministerial candidate, the long-drawn suspense within the party and outside has ended and brought in a sense of closure for the swelling party cadres who are fighting with their tails up in the forthcoming Assembly polls.

As far as the chief ministerial faces of the rival parties are concerned, Congress so far seems to be indicating that it will settle for Charanjit Singh Channi, who made a mark for himself in his short tenure after being sworn in as Chief Minister following the unceremonious ouster of long-serving Amarinder Singh.

Then comes the third serious angle in the Punjab polls—Shiromani Akali Dal where leadership has now become hereditary and has passed on to party President Sukhbir Singh Badal. His father, Parkash Singh Badal, five-time chief minister, is now in his 90s and despite his public appearances now and then in the last five years, has clearly paved the way for his son, who also served as Deputy Chief Minister and Home Minister when the party was in power in alliance with the BJP from 2012 to 2017. SAD is in alliance with the Bahujan Samaj Party this time after breaking its over two-decade-old alliance with BJP on the controversial farm laws. BSP has already been offered the post of Deputy Chief Minister if the alliance is voted to power.

The Patiala royal Amarinder Singh would obviously be the chief ministerial candidate of the Punjab Lok Congress-BJP alliance even though his new party would get a lesser number of seats than BJP in the seat-sharing pact. Of course, the alliance has hardly got much effect on the ground given that it has no traction in the rural areas. In urban pockets, BJP has some influence but overall, political analysts are almost certain that it will not cross into double figures. They have obviously written off the alliance as a serious contender for power despite some aggressive inductions from left, right and centre in recent days. They see the Patiala royal parting ways with Congress and deciding to fight elections more as an "ego trip of a dethroned emperor" rather than a serious attempt at political resurrection.

As of now, it seems that the strategy of AAP in naming Mann, the popular face of the party after a tele-voting campaign, has helped get it traction with the voters. Publicizing a phone number for tele-voting, asking voters to give missed calls, SMS and WhatsApp, helped the party connect with the voters. All of this had an element of surprise and political freshness. This was obviously a new exercise of its kind and such novelty helps the party catch the imagination of

AS OF NOW, IT SEEMS THAT THE STRATEGY OF AAP IN NAMING MANN, THE POPULAR FACE OF THE PARTY, AFTER A TELE-VOTING CAMPAIGN HAS HELPED GET IT TRACTION WITH THE VOTERS. PUBLICISING A PHONE NUMBER FOR TELE-VOTING, ASKING VOTERS TO GIVE MISSED CALLS, SMS AND WHATSAPP, HELPED THE PARTY CONNECT WITH THE VOTERS. ALL OF THIS HAD AN ELEMENT OF SURPRISE AND POLITICAL FRESHNESS

(The writer is Senior Resident Editor, The Pioneer, Chandigarh. The views expressed are personal.)



the voters. Remember the days of the "Chai pe charcha" campaign of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014 Lok Sabha polls and the "Coffee with Captain" campaign of Amarinder Singh in 2017 assembly poll which catapulted both of them to power. Of course, the man behind those popular slogans—Prashant Kishor—is now on a sabbatical, not coining any new slogan for anyone after West Bengal where Mamata Banerjee emerged victorious.

The "AAP da CM" tele-voting exercise saw over 21 Lakh people expressing their opinion on the number released by AAP on January 13 for voting, and 93.3 percent voted for Bhagwant Mann as their choice to be Punjab's CM. Of course, there is many a slip between the cup and the lip and this is true in politics more than anything else, it is now certain that there would be no parachute candidate in Punjab now, as was believed by almost all the other political parties. In the last Assembly polls in 2017, when AAP did reasonably well, getting the Leader of Opposition space by piping out the Akali Dal, it had not declared a CM face and obviously did not want to repeat the mistake in 2022.

On the other hand, ruling Congress has so far not made any official announcement though in 2017 it had named Amarinder Singh as the CM face of the party days before the polls. As public

campaign is not allowed and no big rallies are being held due to Election Commission's COVID-19 guidelines, top leadership of Congress (read Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi) have not yet had the opportunity to go on stage with Channi or Sidhu so that any guesses could be made.

However, Congress, on its Twitter handle, indicated that Channi could be the candidate as it shared a video clip in which Bollywood actor-cum-philanthropist Sonu Sood is seen saying that people want a person from humble origins as the Chief Minister, indicating Channi. In the video, there are visuals of the incumbent Chief Minister, fuelling speculation that the high command has sort of endorsed the name. It is understood that Channi's logical and emotional stand on the recent controversy over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's security lapse in Ferozepur seems to have helped his cause. In addition, he has in a calculated manner cultivated the image of the 'amaadmi' (common man) who has no pretensions to cut into the votes of the AAP.

The Congress high command knows it well that PCC chief Navjot Sidhu is not the one to accept anyone's name as the CM face except his own without any protest. So, it is perhaps buying peace as of now by not making any official announcement. "Collective leadership" is the term coined to

keep everyone happy till the crunch time comes. Sidhu has been urging the high command to name the CM face, going to the extent of saying, "dulhe bin baraat kaisi" (What is a wedding procession without a groom). Obviously, he was referring to the wedding procession as an election campaign and groom as the chief ministerial candidate. But given the compulsions of the top leadership in keeping everyone happy, it seems, there would be no "groom" in the "wedding procession" as of now from Congress and all it would do is keep indicating and suggesting Channi's name, without doing so.

Surprisingly, in the tele-voting campaign of the AAP, Sidhu was the second most-preferred CM candidate of the party getting a little over three percent of the votes. Many in Punjab had two interpretations or questions on this, one whether Sidhu would move to AAP and two, what kind of methodology AAP adopted in tele-voting where Sidhu too figured. But political speculations apart, as of now, Sidhu seems to be a few steps behind Channi as the CM face of the party in the eyes of party cadres as well as the central leadership.

So, the name of the captains of the respective teams as of now are out—Bhagwant Mann, Charanjit Singh Channi, Sukhbir Singh Badal and Amarinder Singh. The results will flick the coin.

POINT COUNTER POINT

THE SAMAJWADI PARTY PATRIARCH'S DAUGHTER-IN-LAW BELIEVES THE BJP'S RULE IS SAFE FOR WOMEN. —UNION MINISTER ANURAG THAKUR



I AM HAPPY THAT OUR SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY IS EXPANDING. IT WILL WORK TO SAVE THE CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRACY. —SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF AKHILESH YADAV



been since 2017 — when GST came into effect — enjoying almost an extended tax-free season. Post GST, there has been no major hike in tax on any of the tobacco products for the last four years, making tobacco products in India more affordable to the common man.

In India, the tax burden on bidis, cigarettes, and smokeless tobacco, on an average, stands at 22 per cent, 53 per cent, and 64 per cent respectively in 2021, while the World Health Organization recommends a uniform tax of at least 75 per cent for each tobacco product. Clearly, we are much below the WHO-recommended tax slab.

Use of tobacco is known to be the cause of several non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and chronic



lung diseases. In India, annually around 13 lakh deaths are attributable to tobacco consumption. India also bears an annual economic cost of over ₹1,77,000 crore spent by people for treating diseases caused by tobacco as well as the monetary value of premature death due to the consumption of tobacco. It accounts for more than one per cent of India's GDP. Economic burden due to bidi consumption is also estimated to be ₹80,000 crore. This burden is likely to increase enormously in the near future as tobacco consumers have a higher risk of contracting coronavirus infection.

Over 28 per cent of adults above 15 years and 8.5 per cent of students aged 13-15 years use tobacco in some form or the other which makes India the second largest consumer of tobacco in the world. Experts have confirmed that smokers are more likely to develop severe

symptoms or die from Covid infection, as it primarily attacks the lungs.

Hence, if taxes are not hiked immediately and significantly, some of the hard-won gains in tobacco consumption reduction achieved in the past few years as reflected in the Global Adult Tobacco Survey (GATS) 2009-17, might reverse at the cost of the economy and public health. The GATS has shown 17 per cent reduction in tobacco consumption. If we do not increase the taxes significantly, use of tobacco products, especially by youths, will increase.

So, there is a necessity for a stiff increase in tax on tobacco products at the earliest so that we can discourage the youth from using products.

Studies and surveys from multiple countries reveal that

many tobacco users also favour tax hikes as they want to get rid of their habit adopted unwisely or due to peer pressure. In the pandemic times when we need major revenue to spruce up the health infrastructure, heavily taxing tobacco products is ideal to discourage its consumption.

Imposing tax on tobacco will rather present Government's image as 'pro-poor.' For, in India, tobacco consumption is in general higher among the poor and middle-class people who are more prone to tobacco related diseases and can't afford the medical expenses. Imposing tax will help save the poor on tobacco items.

Levying tax on tobacco is not anti-farmer too, as cultivators have little say in profits accrued from the sale of tobacco products. For instance, out of ₹100 earned on tobacco products, less than ₹3 goes to the farmers. In fact, when you increase taxes, decrease in consumption does not take place instantly, it takes time. That window should be utilized by the Government to provide the tobacco growers and others to find alternative sources of livelihood in the short run. Notably, there are about 48 lakh bidi workers in the country.

The Government has a plethora of tax options available. Like National Calamity Contingent Duty (NCCD), Compensation Cess and Excise Duty which was re-introduced for tobacco taxation two years ago. These can be exclusively used by the Government to raise prices of the tobacco products.

Sensex skids for 3rd day to close below 60k

PTI ■ MUMBAI

BSE benchmark Sensex spiralled lower for the third consecutive session on Thursday to finish below the 60,000-level, weighed by hectic selling in IT, energy and finance stocks amid a sell-off in European equities.

A depreciating rupee and continued selling by foreign investors also affected the market sentiment, traders said.

The 30-share BSE index ended 634.20 points or 1.06 per cent lower at 59,464.62. Similarly, the NSE Nifty plunged 181.40 points or 1.01 per cent to 17,757. Bajaj Finserv was the top laggard in the

Sensex pack, shedding 4.57 per cent, followed by Infosys, TCS, Sun Pharma, HUL, HCL Tech, Dr Reddy's, HDFC and Reliance Industries.

On the other hand, PowerGrid, Bharti Airtel, Asian Paints, Maruti and UltraTech Cement were among the gainers, spurning up to 4.86 per cent.

The market breadth was negative, with 23 of the 30 Sensex counters closing in the red. "Persistent concern over global inflation and likely Fed rate hike acted as the major headwinds for the domestic market to tumble for the third consecutive day," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.



"High volatility due to rising bond yields is pressuring foreign investors to pull out funds from highly valued markets like India.

As the recent earnings failed to excite the market, the on-going global volatility drained investor confidence," he added.

'Govt should abolish STT to encourage new investors

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Market experts on Thursday said the government should consider relieving traders of the Securities Transaction Tax on equity trade in the Union Budget, which will be presented by the finance minister on February 1. The move is expected to boost the capital markets and encourage new investors to start trading, they added. The government had introduced Securities Transaction Tax (STT) in 2004 on transactions in different types of securities. The rate

presently varies from 0.025 per cent to 0.25 per cent depending upon the type of security traded and transaction — whether sale or purchase. "The investment industry will benefit if the Securities Transaction Tax is abolished, as both long-term capital gains (LTCG) and short-term capital gains (STCG) are in place," Nikhil Kamath, co-founder of True Beacon and Zerodha, said. Nonetheless, if the government does not intervene with STT, it could look at removing the tax on long-term capital gains, he added.

Puneet Maheshwari,

Director, Upstox, said the government may consider relieving traders of the STT. By doing so, new investors would be encouraged to start trading.

"There needs to be more participation in indexes or exchange-traded funds. By offering a lock-in and tax incentives on the lines of equity-linked tax savings schemes, the government can encourage long-term savings in Nifty or Sensex," he noted.

A greater allocation by the government-owned provident funds and pension funds into equity markets could also help, he added.

Retail inflation for farm, rural workers rise to 4.78 pc, 5.03 pc in December

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retail inflation for farm and rural workers rose to 4.78 per cent and 5.03 per cent respectively in December 2021, mainly due to higher price of certain food items, official data showed on Thursday. "Point to point rate of inflation based on the CPI-AL (consumer price index for agricultural labour) and CPI-RL (rural labourers) stood at 4.78 per cent & 5.03 per cent in December, 2021 compared to 3.02 per cent & 3.38 per cent respectively in November, 2021 and 3.25 per cent and 3.34 per cent respectively during the corresponding month of the previous year (December 2020)," a labour ministry statement said. Food inflation stood at 2.99 per cent (farm labour) and 3.17 per cent (rural labour) in

December 2021, compared to 0.88 per cent and 1.07 per cent respectively in November 2021, and 2.97 per cent and 2.96 per cent during the corresponding month of 2020. The All-India Consumer Price Index numbers for agricultural labourers and rural labourers for December 2021 increased by 5 points each to stand at 1,097 and 1,106 points respectively. The CPI-AL and CPI-RL stood at 1,092 points and 1,101 points respectively in November 2021. The major contribution towards the rise in general index of agricultural labourers and rural labourers came from 'fuel and light' and miscellaneous group to the extent of 1.72 and 1.58 points, and 1.02 and 1.06 points respectively, mainly due to rise in prices of firewood, kerosene oil, medicine, barber charges, bus fare, toilet soap, washing soap, etc.

On the results front, Asian Paints' consolidated net profit fell 18.5 per cent to Rs 1,031.29 crore for the third quarter ended December 2021.

FMCG major Hindustan Unilever Ltd reported an 18.68 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 2,300 crore for the third quarter.

Ajit Mishra, VP - Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said the markets are currently facing global headwinds and there's no relief from the domestic front as well. "However, we feel it's a healthy correction so far and expect Nifty to hold the 17,600 zone. For traders, the major challenge is to tackle the volatility amid the earnings season.

We feel it's prudent to limit positions and prefer a hedged approach until markets resume the uptrend," he noted.

Sector-wise, BSE IT, tech, energy, healthcare and FMCG shed as much as 1.69 per cent, while power, utilities, metal and realty posted gains.

In the broader markets, the BSE midcap index dipped 0.07 per cent, while the smallcap gauge inched up 0.05 per cent.

Asian markets ticked higher after China cut benchmark mortgage rates to support the embattled property sector. Bourses in Hong Kong, Seoul and Tokyo ended with gains, while Shanghai closed in the red.

Healthcare likely to receive top priority in Budget: Assocham

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Healthcare sector is likely to receive the highest priority in the upcoming Union Budget 2022-23 on account of continuing challenges posed by COVID-19 and the imperative need for scaling up public health infrastructure, an Assocham survey said on Thursday.

The industry chamber noted that 47 per cent of the respondents in its survey pointed towards Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman according maximum attention to healthcare in the Budget.

Besides, MSMEs, energy and infrastructure and technology were also on priority list as per the survey done among

400 respondents across 40 cities from different sectors, it stated.

While the government's proactive measures and the frontline workers' tireless efforts have helped tide over the uncertain situation, the pandemic also brought forth certain gaps in the public healthcare system, Assocham said.

Besides, nearly 40 per cent of the Assocham survey respondents said the Finance Minister should reduce the income tax among other measures to boost private demand and consumption.

About 31 per cent said Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) to the poor households could be a demand driver at the bottom of the pyramid.

FinMin to release ₹47,541 cr advance installment of tax devolution to States

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre will release an advance installment of tax devolution to the states amounting to ₹47,541 crore, the Finance Ministry said.

"Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has authorised the release of an advance installment of tax devolution to state

governments amounting to ₹47,541 crore, here today. This is in addition to the regular devolution for the month of January 2022, also being released today," the ministry said in a statement.

Thus, states would receive a total of ₹95,082 crore or double their respective entitlement during the month of January 2022, it added.

NIFTY 50						
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	
NIFTY 50	17921.00	17943.70	17648.45	17757.00	-181.40	
POWERGRID	207.10	215.35	205.40	214.50	9.85	
BHARTIARTL	780.00	719.65	705.25	719.00	15.30	
GRASIM	1617.00	1836.75	1813.60	1836.50	30.00	
JSWSTEEL	679.00	686.00	672.40	683.70	9.05	
TATACONSUM	728.05	746.25	717.20	726.05	8.40	
BRITANNIA	3590.00	3624.00	3576.50	3605.65	30.00	
ASIANPAINT	3282.00	3364.90	3222.00	3300.30	22.60	
COALINDIA	164.30	168.25	163.85	165.00	1.10	
ELECTRAMEL	2725.00	2756.00	2712.10	2735.16	10.30	
ULTRACEMCO	7470.00	7559.55	7395.00	7478.00	46.60	
HEROMOTOCO	2700.00	2759.25	2696.05	2713.00	13.20	
IOC	125.10	125.35	124.70	125.00	0.30	
MARUTI	8000.00	8140.00	7997.55	8048.00	32.30	
ICICIBANK	803.00	812.90	799.50	811.60	3.30	
TATASTEEL	1210.10	1224.00	1192.00	1209.90	0.30	
AXISBANK	731.05	737.15	729.15	729.15	-0.45	
TECHM	1670.10	1673.20	1643.55	1668.90	-1.20	
NTPC	134.50	136.35	134.15	134.60	-0.20	
BPCL	395.00	397.55	390.20	393.65	-0.70	
HINDALCO	503.85	508.00	498.10	503.30	-1.50	
UPL	830.80	823.00	804.00	810.65	-2.60	
HDFCBANK	1528.45	1528.50	1500.10	1512.60	-6.45	
BAFINANCE	7610.00	7650.00	7401.00	7534.00	-37.80	
ITC	220.55	222.15	218.00	219.10	-1.25	
KOTAKBANK	1925.00	1925.00	1877.00	1893.90	-11.75	
SBILIFE	1248.00	1255.65	1230.95	1237.95	-10.15	
WIPRO	620.65	622.40	610.90	616.95	-5.15	
NESTLEIND	1880.00	1908.00	1850.05	1877.65	-160.15	
TITAN	2597.00	2610.00	2555.00	2567.00	-21.90	
TATAMOTORS	519.95	523.50	512.00	516.40	-4.45	
LT	2020.00	2030.20	1998.20	2004.20	-18.50	
SBIN	516.00	519.15	508.00	511.00	-4.80	
ADANIPORTS	744.00	751.70	735.00	737.00	-7.20	
HDFCLIFE	654.00	660.40	647.55	649.45	-4.60	
HCTECH	120.00	120.10	117.00	117.50	-14.20	
M&M	896.00	897.60	872.85	882.30	-12.10	
CPIA	895.00	899.90	880.05	883.50	-12.15	
SHREECEM	26578.00	26713.00	25954.00	26040.00	-362.25	
RELIANCE	2500.05	2509.95	2455.00	2482.10	-39.50	
INDUSINDBK	895.00	898.45	872.00	878.00	-15.25	
DREDDY	4712.00	4712.00	4700.00	4797.10	87.85	
HDFC	2612.65	2630.00	2543.40	2571.00	-49.25	
HINDUNILVR	1735.00	2325.55	2243.00	2265.05	-44.85	
ONGC	22.00	17.00	16.60	16.90	-3.35	
SUNPHARMA	839.30	842.75	815.65	821.90	-16.60	
TCS	3910.00	3920.00	3811.00	3833.15	-81.50	
INFY	1844.00	1848.00	1815.50	1825.20	-41.85	
DEVISLAB	4496.00	4496.00	4312.00	4350.10	-131.40	
BAJAJ-AUTO	3389.00	3448.00	3295.00	3309.50	-127.30	
BAJAJFINSV	1806.00	1826.20	1708.00	1725.00	-82.30	

NIFTY NEXT 50						
SCRIP	OPEN	High	LOW	LTP	CHANGE	
NIFTY NEXT 50	42990.85	43081.25	42689.10	42895.85	-32.35	
CHOLAFIN	61.00	62.35	61.85	64.50	36.40	
APOLLOHOSP	4525.00	4725.00	4490.00	4635.05	119.10	
INDUSTALST	41.45	420.60	407.85	419.05	10.05	
ADANIGREEN	1948.15	1979.30	1945.00	1969.00	30.55	
NMDC	142.00	144.95	141.35	143.30	1.70	
BAJAJHLNG	5465.70	5518.90	5450.00	5499.00	61.95	
SAIL	105.00	106.90	103.80	107.70	1.05	
ACC	2230.00	2283.25	2230.00	2253.70	21.90	
VEDL	324.95	329.30	324.25	327.55	2.95	
ICICIPRULI	573.80	580.00	568.00	578.95	5.15	
SIEMENS	2368.00	2407.00	2355.00	2391.70	19.35	
INDIGO	2085.00	2107.20	2053.90	2095.10	15.60	
ADANIANT	1855.00	1880.35	1843.70	1863.00	13.70	
BANKBARODA	95.95	97.50	95.55	96.90	0.65	
NAUKRI	5051.00	5088.90	4950.00	5039.00	22.30	
PEL	2571.90	2648.80	2556.00	2680.00	9.40	
YESBANK	13.80	14.00	13.75	13.85	0.05	
HINDPETRO	323.00	332.20	322.20	325.40	1.05	
AMBUJACEM	375.25	379.80	372.45	375.90	1.05	
PIDILITIND	2687.00	2696.20	2656.10	2675.00	1.60	
HDFCAML	2388.00	2399.00	2356.75	2395.45	1.25	
PGHH	15995.30	16448.70	15901.35	16000.00	4.70	
HAVELLS	1310.00	1322.00	1301.00	1309.10	0.35	
PNB	39.90	40.45	39.75	40.00	0.00	
MUTHOOTFIN	1482.90	1488.70	1462.00	1475.00	-0.10	
TORNTPHARM	3175.00	3228.00	3175.00	3200.40	-0.75	
DLF	408.40	410.35	403.35	407.40	-0.85	
DMART	4517.00	4517.00	4462.35	4466.05	-17.35	
IGL	441.75	443.80	432.90	435.85	-2.75	
PIIND	2700.00	2712.35	2664.90	2674.00	-18.80	
BIOCON	366.00	372.90	361.50	364.35	-3.00	
COLPAL	1449.80	1451.15	1427.00	1435.45	-12.00	
BERGEPAINT	748.80	754.20	736.65	741.50	-6.95	
SBICARD	873.00	874.85	857.10	861.95	-8.40	
GAIL	147.60	148.50	146.25	146.50	-1.45	
BOSCHLTD	17000.00	17127.00	16612.05	16800.15	-169.85	
ADANTIRANS	2002.55	2049.90	1975.00	2020.70	-22.55	
BANDHANBNK	394.50	398.75	298.00	300.00	-3.60	
INDUSTOWER	270.00	271.60	265.70	267.30	-3.50	
CADILAHC	424.50	427.00	416.45	418.25	-5.45	
MARICO	495.90	496.00	486.85	487.90	-6.50	
MCDOWELL-N	930.00	930.85	920.20	911.00	-12.55	
JUBLFOOD	3753.90	3766.70	3650.10	3690.00	-51.50	
AUROPHARMA	6705.65	6737.95	6605.00	6610.95	-9.45	
GLAND	3679.95	3679.95	3601.00	3628.00	-51.95	
ITI	6949.80	6982.25	6570.15	6600.85	-96.20	
DABUR	568.95	569.00	556.25	560.20	-8.35	
LUPIN	958.80	959.80	934.05	939.00	-20.45	
ICICIIG	1394.00	1394.00	1318.10	1385.00	-38.00	
GODREJCP	940.75	940.75	902.50	902.50	-35.05	

BSE 500

	Open	High	Low	LTP	
TCS	3915.00	3915.00	3814.00	3827.85	WELSPUN
TATAELXSI	7048.00	7525.00	7040.00	7448.15	LALPATHI
TATAPOWER	250.00	252.05	245.20	248.65	GUJALKAL
NTPC	133.55	136.35	133.55	134.90	HEROMOTO
SUZLON	11.41	12.25	11.41	12.25	MRF
BAJAJFINSV	18173.00	18264.75	17061.10	17260.30	DLF
BAJAJFINANCE	7615.00	7655.70	7400.00	7531.90	SRTTRANS
RELIANCE	2497.00	2511.25	2455.00	2478.80	PTC
ASIANPAINT	3281.10	3365.00	3223.00	3307.70	AUANK
JUSTDIAL	815.10	939.05	815.10	925.05	DIXON
INFY	1854.00	1854.00	1815.90	1824.15	BDL
SBIN	515.35	518.90	508.00	511.55	APOLLOIT
HINDUNILVR	2324.00	2325.00	2243.60	2261.60	DIVISLAB
GRASIM	1807.85	1836.90	1807.85	1829.85	HAPSPMT
MINDTREE	4136.00	4330.00	4136.00	4251.00	CHAMBLER
WIPRO	621.00	621.50	610.55	615.35	JULBOFLO
TATACONSUM	72.65	74.55	71.75	72.70	HAL
TATACAM	1500.00	1506.85	1440.00	1450.40	IDFC
TATAMOTORS	520.75	523.05	512.00	515.70	PCBL
APOLLO	104.75	106.70	103.80	105.50	LAOPALA
ASIANHOSP	4539.95	4725.00	4489.25	4649.50	AMARAJA
TATASTEEL	1208.75	1223.70	1197.55	1207.50	BPLCL
BANKBAROD	95.95	97.50	95.55	96.65	LCHSGFIN
TRIDCENT	152.15	152.95	150.00	150.90	JSL
HDFC	58.65	64.45	58.65	64.45	JWSSTEEL
IFCL	11.90	12.35	11.85	12.05	LAURUSLA
POWERGRID	89.00	90.95	87.15	87.85	HDFCLIFE
TITAN	206.10	215.30	205.95	214.60	SYNGENE
IXE	2595.00	2609.95	2550.30	2570.00	POONAWA
LIJ	261.20	261.70	256.15	259.95	REDINGTON
PVR	152.170	158.600	151.155	156.225	ULTRACEL
ICICIBANK	806.00	812.50	796.80	809.95	GODREIP
HLCTECH	1204.90	1204.90	1170.00	1175.55	RAJESHEXP
HINDPETRO	332.25	332.40	322.20	325.45	MPHASIS
GREAVESCOT	234.20	251.00	231.55	249.10	VTL
AXISBANK	729.25	736.75	722.10	728.75	NCLINDIA
RBLBANK	155.00	155.35	149.55	151.45	POLYCAP
ITC	220.32	222.15	218.05	218.75	
BHARTIARTL	70.20	71.80	70.20	71.30	
ANGLOONE	1434.00	1498.00	1420.00	1484.05	
TECHM	1673.00	1673.00	1645.00	1668.15	
ADANIEN	1864.00	1879.80	1844.90	1865.45	
NAUKRI	5046.00	5088.90	4951.25	5087.40	
STUTECH	241.10	246.00	217.25	222.10	
LT	2025.00	2033.50	1983.65	2002.15	
HIKAL	445.00	449.55	367.30	387.00	
ASHTOKLEY	137.60	141.30	137.60	139.05	
ADOC	2618.65	2618.65	2544.40	2568.85	
ALOKTEXT	32.10	33.75	32.30	32.55	
BAJAJ AUTO	3429.00	3445.50	3296.50	3349.60	
ZEEL	311.00	317.35	307.30	308.55	
1518RD	52.80	55.60	52.80	55.50	
VEDL	324.70	329.25	323.35	327.00	
ADANIPORTS	74.70	75.140	73.75	73.70	
BATAINDIA	2020.00	2068.65	2020.00	2049.90	
ONGC	177.80	171.00	166.16	166.85	
LI	6891.40	6928.00	6575.00	6607.25	
ADANIPOWER	114.95	116.00	112.65	113.15	
YESBANK	13.80	14.40	13.75	13.85	
PNB	40.10	40.45	39.80	39.95	
DREDFEY	4240.00	4270.00	4258.95	4599.35	
SHREYAS	1240.15	1255.20	1213.55	1237.75	
PRAJIND	431.00	438.25	428.10	435.65	
BANDHANBANK	302.35	300.55	295.70	299.70	
IBREALEST	159.15	165.20	159.15	161.15	
IGL	141.00	143.80	143.05	143.05	
BSOF	516.40	519.15	496.60	502.65	
CHOLAFIN	614.70	651.85	609.50	640.60	
MARUTI	8008.00	8140.00	7987.15	8036.35	
147HSGFIN	21.80	22.40	21.20	21.85	
PERSISTENT	4270.00	4372.20	4184.65	4298.85	
CANBK	228.35	232.40	226.00	228.40	
MASTEK	2950.00	3000.00	2750.00	2855.95	
SBICARD	872.00	877.00	857.15	861.00	
EICHERMOT	2716.00	2755.80	2713.20	2741.00	
ICICIBANK	1395.00	1395.00	1319.00	1386.00	
NATIONALAUM	109.55	111.65	109.15	110.60	
COFORGE	5403.25	5403.25	5225.50	5340.85	
INDUSINDBK	890.50	897.95	871.85	878.25	
MGL	864.00	875.50	862.65	871.65	
LJTS	5144.00	5144.00	5045.50	5121.15	
HINDALSTEL	40.85	42.30	40.45	41.80	
KOTAKBANK	1917.00	1922.35	1878.00	1894.55	
NMDC	142.00	144.90	141.60	143.20	
COALINDIA	164.75	168.20	163.85	165.25	
IRCTC	67.70	884.80	865.90	880.00	
ZENSAR	897.80	897.90	873.05	880.60	
STRANSARTCH	181.00	483.00	188.80	461.30	
HAVELLS	1319.15	1322.20	1301.85	1310.20	
BCG	182.10	186.00	173.35	177.65	
BHEL	62.20	62.25	61.10	61.70	
DEEPAKNI	2566.00	2663.20	2566.00	2651.45	
CIPILA	895.45	897.50	880.10	882.50	
DEEPAKFERT	503.00	536.40	495.80	518.70	
SONACOMS	739.75	744.60	720.00	736.20	
HINDALCO	504.00	508.00	498.25	503.05	
ADANIGREEN	1950.00	1978.95	1944.00	1965.05	
GAIL	148.00	148.50	146.30	147.40	
BALRAMCHIN	449.30	459.25	447.05	453.85	
HINDCOOPER	130.40	134.40	130.00	133.85	
OMFS	47.65	51.50	47.65	50.40	
OFFSC	3840.05	3901.25	3693.00	3700.00	
DNBL	385.90	394.15	365.00	370.45	
GNFC	488.50	500.00	482.00	495.20	
BEL	208.55	212.80	207.45	212.00	
KPITTECH	70.50	70.80	68.01	68.15	
TANLA	1849.95	1930.00	1849.40	1908.35	
DMART	4505.00	4515.00	4465.00	4486.60	

Russia accuses West of plotting ‘provocations’ in Ukraine

MOSCOW ■ AP

Russia accused the West on Thursday of plotting “provocations” in Ukraine even as it blames Moscow of planning aggressive military action in the neighbouring country. Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova alleged that Ukrainian and Western claims of an imminent Russian attack on Ukraine were a “cover for staging large-scale provocations of their own, including those of military character.” “They may have extremely tragic consequences for the regional and global security,” Zakharova said.

She pointed to the delivery of weapons to Ukraine by British military transport planes in recent days, claiming that Ukraine perceives Western military assistance as a “carte blanche for a military operation in Donbas.”

Donbas, located in eastern Ukraine, is under control of Russia-backed separatists who have fought Ukrainian forces for nearly eight years, a conflict that has killed more than 14,000 people.

Ukraine said earlier this week that it has taken the delivery of anti-tank missiles from the U.K. It has rejected

Moscow’s claims that it plans an offensive to reclaim control of separatist-held areas in the country’s eastern industrial heartland.

Meanwhile, Ukraine’s government, the U.S. And its NATO allies have expressed intensifying concerns in recent weeks over a Russian troop buildup near Ukraine.

The concentration of an estimated 100,000 Russian troops near Ukraine has fueled Western fears that Moscow is poised to attack its neighbor. U.S. President Joe Biden said Wednesday he thinks Russia will invade Ukraine and warned President Vladimir Putin that his country would pay a “dear price” in lives lost and a possible cutoff from the global banking system if it does.

Moscow has repeatedly denied having plans to launch an offensive. But it has sought a set of security guarantees from the West that would exclude NATO’s expansion to Ukraine and other ex-Soviet nations and the deployment of the alliance weapons there.

Washington and its allies firmly rejected Moscow’s demands in security talks last weeks, but kept the door open to possible further talks on arms control and confidence-building measures to reduce

the potential for hostilities.

Amid the tensions, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited Ukraine Wednesday to reassure it of Western support. He travelled to Berlin on Thursday to meet with his British, French and German counterparts to discuss Ukraine and other security matters.

Blinken is set to deliver a speech on the Ukraine crisis later Thursday in the German capital before flying on to Geneva, Switzerland, where he will meet Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on Friday.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is scheduled to arrive Thursday in Poland for two days of talks with his Polish counterpart. Poland, a European Union member state on Ukraine’s western border, has long supported Ukraine’s efforts to move closer to the democratic Western world.

Deputy Foreign Minister Marcin Przydacz said in a Thursday morning radio interview that Poland is offering its political and diplomatic support to Ukraine, but he would not say whether military aid would be extended amid the Russian troop buildup.

“We are aware of how seri-

ous the situation is, hence our diplomatic activity,” Przydacz said on Radio RMF FM from the southern Polish city of Wisla, where Zelenskyy will visit Poland’s President Andrzej Duda through Friday.

U.S. President Joe Biden said Wednesday he thinks Russia will invade Ukraine, and he warned Russian President Vladimir Putin that Russia would pay a “dear price” in lives lost and a possible cut-off from the global banking system if it does.

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

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has dismissed the U.S. Claim as “total disinformation.”

In a move that further beefs up forces near Ukraine, Russia has sent an unspecified number of troops from the country’s far east to its ally Belarus, which shares a border with Ukraine, for major war games that run through Feb.

Top US, European diplomats hold talks on Ukraine crisis

BERLIN ■ AP

Top American and European diplomats are meeting in Berlin on Thursday as the allies seek to project a united front to Russia over concerns that it may be planning an invasion of Ukraine. Russia has massed an estimated 100,000 troops near Ukraine, and US President Joe Biden said Wednesday he thinks Moscow will invade. He warned Russian President Vladimir Putin that his country would pay a “dear price” in lives lost and a possible cutoff from the global banking system if it does. Against that backdrop, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken held talks Thursday with diplomats from Germany, France and Britain — a so-called Quad meeting.

A day earlier, he met Ukraine’s president in Kyiv to discuss the threat.

Russia has denied it is planning an invasion and has, in turn, accused the West of plotting “provocations” in

Ukraine, citing the delivery of weapons to the country by British military transport planes in recent days.

The US and its NATO allies face a difficult task on the Ukraine crisis. Biden has said he is not planning to send combat troops in the case of a further Russian invasion. But he could pursue a range of less dramatic yet still risky military options, including supporting a post-invasion Ukrainian resistance.

The rationale for not directly joining a Russia-Ukraine war is simple. The United States has no treaty obligation to Ukraine, and war with Russia would be an enormous gamble.

But doing too little has its risks, too. The challenges of keeping the United States and its NATO allies united in their response to Russia were on display Wednesday, when Biden warned Russia against any invasion but also said a “minor incursion” would elicit a lesser response.

N Korea slams US, hints at resuming nuclear, ICBM tests

SEOUL ■ AP

Accusing the United States of hostility and threats, North Korea on Thursday said it will consider restarting “all temporally-suspended activities” it had paused during its diplomacy with the Trump administration, in an apparent threat to resume testing of

nuclear explosives and long-range missiles. North Korea’s official Korean Central News Agency said leader Kim Jong Un presided over a Politburo meeting of the ruling Workers’ Party where officials set policy goals for “immediately bolstering” the North’s military capabilities to counter the Americans’ “hostile moves.”

Stampede at religious event in Liberia kills 29 people

Monrovia (Liberia): At least 29 people in Liberia, including 11 children and a pregnant woman, have died in a stampede of worshippers at a Christian ceremony in a densely populated area of the capital, Monrovia, officials said Thursday.

The stampede erupted when a gang of thugs armed with knives attacked some of the hundreds attending the ceremony at about 9 pm on Wednesday night, police spokesman Moses Carter told The Associated Press. One person has been arrested, he said. The bodies have been taken to the morgue of Redemption Hospital, close to where the incident occurred in beach area called New Kru Town. Street gangs have become an increasing problem in Monrovia and other Liberian cities in recent years, according to residents. President George Weah was expected to visit the scene Thursday.

Kamala Harris will be his running mate in 2024, says Prez Biden

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US President Joe Biden has said that Vice President Kamala Harris would be his running mate if he stood for office again in 2024.

President Biden made this emphatic assertion on Wednesday amid US media reports alleging dysfunction among her staff and doubt on her standing within the administration. Harris, 57, is the first woman and first Black and Asian American person ever sworn in as US vice president.

Harris was born at Oakland in California. Her mother Shyamala Gopalan migrated to the US from Tamil Nadu, while her father, Donald J Harris, moved to the US from Jamaica.

Asked by a reporter whether Biden was satisfied with Harris’ work leading the voting rights effort for the White House and whether he will commit to putting her on the ticket once again, Biden replied directly. “Yes and yes,” he said during a press conference held at the White House to mark the first year of his presidency.

3 killed, 20 injured in blast at Lahore’s Anarkali market

PTI ■ LAHORE

At least three people were killed and 20 others injured on Thursday in a powerful blast at the Paan Mandi in Lahore’s famous Anarkali market, where Indian commodities are sold, police said.

Lahore police spokesperson Rana Arif confirmed the death of three persons in the blast that shattered windows of nearby shops and buildings, Dawn newspaper

reported. According to police, the blast took place near the Paan Mandi, where Indian commodities are sold. No group has claimed responsibility for the blast so far.

“We are ascertaining the nature of blast. Over 20 people have been injured in blast and shifted to hospitals,” Deputy Inspector General Police Operation Dr Mohammad Abid told reporters at the site of the blast near Lahore’s historic Walled City.

Retired pope faulted over abuse cases when he was in Germany

AP ■ BERLIN

A long-awaited report on a sexual abuse in Germany’s Munich diocese on Thursday faulted retired Pope Benedict XVI’s handling of four cases when he was archbishop in the 1970s and 1980s. The law firm that drew up the report said that Benedict strongly denies any wrongdoing.

The report also faulted the current archbishop, a prominent ally of Pope Francis, in two cases.

19-year-old woman sets record for solo global flight

AP ■ KORTRIJK

The 19-year-old Belgian-British pilot Zara Rutherford set a world record as the youngest woman to fly solo around the world, touching her small airplane down in western Belgium on Thursday — 155 days after she departed. Rutherford will find herself in the Guinness World Records book after setting the mark that had been held by 30-year-old American aviator Shaesta Waiz.

European Commission announces new policy for expansion of chip production

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/DAVOS

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on Thursday announced a new policy to support a massive expansion of chip production in the European Union and said the European need for chips will double in the next decade.

In a special address at the World Economic Forum’s online Davos Agenda 2022 summit, she also expressed concern over the Russia-Ukraine situation and hoped that there is no attack by the swelling Russian troops on the Ukrainian border.

“We hope an attack will not happen, but if it does, we are

prepared. And what I want us never to forget is the following —

Russia and Europe share geography, culture and history. We also want a common future,” she said. On semiconductors, she said, “We need to radically raise Europe’s game on the development, production and use of this key technology.”

“There is no digital without chips. The European need for chipswill double in the next decade,” she added. The European Commission President said Europe’s global semiconductor market share is only 10 per cent and most of its supply comes from a handful of producers outside the continent.

Pentagon releases first video of botched Kabul airstrike

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The Pentagon has declassified and publicly released video footage of a U.S. Drone strike in Kabul that killed 10 civilians in the final hours of a chaotic American withdrawal that ended a 20-year war in Afghanistan.

The New York Times obtained the footage through a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit against U.S. Central Command, which then posted the imagery to its website. It marks the first public release of video footage of the Aug. 29 strike, which the Pentagon initially defended but later called a tragic mistake.

The videos include about 25 minutes of footage from what the Times reported were two

MQ-9 Reaper drones, showing the scene of the strike prior to, during and after a missile struck a civilian car in a courtyard on a residential street. Indistinct images show individuals moving in or near the attack zone.

The military has said it struck what it thought was an extremist with the Islamic State group’s Afghanistan affiliate who might imminently detonate a bomb near the Kabul airport, where a hurried evacuation was still under way. Three days earlier a suicide bombing at the airport had killed 13 U.S. Troops and more than 160 Afghans. When it later acknowledged its error in the Aug. 29 drone strike, Central Command said it determined that the man driving the car had nothing to do with the IS group.

FROM PAGE 1

RAVAN TO CHALLENGE YOGI ON HIS HOME TURF

On January 16, the BJP had announced that Yogi will fight the upcoming election from Gorakhpur urban seat.

Earlier, Azad Samaj Party tried to join hands with the SP but it did not materialise. On January 18, Azad who is a staunch BJP critic said his political outfit - Azad Samaj Party - is open to stitching an alliance with others and maintained that his fight has always been with the ruling party and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

PARRIKAR’S SON MISSING FROM GOA BJP FIRST LIST

He described Aam Admi party as a “liar” which had not fulfilled its promises to the people of Delhi.

Asked about denial of ticket to Utpal, Fadanvis “we gave two options to UtpL..one he declined..”

While BJP dropped two Ministers - WRD minister Filipe Nery Rodrigues and PWD Minister Deepak Prabhu Pauskar -- it also announced candidature to Milind Naik from Mormugao who had resigned as Minister over the alleged sex scandal case.

Deputy Chief Minister and Pernem MLA Manohar ‘Babu’ Azgaonkar is given candidature from Margao.

The BJP has also dropped sitting MLA Isidore Fernandes and given candidature to former sports minister Ramesh Tawadkar.

The BJP is going to the polls all alone without an ally.

The Congress had narrowly missed power last time in 2017 when the assembly polls gave a hung Assembly.

27% OBC QUOTA IN NEET IS NOT AT ODDS WITH MERIT, SAYS SC

delivered by the bench of Justices Chandrachud and AS Bopanna, adding that exams did not reflect how social, economic and cultural advantages that accrued to certain classes contributed to their success in them.

Reading out excerpts from the judgment, Justice Chandrachud said the power of the State Governments to provide reservations under Article 15 (4) and (5) of the Constitution was not an “exception” to Article 15 (1), which enshrines the mandate that “the State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them”. Apex court held that the power of the State Government to craft reservations for the OBC amplified the principle of “substantive

equality” manifested through Article 15 (1).

“Examinations are not a proxy for merit. Merit should be socially contextualized and reconceptualized... Reservation is not at odds with merit but furthers its distributive impact,” Justice Chandrachud observed. The court observed that material affluence of certain individual members of a socially backward group or ‘creamy layer’ could not be used against the entire group to deny it the benefits of reservation.

“It may be that individual members of an identified group which are being given reservation are not backward or individuals belonging to the non-identified group may share characteristics of a backward group with members of an identified group. The individual difference may be a result of privilege, fortune and circumstances but it cannot be used to negate the role of circumstances,” said the judgment.

The court further confirmed that there was no need for the Centre to have got the prior consent of the Supreme Court before introducing the OBC quota in the AIQ seats under NEET. The petitioners, several NEET aspirants, had argued that since the top court had limited reservation to 50 per cent in the Indira Sawhney judgment, the Government should have first applied to the court before tinkering with the quota calculations.

“Providing reservation to AIQ is a policy decision that would not be subject to judicial review,” said the Court, rejecting the arguments made by the petitioners that the Centre changed the “rules of the game midway”, well into the middle of the NEET admission process.

“The Government introduced OBC/EWS quota before the counselling. Thus, it cannot be said that the rules of the game have been changed. Reservation would be notified by the counselling authority before the beginning of the counselling process. Therefore, the candidates applying for NEET PG are not provided any information on the distribution of the seat matrix. Such information is provided by the counselling authority only after the counselling session is to begin,” the court reasoned.

Series of petitions were filed by doctors in August 2021 against a July 29, 2021, notification issued by the Directorate General of Health Services of the Ministry of Health implementing 27 per cent and 10 per cent reservation for OBC and Economically Weaker Sections (EWS), respectively, while filling up 15 per cent undergraduate and 50 per cent postgraduate AIQ seats under NEET. This part of the judgment concerning the OBC quota provided in the July 29, 2021 notification is final. Questions on the validity of the 10 per cent quota for the EWS would be heard finally in the third week of March.

Meanwhile, on January 7, the court had allowed NEET counselling for 2021-22 admissions for AIQ seats to proceed in accordance

with the July 29, 2021, notification in order to solely ensure there is no “dislocation” in medical admissions this year when the need for doctors is more due to the pandemic.

The Rs.8 lakh gross annual family income limit criterion for identifying EWS, as originally notified by a January 2019 official memorandum and recommended for retention by the Government-appointed former finance secretary Ajay Bhushan Pandey-led expert committee on December 31, 2021, would be implemented for the admission year 2021-2022.

ARMY CONTACTS PLA AS ARUNACHAL YOUTH LOST IN WOODS UNTRACEABLE

The latest incident was flagged by Arunachal Pradesh’s MP Tapir Gao on Wednesday. He had claimed the PLA had abducted a 17-year-old boy from inside the Indian territory in the State’s Upper Siang district.

Gao said the incident took place near the place where the Tsangpo river enters India in Arunachal Pradesh. Tsangpo is called Siang in Arunachal Pradesh and Brahmaputra in Assam.

The MP also said he had informed the Union Minister of State for Home Nisith Pramanik about the incident and requested him to take necessary action in this regard.

The latest incident has taken place at a time when India and China are in a stand-off at various friction points at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh. The military commanders of both countries have held 14 rounds of talks to ease tension there. More than 50,000 troops each from both sides are deployed at the LAC there for the last two years since the situation flared up.

COUNTRY CREATING SYSTEM WHERE DISCRIMINATION HAS NO PLACE: PM

The Prime Minister stressed that our progress lies in the progress of the nation. “The nation exists from us, and we exist through the nation. This realization is becoming the biggest strength of us Indians in the making of a new India. Everything the country is doing today includes ‘Sabka Prayas’”, he said.

He added that “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas” is becoming the guiding motto of the country.

Commenting on the innovative and progressive new thinking and new approach of the New India, the Prime Minister remarked that “today we are creating a system in which there is no place for discrimination, we are building a society that stands firmly on the foundation of equality and social justice”.

The Prime Minister remarked on the Indian tradition of veneration and the importance of women.

He said, “When the world was in deep darkness and caught in the old thinking about women, then India used to worship women as Maatru Shakti and Goddess. We had women scholars like Gargi, Maitreyi, Anusuya, Arundhati and Madalasa giving knowledge to society”.

He noted the contribution of remarkable women in different epochs of Indian history.

In the troubled medieval times, the Prime Minister recalled, there were great women like Panna Dai and Mirabai in this country. And during the freedom struggle too, many women have sacrificed.

From Kittur’s Rani Chennamma, Matangini Hazra, Rani Lakshmbai, Veerangana Jhalkari Bai to Ahilyabai Holkar and Savitribai Phule maintained India’s identity, he said.

The Prime Minister listed developments like entry of women in the armed forces, more maternity leaves, better political participation in the form of more voting and representation in the Council of Ministers as a mark of new confidence among women.

He expressed satisfaction that this movement is society-led and the gender ratio has improved in the country.

515 DISTRICTS REPORT OVER 5% POSITIVITY; KERALA, K’TAKA LEAD

Notwithstanding the drop in cases in the State Capital, Maharashtra recorded 43,697 cases with 20.66 per cent positivity rate.

Meanwhile, the Union Health Ministry on Thursday said that at least 515 districts in the country are reporting a positivity rate of over 5 per cent and the Central health teams have been sent to these States to monitor the situation. The Ministry, however, said that bed occupancy or hospitalization and death is significantly lower in the third wave in comparison to that in the second.

DG-ICMR Dr Balram Bhargava, while briefing the media on the Covid-19 situation in the country, also said that the number of deaths has considerably reduced due to vaccinations. “In this third surge of Covid-19, we are currently not witnessing severe illness and deaths due to high vaccination uptake, Bhargava said.

Dr V K Paul, head of India’s Covid-19 task force, however, maintained that even in the “relatively low mortality phase” of the pandemic, people with comorbidities and the elderly continue to remain vulnerable and should get vaccinated. Dr Paul also raised a red flag that there are 10 per cent of people over the age of 60 years who are yet to get their first dose and 25 per cent who are to get their second dose.

First conviction in Delhi riots: Youth gets 5 years in jail

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In its first judgment in cases related to Delhi riots of 2020, a Delhi trial court on Thursday sentenced Dinesh Yadav to five years in jail for being part of a riotous mob that set on fire a 73-year-old woman’s house in Gokalpuri.

Last month, Additional Sessions Judge Virender Bhat had convicted him. Yadav has been directed to pay a fine of ₹12,000, said advocate Shikha Garg, who had represented him during the trial.

As per the prosecution, Yadav was an “active member of the riotous mob” and participated in vandalising and putting on fire the house of a woman named Manori on February 25 night.

Manori had alleged that a mob of around 150-200 rioters attacked her house when her family was not present and looted all the articles and even the buffalo.

The 25-year-old Yadav was arrested on June 8, 2020. The court framed charges against him on August 3, 2021, to which he pleaded not guilty and claimed trial. He was convicted on December 6. Communal clashes had broken out in northeast Delhi in February 2020, after the violence between the Citizenship (Amendment) Act supporters and its protesters spiraled out of control leaving at least 53 people dead and over 700 injured.

Textile printing mill catches fire in Gujarat, no casualty

Bardoli : At least 10 workers were rescued after a three-storey textile dyeing and printing mill, located near Bardoli town in Gujarat’s Surat district, caught fire early on Thursday, officials said.

As the fire is still raging, nearly 100 firemen from Bardoli, Surat city and other nearby places are involved in the firefighting operation, but the blaze has gutted the entire building, Bardoli’s chief fire officer P B Gadhvi said. “The fire broke out at the

dyeing and printing mill located in Palsana area around 3.30 am and it is still raging. It has engulfed all the three floors of the unit. While majority of the workers came out safely with the help of locals after the fire started spreading, firemen rescued around 10 workers who had got stuck in the rear part of the mill. But no one was injured in the incident,” he said.

Since it was a major fire, nearly 15 firefighting vehicles were pressed into service since early morning, he said.



RAISE A TOAST TO TEA

MADHAV SARDA lists the reasons for the uptick in the sales of this hot beverage



Tea is one of the most loved beverages in India and across the world. People have enjoyed tea since time immemorial and consider it to be one of the most cherished parts of their native culture. Indians' love for this super beverage has given the tea industry a loyal customer base in the country, which has resulted in fast-paced growth. According to expertmarketresearch.com, the Indian tea industry is expected to grow at a CAGR of about 4.2 per cent in the 2021-26 period and reach an approximate valuation of 1.40 million tonnes by the end of this period. Some of the trends that are dictating the landscape of the tea industry in India are as follows:

Tea as a wellness superfood
Due to the ongoing Covid pandemic situation, there is a huge resurgence of teas with proven health benefits. Immunity boosting teas and superfoods with Ayurvedic ingredients like turmeric, *ashwagandha*, moringa, tulsi etc are in big demand. As per a study by Numr Research, about 443 million Indian millennials spend more than ₹4,000 on their health and wellness every month. Both established companies and start-ups have caught on



to this trend and have witnessed phenomenal growth.

Increasing customer preference for premium teas
With the advent of globalisation and increased internet penetration, there has been a substantial surge in the complexities of consumer demand. As the variety of teas available increased due to the removal of global barriers and the advent of e-commerce, discerning customers started seeking innovation and diversity in products being offered by tea brands. In this scenario, the demand for premium teas has

THE VARIETY OF TEAS HAS INCREASED DUE TO THE REMOVAL OF GLOBAL BARRIERS AND THE ADVENT OF E-COMMERCE SITES

increased. These premium teas include immunity-boosting, speciality and flavoured teas. The younger generation is lapping these up.

Eco-friendly and sustainable packaging
Tea packaging has come a long way over the years. Stand up pouches have become the preferred choice for many of today's top brands in the beverage market. Stand-up pouches for tea packaging keep the leaves fresh and protect against outside elements. Zipper pouch bags help maintain a longer shelf life of the natural leaves.

These tea pouches are recyclable, landfill friendly, and don't rip, tear, or break like traditional boxes or cartons. The wide face of stand-up pouches acts as the perfect surface for your company's branding and designs.

Growing brand consciousness
As gifting tea packages at corporate events and festivals has become a trend, brand consciousness comes into play. People are now progressively opting for branded labels instead of products from the unorganised sector. This has led to increased global investment in tea brands that have a compelling story to tell and with a scalable business model. As per Nielsen's insights, Indian consumers these days look at food labels more than ever before and are willing to pay more for products that make the cut, especially those with added nutrients. They are also more loyal to trusted brands. The surge in brand preference has also come because of the inclination towards health and hygiene factors. Since people generally expect a product to be premium and reliable if it is branded.

Mushrooming of tea boutiques and cafes
Tea stalls are a common sight across India, but they are typically fragmented and unorganised. Tea café chains emerging across India are giving consumers a midway option between at-home consumption and the humble roadside stall. A number of companies with tea outlets similar to modern coffee chains have mushroomed, and are slowly revolutionising the tea industry in India. These companies are looking to appeal to young Indians by offering them an upgraded version of the tea *dhabas* and their efforts are paying off. Some of these start-ups are now national chains. These tea chains are a much better alternative to the open-air tea vendors, offering consumers a more relaxed environment, with seating and snacks. (The author is an expert tea taster and managing director of Golden Tips Tea.)



What's in a name?

The terms — vegan and plant-based — are often used interchangeably. AARTI GILL sets the record straight by pointing out the subtle differences

With veganism and plant-based living gaining increasing popularity across the globe there is still a lot of confusion around these two lifestyles. People tend to use them interchangeably due to the various similarities between them. But plant-based diets are not the same as vegan diets. Essentially speaking, a vegan diet will remove every animal product from the diet. On the other hand, a plant-based diet entirely or mostly comprises plant-based foods. Plant-based diets are touted as a healthier alternative by many experts as these focus on deriving maximum nutrition from eating plant-based foods like whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables while eliminating highly processed foods.

The term vegan was first coined in 1944 by Donald Watson, an animal rights advocate and founder of the Vegan Society. It means a person who avoids animals and animal-derived products for ethical reasons. Someone who follows a vegan diet more often than not eliminates animals and animal-derived products not just from their diet but also their daily lifestyle. A vegan diet consists only of plant-based foods and eliminates every animal product whether dairy, meat, poultry, fish, eggs and even honey. Most people who turn vegan usually convert due to ethical, social and environmental reasons. Most health nutritionists argue that just because something is labelled vegan, it doesn't straightaway imply it's healthy. The ever-growing popularity of vegan culture has also led to a whole new category of vegan fast-foods like vegan chips, vegan cookies and more. Vegan-based junk, like other types of junk food, has more calories and less nutrition. While the term plant-based is used usually in the context of a diet, an increasing number of people have begun to adopt other plant-based products in other facets of their life as these have several benefits while being environmentally friendly. In a plant-based diet, the focus predominantly is on eating whole foods that have undergone zero or little processing. The food is in its nat-



ural and pristine state, as much as possible. These are better absorbed by the body and safe for long-term consumption due to the absence of harmful ingredients like additives. Plant-based diets include foods such as vegetables, fruits, whole grains (quinoa, farro, barley, oatmeal), plant-based oils (avocado, olive, canola), nuts and seeds. Green vegetables and fresh fruits are best consumed in their original form as they contain a huge amount of essential nutrients like vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. Plant-based fats such as almonds and avocados are also excellent sources of healthy fat. If you have a family history of heart disease or you are receiving warning signals from the body, it is best to switch to a plant-based diet; simply owing to its countless benefits.

Whether you choose to go plant-based or vegan, two factors that one should keep in mind for a healthier body are:
□ Consuming a balanced diet with the right amount of macros and micros
□ Clean nutrition, without harmful chemicals, additives, artificial sweeteners
□ Keeping track of these factors will ensure that you get the best out of your daily diets. (The author is co-founder of OZiva)

R E C I P E S



TRIO HEIRLOOM TOMATO BURRATA

- WHAT YOU NEED**
- Assorted heirloom tomato: 200 gm
 - Burrata cheese: 3
 - Yellow pear tomato: 6
 - Red cherry blossom tomato: 6
 - Rucola: 1 cup
 - Pinenuts: 2 tsp
 - Garlic: 1/2 tsp
 - Grana Padano: 3 tsp
 - Salt: 1 tsp
 - First-pressed olive oil: 5 tsp
 - Pistachio: 2 tsp

METHOD

- Reserve the Rucola pistachio pesto. Dress heirloom tomatoes.
- To assemble; place the pistachio paste and tomatoes on the base of a serving dish.
- Place the burrata on top and then scatter the sun-dried tomatoes and halved well-seasoned heritage tomatoes. Drizzle with olive oil and top with basil leaves.
- Garnish and serve.

Courtesy: Ravish Mishra, executive chef at The Westin Goa

KHAPSE

(A sweet biscuit from Tawang and West Kameng districts of Arunachal Pradesh)

WHAT YOU NEED

- Refined flour: 500 gm
- Refined oil / Ghee: 200 ml
- Sugar: 100 gm
- Milk: 200 ml
- Breakfast sugar: 100 gm
- Oil/ghee: For deep frying

METHOD

- Dissolve the sugar in warm milk

BURNT GARLIC SCHEZWAN FRIED RICE

WHAT YOU NEED

- Boiled rice: 150 gm
- Green capsicum: 15 gm
- Carrot: 15 gm
- French beans 10 gm
- Green chilli: 2
- Garlic: 10 gm
- Spring onion: 5 gm
- Refined oil: 10 ml
- Schezwan sauce: 1 tbsp



- Combine flour, oil and milk. Mix everything to make a smooth dough, knead for about 10 minutes.

- Roll out the dough to about ¼ inch thickness.
- Cut the rolled-out dough into small rectangular strips.

- In each rectangular strip make a slit in the middle and also make thin strips on both sides. Pull one strip at a time from each side and join in the middle continue for all the thin strips forming something like a shoelace pattern.

- Now heat oil/ghee in a pan and deep fat fry.

- Remove when golden brown and while hot sprinkle some breakfast sugar on top of each.

Courtesy: Chef Arvind Rai, executive chef at The Ashok, New Delhi



- Green chilli sauce: 1/4
- Tomato ketchup
- Salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

- Heat oil in a wok, add chopped

garlic and saute till golden.

Add green chilli and saute for 20-seconds before adding chopped carrot, beans and capsicum. Stir fry it on high flame.

Add Schezwan sauce, soya sauce, green chilli sauce, and toss for a minute. Add boiled rice and correct the seasoning. Toss on high flame. Garnish with chopped spring onions and serve with Del Monte Tomato Ketchup.

Courtesy: Del Monte

PANEER STUFFED RAGI PARATHA

WHAT YOU NEED

For dough

- Ragi flour (Finger millets): 30 gm
- Whole wheat flour: ½ tsp
- Pomace olive oil: 1 tsp
- Salt as per taste

For paneer stuffing

- Grated paneer: 30 gm
- Finely grated green chilli: 1
- Few mint leaves, chopped
- Cumin powder: 1/4 tsp
- Salt as per taste



For cooking

- Pomace olive oil: 1.5 tsp

METHOD

- Start with kneading the dough by mixing *ragi* and wheat flour. Knead paratha dough for a couple of minutes until it gets smooth and elastic.
- Next, add a teaspoon of oil to coat the paratha dough and knead a little more.
- Cover the *ragi* paratha dough and allow it to rest until you get the filling ready.

- Make the paneer filling by combining the grated paneer, green chillies, mint leaves, salt, cumin powder and mix all the ingredients well.
- Divide the filling into equal portions.
- The next and final step is to stuff the filling into the ragi paratha dough.
- Dust the *ragi* paratha dough in flour, flatten it with your finger and place it on a flat surface. Roll it out thin.
- Take a portion of paneer filling

and place it in the centre. Next, gather the sides of the paratha dough and bring all the sides together.

- Remove the excess dough which pops out when you bring it together. Press the dough down.
- Dust the paratha dough in some flour and roll it gently until you get desired thickness. Proceed the same way with the remaining portions of paratha dough and filling.
- Preheat the skillet on medium heat and grease it with little oil.

- Place the paratha on it and allow it to cook on medium heat for 30 to 45 seconds and flip over.
- Spread a little oil over the paratha and cook evenly on both sides.
- Flip a few times to cook ensure both sides are properly browned and crisp evenly.
- Once the paratha is cooked, transfer it to a plate. Serve hot.

Courtesy: Celebrity nutritionist, Nnami Agarwal in association with Oleev

NEW IN TOWN

ROASTERY COFFEE HOUSE
Coffee roaster and café, Roastery Coffee House, is expanding its footprint by launching its third outlet in Noida. With coffees sourced from coffee farms in India, the brand is known to deliver a first-of-its-kind experience by going from 'crop-to-cup' and offering single-state speciality coffee.

HARAJUKU TOKYO CAFE
Harajuku Tokyo Cafe, a Japanese street food-inspired QSR, is gearing up to launch its second outlet in the NCR at Ambience Mall, Gurugram. The brand first opened in Select CityWalk, Saket and is looking to expand further. Some favourites from Japan include boba tea, freshly baked Japanese Jiggly Cheesecake, exclusively-crafted Japanese desserts and breads, and made-on-order street food like takoyaki, chicken karaage and the twelve-inch-long Japanese fries; fun desserts like taiyaki, and the popular Harajuku crepes; ramen, chahan, sushi amongst other lip-smacking dishes. The new outlet in Gurgaon spread across 2,400 sq ft and seating of around 50 guests will feature an upgraded menu with new additions like Shrimp dynamite, Gyoza ramen,

Lotus biscoff pancakes, Mochi doughnuts, new boba tea flavours and more.

Given the Covid protocol in Delhi, both outlets are open for delivery and takeaways.

SINDHU, PRANNOY ENTER SYED MODI QUARTERFINALS

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu hardly broke any sweat but HS Prannoy had to toil hard as the two Indian shuttlers progressed to the women's and men's singles quarterfinals of the Syed Modi International Super 300 tournament here on Thursday.

Top seed Sindhu took just 33 minutes to get the better of American Lauren Lam 21-16 21-13 in her second-round match, while fifth seed Prannoy staved off a stiff challenge from compatriot Priyanshu Rajawat before prevailing 21-11 16-21 21-18 at the BBD indoor stadium here.

Sindhu, a former world champion, will take on sixth-seeded Thai shuttler Supanida Katethong in the last-eight stage in a repeat of the India Open Super 500 semifinals.

The 26-year-old from Hyderabad will look to set the record straight against the left-handed Thai, who had beaten the Indian last week.

Prannoy, a former top 10 player, will clash with France's Arnaud Merkle, who ended



India's Kartikey Gulshan Kumar's campaign with a 21-8 21-12 win in another second-round match.

In other results, Aakarshi Kashyap and Malvika Bansod have set up an exciting quarter-final clash against each other

after notching up straight game wins over Sai Uttejitha Rao Chukka and Prerana Neeluri respectively.

While Aakarshi beat Sai 21-9 21-6, Malvika defeated Prerana 21-10 21-8 in two lopsided contests.

In another women's singles second round match, India's Samiya Imad Farooqui beat compatriot Kanika Kanwal 21-6 21-15 and will face Anupama Upadhyaya in another all-Indian clash.

Anupama beat Smit Toshniwal 21-12 21-19 in another match.

In the men's singles, Mithun Manjunath fought for an hour and 20 minutes before prevailing 16-21 21-16 23-21 against Malaysia's Soong Joo Ven but it was curtains for Chirag Sen, Kaushal Dharmamer and Raghu Mariswamy.

While Russia's Sergey Sirant quelled Chirag's challenge 18-21 22-20 21-12, Kushal lost 16-21 13-21 to Cheam June Wei of Malaysia and Raghu went down 9-21 9-21 to Lucas Claerbout of France.

Manju will cross swords with Sergey next.

Fourth seeded men's doubles pair of MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila also reached the quarterfinals after getting a walkover from compatriots Ayush Makhija and Venkat Gaurav Prasad.



Sania-Ram pair moves into Australian Open second round

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Sania Mirza and her American partner Rajeev Ram moved into the mixed doubles second round of the Australian Open with a confident straight-set win over the Serbian team of Aleksandra Krunic and Nikola Cacic, here on Thursday.

Ram came out serving big and also stayed like a rock at the net as he anchored the 6-3 7-6(3) win in the opening round that lasted 69 minutes. Ram is a defending champion in the event. He had won the mixed title here with Czech partner Barbora Krejickova in 2021.

Mirza, who will retire after the 2022 season, also served well in the contest.

They had a chance to go up as early as in the second game but Mirza buried a forehand into the net on the deciding point.

The team got another chance on the serve of Krunic but that chance also went abegging when Mirza could not finish the point with a volley.

However, they got the break on the deciding point.

Ram then served out the next game at love for a 4-1 lead.

Mirza too made a lot of first serves as the team cruised towards a first-set lead. Ram's solid serving and Mirza's smooth volleys sealed the set for the Indo-American team.

Mirza unleashed her big forehand to Krunic on a weak return from Cacic to earn the first break chance of the second set. But the Indian hit the forehand long on the deciding point.

A stunning cross court winner by Mirza earned the team two break points on Krunic's serve in the sixth game.

But the Serbians held the game as Krunic served wide and Mirza's return was dispatched for a volley winner by Cacic.

At 5-5, Krunic came out serving big for a crucial hold and now Mirza had to serve under pressure to stretch it to a tie-breaker.

But the Indian made no mistake and served out the game at love.

Both Krunic and Cacic lost a point each on their serves to hand the Indo-American duo three match points. An error in return of serve by Cacic sealed it for Mirza and Ram.

Rohan Bopanna is also in fray in the mixed doubles event. He has paired up with Croatia's Darija Jurak Schreiber and will be in action on Saturday.

Holders India look to continue momentum after Olympic high

PTI ■ MUSCAT

The Indian women's hockey team will look to carry on the momentum from the historic Tokyo Olympic campaign when it opens its title defence against Malaysia in the Asia Cup here on Friday.

The Indian women recorded their best-ever Olympic result after finishing fourth in Tokyo last year, narrowly missing out on a podium.

The Savita Punia-led side, the most experienced in the tournament, will now be hoping to use that experience to good effect in its first major event after the Olympics.

Goalkeeper Savita will lead the side in the absence of Rani Rampal, who has been rested to recover from a hamstring injury.

Savita has admitted that India's experience will be key to the team's success at the prestigious quadrennial tournament, which is also a qualifying event for this year's FIH Women's World Cup, to be co-hosted by Spain and Netherlands.

"The best part about this team is that, many of us have been playing together for a long time and I feel this experience and team camaraderie will give us the edge over other teams.

"Our main priority will be to remain focused on our game and ensure we execute the plans against each team without making errors," Savita said on the eve of their opener.

The defending champions are grouped in Pool A along with Japan, Malaysia and Singapore.



After Malaysia, the Indians will play against Japan on Sunday before squaring off against Singapore in their final pool game on January 24.

The Indian skipper also emphasised on the need to make a positive start to

the tournament.

"We have played Malaysia quite a few times in the past and they are a good side. Doing well against them will give us the right start to the tournament," Savita said.

As a team, we believe in focusing on

our own game and not worry too much about what the opponent team can or cannot do. We just want to play to our strength."

The Tokyo campaign has also been instrumental in instilling a 'never-give-

Garbiñe: No 3 Muguruza bows out at Australian Open

AP ■ MELBOURNE

The surprises started early at the Australian Open on Day 4, with No 3 Garbiñe Muguruza becoming the highest-seeded player to exit the women's draw just minutes after No 6 Anett Kontaveit lost.

Not long after, No 2-seeded Aryna Sabalenka served a dozen double-faults in the first set and appeared to be on the brink of a second-round defeat before recovering to hold off 100th-ranked Wang Xinyu 1-6 6-4 6-2.

Muguruza never managed to earn a single break point and made a whopping 33 unforced errors, more than twice her opponent's total, in a 6-3 6-3 loss to Alize Cornet under a bright blue and cloudless sky at Rod Laver Arena on Thursday.

"A little bit surprised about my level. I am a little disappointed, too," said Muguruza, who won the season-ending WTA Finals in 2021.

"I feel like my shots weren't as accurate and precise. I feel, also, my aggressive game wasn't that aggressive today."

Here's how unexpected that result was: Muguruza is a two-time Grand Slam champion and a two-time major runner-up, too, including making it to the final at the Australian Open in 2020.

And the 61st-ranked Cornet? She's appearing in her 63rd career major tournament — and 60th in a row — but never has been beyond the fourth round.

Cornet will get a chance to equal that showing when she plays Saturday, her 32nd birthday.

She called herself "a little bit (of) a dinosaur."

"I don't know how many years I have left," Cornet said.

"Today was a perfect gift I could give myself and I really hope the journey's going to go even farther for me." Sam Stosur's 6-2 6-2 loss to No 10 Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova ended the 2011 US Open champion's 20th, and last, singles campaign at the Australian



Open.

"I've done more than I ever thought possible. I dreamed of winning a Grand Slam (singles title), and I couldn't have asked for anything more," Stosur told the crowd in Kia Arena.

Muguruza said she didn't feel at her best physically and noted that the start of this season was "kind of stressful," because COVID-19 spread through her support team and she was apart from them for two weeks.

Kontaveit, who lost to Muguruza in the title match at the WTA Finals, was beaten 6-2 6-3 by 19-year-old Clara Tauson of Denmark.

"I just went in there believing I could win, but it wasn't like I have to win," said Tauson, who will make her debut in the third round at a major against 2019 Australian Open semifinalist Danielle Collins. "It was more: I can win, but we'll see what happens." Sabalenka finished with 19 double-faults, including nine in her first two service games, in her win over Wang. She said she regained her composure during a quick trip to the locker room following the first set.

The US Open and Wimbledon semifinalist from last year said she had Sam Stosur's 6-2 6-2 loss to No 10 Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova ended the 2011 US Open champion's 20th, and last, singles campaign at the Australian

Star archery couple Deepika, Atanu dropped from TOPS

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Star archer Deepika Kumari and her husband Atanu Das were on Thursday dropped from the Sports Ministry's Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) due to their below-par performances in the national ranking tournament.

The Mission Olympic Cell (MOC) last month decided to review support for Deepika, a former world number one recurve archer, and Atanu after the National Ranking Archery Tournament in



Hyderabad, where they cut a sorry figure. "Considering their below-par performances in the event, MOC decided to not include them in the TOPS list for now," Sports Ministry said in a statement. The archery couple was rated highly after their exploits in the different World Cups, but both Deepika and Atanu have time and again failed to shine at the multi-sport events -- the latest being the Tokyo Olympics, where much was expected from them but they returned empty-handed. Their problems compounded

after they flopped at the World Cup Finals in Yankton, USA last October.

Aware of their immense contribution in raising the profile of archery in the country, the decision was conveyed to the duo by MOC members, SAI and Archery Association of India officials.

Deepika said the TOPS omission will only motivate her to comeback stronger.

"I appreciate that SAI officials informed me before the MOC meeting itself that there was a possibility of me being excluded from the TOP Scheme.

Judges didn't consider 'wisdom' of deporting Novak Djokovic

AP ■ MELBOURNE

Three Australian Federal Court judges on Thursday revealed their reasons for backing a government order to deport tennis star Novak Djokovic, explaining they did not consider the "merits or wisdom of the decision."

The judges on Sunday unanimously endorsed Immigration Minister Alex Hawke's decision to deport the 34-year-old Serb following an urgent court challenge on the eve of what was to be Djokovic's first match in defense of his Australian Open title. Djokovic accepted the verdict and flew from Melbourne to the United Arab Emirates hours later.

Chief Justice James Allsop and Justices James Besanko and David O'Callaghan on Thursday released a 27-page explanation of why they rejected Djokovic's challenge.

"The court does not consider the merits or wisdom of the decision," the judges said. "The task of the court is to rule upon the lawfulness or legality of the decision." "Another person in the position of the minister may have not cancelled Mr. Djokovic's visa. The minister did," they added. Djokovic had his visa revoked at Melbourne's airport on Jan. 6 hours after arriving because he wasn't vaccinated against COVID-19.

A judge later found that the border officer's decision to cancel the visa was legally unreasonable and restored it.

But Hawke used his sweeping discretion under the Immigration Act to cancel the visa again on Friday on



the broad ground of public interest.

Djokovic was a "high profile unvaccinated individual" whose presence in Melbourne "may foster anti-vaccination sentiment" and increase pressure on the health system, Hawke said in his 10-page decision to revoke the visa.

Hawke had rejected Djokovic's arguments that his deportation would appear to be "politically motivated decision-making".

CANCELLATION OF NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

No.SSA/MDM/NABL-Testing/332/2021/8558 Date : 18.01.2022

The Notice Inviting Expression of Interest (EOI) vide No.SSA/MDM/NABL-Testing/332/2021/7726 Date : 03.12.2021 for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) for testing of dry and cooked MDM Food is hereby cancelled due to administrative reasons.

Janasanyog/CF/2970/21

Sd/-Mission Director
SSA, Assam

Notice Inviting e-Tender

No. SSA/Esstt/KGBV-Furniture/371/2021/8581 Date: 19.01.2022

Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam (Samagra Shiksha) invites tender through e-Tendering process from Manufacturer of furniture/Authorized Dealer/ Distributor of the manufacturer of furniture for supply of Furniture. To participate in this tender process through e-procurement document, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves. The Bidder who have downloaded the tender schedules containing the tender details, terms and conditions, from the website shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>, with proof of payment of non refundable tender fee of Rs. 5000/- (Rupees five thousand) only in the form of demand draft/Bankers Cheque drawn in favour of Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam, from any nationalized/ scheduled Bank and payable at Guwahati. The tender should be submitted on-line as per date and time of submission as per prescribed schedule.

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

Janasanyog/CF/2961/21

INDIA HOPE TO MAKE TURNAROUND

With very little time to rest, India will be hoping to put up a better batting show and make a turnaround against South Africa in the second ODI at Boland Park on Friday

PTI ■ PAARL (SOUTH AFRICA)

KL Rahul will have to show drastically improved leadership acumen when he leads India against a buoyant South African side in the second ODI on Thursday, with the three-match series and his long-term Test captaincy ambitions both at stake.

Rahul was at best mediocre in terms of "on-your-feet-thinking", something that's basic to art of captaincy, and also didn't look the part with the bat in a deflating 31-run defeat in the opening ODI where India were outplayed for the better part of the game.

The middle-order, which had been a problem since Virat Kohli's heady days as captain, is still sticking out like a sore thumb and no one knows what exactly the solution is.

Once again, it was a case of one opener -- Shikhar Dhawan on this occasion -- and the indomitable Kohli holding fort before the middle-order caved in on a slower pitch where there was turn and the

ball gripped, making a run-of-the-mill seamer Andile Phehlukwayo look formidable.

South Africa crushed India both strategically as well as on skills and therein lay serious questions about Rahul's wares as captain.

The most dominant query was what exactly was Venkatesh Iyer doing in the team if he was not bowling at least four to five overs as the sixth bowler when Yuzvendra Chahal and Shardul Thakur were being taken to the cleaners by Rassie van der Dussen and Temba Bavuma?

If Venkatesh is playing as a specialist batter at No.6 then why not use Suryakumar Yadav, who is more experienced with a better range of strokes under pressure?

The next question that arose was whether Rahul spoke to Chahal or Ashwin when Van der Dussen and Bavuma started playing the sweep shots -- both conventional and reverse sweep on a good batting strip.

There wasn't a singular inspired bowling change unlike Proteas who introduced Aiden Markram's off-breaks first-up and bottled up the Indian skipper.

When India batted, the game was lost at the halfway stage once Dhawan and Kohli were out in quick succession following their 90-plus stand. Suddenly, the strip where batting looked easy became difficult.

Shreyas Iyer's well-documented struggles against the short ball were again exposed on the day and the Mumbaikar would know that a place in the Indian playing XI comes at a premium and he can't go on wasting chances like a millionaire.

But going by Rahul Dravid's template, he would get his share of chances.

On a slow track, where rotating the strike is a must, the likes of Rishabh Pant and the two Iyers will have to play a big-role.

Similarly, Shardul Thakur, despite his fifty which came when the match as a contest was over and there was no pres-

sure of a target, will have to measure up as a bowler which is his primary skill.

Going for 70 plus runs in his 10-over spell with too many loose balls didn't help the team's cause and even Bhuvneshwar Kumar looked insipid on his return to the national playing eleven after the tour of Sri Lanka.

The difference between the two sides was how the spinners fared -- Ashwin and Chahal in their combined 20 overs gave away 106 runs for a single wicket while Markram, Tabraiz Shamsi and Keshav Maharaj bowled 26 overs between them for 124 runs and snared four wickets between them.

"It was a sort of wicket that we get back home. It was not a typical South African wicket. There was turn (on offer) in the wicket, and the ball was also keeping straight, so it wasn't easy for the new batsmen to score runs," senior batter Dhawan had said after the match.

"The plan of the set batsmen was to take it deep, but unfortunately I got out on the ball which turned a lot and I didn't

expect that, but yes that happens," he said.

Test captaincy is a different ball-game compared to white ball but Rahul only knows too well that when it comes to decision-making, the top brass will fall back on references they have.

And a series defeat against South Africa isn't going to do his case any good unless the head coach is bent on trying to make a leader out of him.



Tough times made me stronger but needed calm and clarity: Shikhar Dhawan

PTI ■ PAARL

Shikhar Dhawan believes that every Slean patch in his career has made him "stronger" but it is his clarity of mind and calmness that has enabled him to ride over the rough times.

The oldest player in the Indian ODI set-up, there were lot of talks about Dhawan's poor form in domestic cricket but as it has been with the 36-year-old, he was back with a bang in his favourite blue shirt with a top-score of 79 off 84 balls, albeit in a losing cause in the first ODI against South Africa. "I don't listen to the media or don't read newspapers or watch news, that way I don't take all that information," Dhawan said when asked how he keeps himself way from negativity.

For him, neither the bad patch has affected him for the first time nor is it going to be the last time but one needs to have the self belief in one's abilities. "I have full confidence in myself



that what my game is and I have clarity on that and I stay quite calm. And this is part of life, this happens in life, everyone's life has ups and downs, so it is nothing new and happening for the first time or for the last time in my career or my life, so it is alright, that only makes me stronger," said Dhawan.

Dhawan came into the series after

a poor run of Vijay Hazare Trophy scores -- 0, 12, 14, 18, 12 -- in five List A games. But if one carefully looks at Dhawan's career, just when there have been calls to drop him, he has invariably responded with a big knock like he did in the first ODI, where he looked the best batter in his side.

"These talks (to drop him) always are there and I am used to it and I just know how to give my best and I always make sure that my preparation is quite good and process is good and then I leave it on God.

"...And I know that with my experience and my self-confidence, I'll do good and I am happy that I did well today," the flamboyant opener quipped.

His endeavour is to remain fit and healthy for the last part of his career.

"With my experience I'll keep scoring lots of runs and yeah till the time I keep playing cricket I stay healthy and happy and I score lot of runs," he said knowing well that he is

reaching the business end of his career.

Dhawan's assessment of his team's 31-run defeat against South Africa was its struggle to keep the scoreboard ticking in the middle overs as the pitch got slower.

"We had a good start and I feel the wicket was slow, it was offering a bit of turn as well. So, when you are chasing (around) 300 runs, when the middle-order comes to bat, it is not easy to play shots. "Our wickets fell in a heap and that had an impact on us as a batting unit," Dhawan reasoned.

Dhawan also praised the South African duo of Temba Bavuma (110 off 143) and Rassie van der Dussen (129 not out off 96) for their well crafted hundreds that laid the platform for a convincing win. Dhawan believes that handling varied match situations comes with experience and the likes of Rishabh Pant, the two Iyers -- Shreyas and Venkatesh -- will understand better as they play more games.

After T20s, no Indians in ICC ODI men's Team of The Year



PTI ■ DUBAI

After going unrepresented in the ICC's men's T20 Team of the Year' due to a disastrous World Cup campaign in the UAE, no Indian player featured in the global body's 'ODI Team of the Year' which features two players from minnows Ireland.

Incidentally, the team also doesn't have any Australia, English, New Zealand or West Indies players. The team, which has Pakistan's Babar Azam as its

captain, has two Pakistanis including Fakhar Zaman. South Africans Janneman Malan and Rassie van der Dussen, Bangladeshis Shakib Al Hasan, Mustafizur Rahaman and Mushfiqur Rahim, who is also the designated wicketkeeper, Sri Lankans Wanindu Hasaranga and Dishmantha Chameera along with Irishmen Paul Stirling and Simi Singh form the rest of the squad. India, in the year 2021, played six ODIs and won four losing two. The two 50-over series that they played were against England at

home, which they won 2-1, and the other was an away clash against Sri Lanka in the island nation which was also won by an identical margin.

The problem with non-selection of an Indian player in the XI is more to do with lack of matches rather than poor show since they have won both the series that they played in 2021.

The only Indian player, who has played all the ODI matches in 2021 is veteran opener Shikhar Dhawan, who had 297 runs from six games.

The likes of Virat Kohli, KL Rahul and Rohit Sharma only played three ODIs in 2021 and ditto for premier bowlers, who also didn't play all the six games.

Buvneshwar Kumar was there in five of those six games with his tally of wickets not in double digits (9 from 5 matches).

In order to make it to the team of the year, there have to be enough impactful performances to earn points which Indians didn't have.

India veterans Raj, Goswami feature in ICC Women's 'ODI Team of the Year'



PTI ■ DUBAI

Veteran India players Mithali Raj and Jhulan Goswami featured in the ICC 'ODI Team of the Year' for women after they extended their consistent run in international cricket.

The ICC Team of the Year recognises the achievements of exceptional players who impressed with their on-field exploits in a calendar year.

The 39-year-old Raj, the veteran India batter and captain, amassed the same number of runs as England opener Tammy Beaumont and at exactly the same average.

But her 503 runs came when the Indian team struggled as a unit, making her contribution even more important. She didn't score any century this year but made a total of six half-centuries.

Long-time pace spearhead Goswami,

who is also 39, is still proving herself to be a force to reckon with.

She claimed a total of 15 wickets in 2021 and maintained an excellent economy rate of 3.77 as well.

An experienced bowler who can keep runs in check, and pick up wickets at the same time, Goswami is an asset for any side, the ICC said in its appreciation for the Indian.

With 340 ODI scalps, Jhulan, who is also an ICC Women's Cricket of the Award winner, leads the tally for most wickets in the international arena.

Raj and Goswami are the only two Indian players to have featured in the side captained by England skipper Heather Knight.

The team has three players from South Africa, two each from England and West Indies and one from Australia.

Biopics are being made on both Raj and Goswami. The two seasoned cricketers are now looking forward to this year's upcoming ODI World Cup in New Zealand.

Knight, the England captain has been a vital cog of their middle-order for a number of years now and she was one of the top performers in that role once again in 2021.

Knight accumulated a total of 423 runs this year, at an average of 42.30, including one century and three fifties. She also played a key role with the ball, chipping in with five wickets at an average of 19.80.

‘Tried reverse sweeps to put pressure on Indian spinners’

PTI ■ PAARL

South African batter Rassie van der Dussen was satisfied that he could execute his sweep shots to perfection against the Indian spinners which unsettled them during his team's 31-run win over the visitors in the first ODI here. Van der Dussen's 129 not out off 96 balls and his 204-run stand with skipper and fellow centurion Temba Bavuma formed the cornerstone of an easy victory for the Proteas. "Yeah, I think it was 68 for 3 when

I came in. It was taking a bit of turn, so I knew I had to get my sweeps out. Generally, the wicket is quite slow here. I tried reverse sweeps, a few of them came off, got off to a flyer. I tried to put pressure back on the them (Indian spinners)," Van der Dussen said at the online media interaction after the opening ODI here on Wednesday. Van der Dussen was involved in two high pressure chases in the Test victories recently and that certainly increased his confidence in the first ODI where he took the Indian attack to clean-

ers. "Two high pressure run chases in the Tests meant we were quite confident as a unit. All in all, a good day for the batters," he added. Van der Dussen swept really well against Yuzvendra Chahal and Ravichandran Ashwin, something he works hard on during net sessions against quality slow bowlers. "Conditions in Paarl generally suit spinners and slower bowlers. The way we upskilled ourselves...Starting from the T20s in West Indies, then the series in Sri Lanka and the T20 World Cup. "Up-skilling our bat-

ters against spin.. Making sure that we can dominate spin. In the past SA batters were known to dominate against the seamers, now with the work put in by the coaching unit against spin bowling has helped a lot," he added. Van der Dussen, was all praise for his skipper Bavuma, who anchored the innings well. "Obviously, played with Temba for long in my career. It was very hot out there today and when he got to 70 or 80, he felt the heat a bit and he reminded me to remind him to keep the intensity.

Zimbabwe's Chirwa suspended from bowling in international cricket

PTI ■ DUBAI

Zimbabwe's Victor Chirwa has been suspended from bowling in international cricket with immediate effect after the Event Panel of the ICC U-19 World Cup confirmed that he uses an illegal action.

The Event Panel comprised members of the ICC Panel of Human Movement Specialists.

Chirwa was reported by the match officials during



Zimbabwe's match against Papua New Guinea on Saturday. Video footage of him bowling in the event was shared with the Event Panel for review.

The Event Panel concluded that Chirwa employed an illegal bowling action and, as such, in accordance with Article 6.7 of the regulations, he is immediately suspended from bowling in international cricket, the ICC said in a media release.

COVID-hit India stroll into QFs after beating Ireland; Australia win too

PTI ■ TAROUBA (TRINIDAD)

Record four-time champions and title contenders India stormed into the Super League quarterfinals of the U-19 World Cup after thrashing minnows Ireland by a whopping 174 runs in a league game here, in which they barely managed to field a playing XI.

India started their campaign on a winning note, beating South Africa by 45 runs on last Saturday and the win on Wednesday by such a huge margin is significant as the team fielded only the available 11 players after six members of the side were forced into isolation after testing COVID positive.

Put into bat at the picturesque Brian Lara stadium, India first rode on Harnoor Singh's brisk 88, which was well complimented by a run-a-ball 79 by his opening partner Angkrish Raghuvanshi, to post a challeng-

ing 307 for five.

The Hrishikesh Kanitkar-coached side then bundled out the opposition for meagre 133 in 39 overs to register a comfortable win.

Skipper Yash Dhull and his deputy Sheikh Rasheed were among those isolated after testing positive as Nishant Sindhu led the side.

Left-handed Harnoor and Angriksh stitched a 164-run stand at the top to ensure Indian bowlers had a decent total to defend.

Harnoor hit 12 fours in his 101-ball knock while Angriksh found 10 boundaries and two sixes.

Stand-in skipper Nishant Sindhu (36 off 34; 5x4s) and Raj Bawa (42 off 64; 2x4s; 1x6) shared a 64-run stand for the third wicket, ensuring that the platform created by the openers was well-utilised to set a big score.

Just when it seemed India lacked enough firepower towards the end as big hits had dried up, Rajvardhan Hangargekar hit five sixes, including a hat-trick of maximums in the last over, in his fiery 17-ball 39-run unbeaten cameo that took India past the 300-run mark. Harnoor, who has been in sparkling form, drove the ball elegantly. If it was pitched up on the middle and leg, the left-hander from Jalandhar flicked it exquisitely. The ones pitched up on the off-side were driven in the cover region as Harnoor ticked the board nicely.

In contrast, Angriksh chose to muscle the ball around. He cut, pulled and also drove in an aggressive manner as none of the Ireland bowlers could trouble the Indian openers.

The 16-year-old from Delhi pulled left-arm spinner Matthew Humphreys (1/69) over deep mid-wicket for a six to raise his

half-century.

It was the same bowler who trapped him leg before later.

Angkrish was dismissed by spinner Jamie Forbes (1/38).

Chasing 308, Ireland was teetering at 17 for three after losing both openers Liam Doherty (7), David Vincent (8) and one-down Jack Dickson (0) cheaply inside the first seven overs.

Ireland never recovered from the early blows as right-arm medium pacer Garv Sangwan (2/23) sent back skipper Tim Tector (15) in the 15th over, to leave the side reeling at 36 for four.

Wicket-keeper Joshua Cox (28 off 46 balls) tried to take the game deep, but it was too little and too late.

Sangwan struck again, this time removing Cox, who was caught by Dinesh Bana in the 21st over as Ireland lost half its side for 66.

Scott Macbeth (32) only

delayed the inevitable but from here on, it was just a matter of time and India folded up Ireland's innings for just 133 with left-arm orthodox spinner Aneeshwar Gautam (2/11) and off-spinner Kaushal Tambe (2/8) cleaning up the lower middle order and tail-enders.

For India, Sangwan, Gautam and Tambe picked two wickets each while Rajvardhan Hangargekar (1/17), Ravi Kumar (1/11) and spinner Vicky Ostwal (1/22) too played their parts to perfection.

India now need to have enough players for their last Group B game against Uganda on Saturday as besides Dhull and Rasheed, batter Aradhya Yadav, Vasu Vats, Manav Parakh, and Siddharth Yadav also tested positive for the virus.

AUSTRALIA BEAT SCOTLAND IN

BASSETTERRE IN GROUP D

In a Group D match in Basseterre, Australia defeated Scotland by seven wickets.

Put into bat, Scotland rode on Charlie Tear (54), Thomas Mackintosh (54) and Oliver Davidson's (33) to post a respectable 236 for eight.

Australia sent Scotland in to bat first at the Conaree Cricket Centre, a decision that looked like it might backfire when Scotland's openers made a positive start with Tear and Davidson sharing 88 runs for the first wicket.

For Australia, Aiden Cahill (2/33) and William Salzmann (2/38) picked up two wickets apiece. Chasing, Australia started well, with run-machine Teague Wyllie and Campbell Kellaway attacking in the powerplay. The pair stuck 100 on the scoreboard without loss, before Kellaway (47) departed just shy of a half-century.

Notice Inviting e-Tender

No.SSA/Pre-Primary/Procurement/Furniture/433/2021/8571 Date:18.01.2022

Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam (Samagra Shiksha) invites tender through e-Tendering process from reputed Manufacturer/Authorized Dealer/ Distributor of manufacturer of plastic Moulded furniture for supply of Plastic Moulded Storage Cupboard

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

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

Janasanyog/CF/2961/21

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

Notice Inviting e-Tender

No. RMSA/AG/1024/2018/8572 Date: 18.01.2022

Mission Director, Axom Sarba Siksha Abhijan Mission (Samagra Shiksha), Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam invites tender through e-Tendering process from manufacturer/ Authorized Dealer of manufacturer of sanitary napkin for supply of Sanitary Napkin.

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

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

Janasanyog/CF/2961/21

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