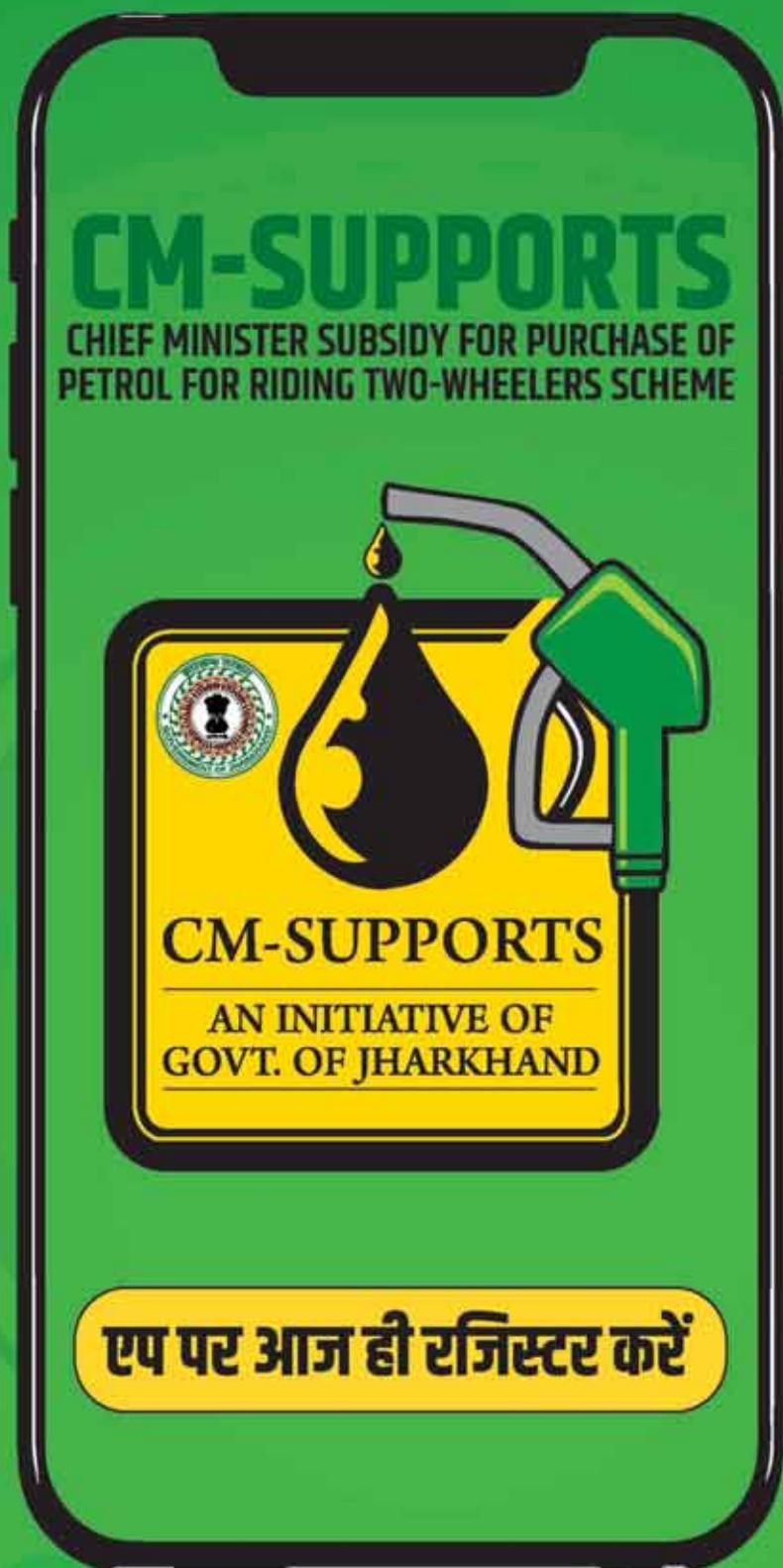




पेट्रोल पर सब्सिडी दे रही झारखण्ड सरकार



26 जनवरी 2022
से पेट्रोल सब्सिडी
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*अधिकतम 10 लीटर प्रति माह



ऐसे करें रजिस्टर :-

- एप में आवेदक को अपना राशन कार्ड एवं आधार संख्या डालना होगा, जिसके उपरांत उनके आधार से जुड़े मोबाइल नंबर पर OTP जायेगा
- OTP सत्यापन के बाद आवेदक राशनकार्ड में नाम चुनते हुए वाहन संख्या एवं ड्राइविंग लाइसेंस नंबर दर्ज करेंगे
- तत्पश्चात स्वघोषणा करते हुए आवेदन समर्पित करेंगे

आवेदन हेतु अर्हता :-

- आवेदक को राज्य के NFSA अथवा JSFSS का राशन कार्डधारी होना चाहिए
- राशन कार्ड में परिवार के सभी सदस्यों का सत्यापित आधार संख्या अंकित होना चाहिए
- आवेदक के आधार से लिंक बैंक खाता संख्या एवं मोबाइल नंबर अपडेट होना चाहिए
- आवेदक के दो-पहिया वाहन का निबंधन आवेदक के नाम से होना चाहिए
- आवेदक का दैध्य ड्राइविंग लाइसेंस होना चाहिए
- आवेदक का दो-पहिया वाहन झारखण्ड राज्य में निबंधित होना चाहिए

15 pressure cooker bombs recovered in Seraikela

PNS ■ Jamshedpur

In a breakthrough, security forces on Wednesday recovered 15 pressure cooker bombs, suspected to have been planted by Maoists. The bombs were planted along a road in Kaderango forest in Seraikela-Kharswan district. As the news spread, a bomb disposal squad cordoned off the area and defused the IEDs.

Sources informed that Seraikela Kharsawan Police have been achieving success continuously for the last few months against Maoists. While many ultras are being arrested at the same time, several Naxalites are also surrendering. Simultaneously, during the police search operation, many successes have been made by recovering the ID and explosive device laid to target police.

Meanwhile, acting on a joint team of officers and jawans of District Police Force and CRPF 157 Battalion and CRPF's BDDS team was formed and a search operation was launched. All the bombs were de-



15-pressure bombs, planted inside dense forest area at Kucahi under Seraikela-Kharsawan district of Jharkhand on Wednesday.

SANJIB KUMAR DUTTA

fused by the Bomb Destroy Team of CRPF by detonating on the spot itself.

This area is the border area of

Chaibasa, Ranchi, Khunti. Due to being a very densely forested and hilly area, Naxalites visit this area for years. In order to prevent the

police from entering this area, IED bombs and explosives are laid at different places by the Naxalites. However, this time the intentions of the Naxalites were foiled by taking a serious and careful initiative. A great danger averted from the police. A few days ago, a large quantity of IEDs were also recovered during the search operation from Patradih, Dodarda etc. areas of Seraikela Kharsawan district.

"We had secret information from a squad led by CPI (Maoist) leader 'Anal da' planted IEDs in various parts of West Singhbhum, Khunti, Ranchi and Seraikela-Kharsawan to cause harm to security personnel. We immediately formed a team and came into action," he said. Following the breakthrough, a special team, comprising district armed police force personnel, CRPF jawans and members of its bomb disposal squad, carried out extensive search operations in Kuchai police station area among other places and recovered the IEDs.

LIC Nationalisation Day observed

Pankaj Kumar

■ Dhanbad

COVID-19

East Singhbhum records highest deaths in 18 days



PNS ■ Jamshedpur

East Singhbhum has recorded the highest Covid fatalities in the state. According to data released by the health department about 37 deaths were reported from the district which is more than 50% of total death cases in the state from 30 December 2021 to 18 January 2022. The district has reported a total of 1,085 deaths so far since the outbreak of the pandemic. The city witnessed its first COVID death when a 71-year-old man who was a resident of Sonari died at the Tata Main Hospital on July 4, 2020. District's civil surgeon Dr AK Lal said that most of the death cases in the district were reported among the elderly people within 65 years above age

group who were co-morbid and suffering from other ailments including Covid infection. "There has been a greater number of co-morbid cases. A lot of victims were suffering from Covid infection too. The death happened due to other chronic ailments such as heart or kidney failure which also had a Covid infection," Lal said.

An official of Tata Main Hospital said that the risk of death from Covid-19 strongly depends on age and previous health conditions. Older patients and those with chronic comorbidities, such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension, diabetes, and pulmonary disease, are much more prone to critical.

The district administration has imposed restrictions in different areas in view of rising COVID-19 positive cases in the

city. A team from district police, Jamshedpur Notified Area Committee (JNAC) led a drive to sensitise people to wear face masks and ensure personal distancing while venturing out to carry out their essential works in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A senior health officer said people should avoid visiting thickly populated places as much as possible. Though it is a festive season, people should avoid crowded places. "If people ensured social distancing norms, the situation could be brought under control within three weeks," the official noted. Deaths have started taking place of the persons hailing from very densely-populated localities of the city whereas asymptomatic COVID patients are present in an overwhelming number in the steel city.

"We have noticed that a number of positive cases are coming from areas that are densely populated like Sonari, Jugsalai and Kadma. Business and residential areas located in Sakchi are vulnerable. Crowded marketplaces and densely populated residential areas surrounding them are emerging as COVID-19 hotspots in the city," noted an official. Mango and Jugsalai areas have a large number of small to medium retail and wholesale business houses and are frequented by thousands of customers every day.

Despite all efforts, the city remains a Corona hot bed with corona positive cases going northwards. The district administration has launched steps on a war-footing to control virus spread which threatens to destroy the city.

The officers, development officers and staff of the LIC of India observed LIC nationalisation day today and held demonstrations outside different offices of the organisation during lunch time in support of the nationalisation and to oppose attempts to privatise the corporation. Hemant Mishra general secretary of Hazaribagh divisional LIC workers Union while addressing media persons said that on this day the parliament in 1956 had approved government takeover of the ongoing insurance business by private players. Since then the corporation has built a huge trust on people with 40 crores policy holders in the country having faith and trust in it. The Rs 5 crore company now has grown up to Rs 38,04,610 crore and its assets are growing as it has helped policy holders at times of need. It is one of the largest companies that has 18 per cent worth of the national GDP, said Mishra. The present government is all set to come with an IPO in order to sell its stake, said Mishra. We all including officers, development officers and staff are opposed to any such move and demand from government to withdraw its move in larger interest of the investors, said Hemant.

City writer to pen stories for Bollywood films

PNS Jamshedpur



You write stories or scripts for films. Especially when you are a writer, you must believe in yourself," said the writer.

There is a lot of struggle in the life of a writer and even after so much struggle, time decides whether he will get success but on the strength of many years of hard work and his abilities, Ansuman has achieved a good position. He is now looking forward to making a move in the Bollywood TV industry.

Along with writing the book, now Ansuman Bhagat, the young writer of the city will also write stories for films, this is his next stop for which he was waiting for years to see a film being made on his own story.

Ansuman had already thought of

many stories for films, but due to the busyness in the publication of his book, he is going to make his new beginning from the year 2022. But before that, very soon another book of his is going to be published. His upcoming book will be on the work of the Prime Minister of the country and the thinking of the people for the Prime Minister. Bhagat's novel 'Ek Safar Mein', based on the Bollywood industry, was released in Mumbai recently. The book was launched by famous personality Tuhin Sinha who is a renowned author and BJP spokesperson.

After seven years of experience in the film industry and writing, young Jamshedpur-based writer Ansuman Bhagat will be writing stories for Bollywood films, so far four books written by Ansuman have been published. Through his writings, the young writer has always been working to give some better and right direction to the young generation of today.

"You don't necessarily have to stay in Mumbai to make your dreams come true, only then can



line project, Muzaffarpur-Valmikinagar doubling, Jhanjharpur-Laukhabar, Jhanjharpur-Nirmali, Saharsa-Forbisganj gauge conversion project and other rail projects.

Addressing the meeting, the GM said, "We have to make maximum use of new tech-

nology in each and every area of the Railways so that we can give better results by meeting the expectations of the people." He directed for regular and thorough monitoring of the ongoing construction projects in ECR so that all the construction work could be completed

on time. The GM reviewed the ongoing infrastructural improvement work to increase the speed of trains from 130 to 160 kmph on Grand Chord railway section in Dhanbad and Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay division. The Muzaffarpur-Sagauli-Valmikinagar doubling project is estimated to cost about Rs 2402 crore.

National Quality Circle Conference winners honoured

RAHUL SHARMA

■ Bokaro



duction, productivity and quality.

It is noteworthy that the National Quality Circle Conference was organized by the Quality Circle Forum of India in Coimbatore in the month of December, in which three Quality Circles of the Capital Repair-Electrical Department participated. QC No.-1626 (Karmayodha) got the distinction of winning Para-Excellence and QC No.-1627 (Sevanjali) and LQC No.-02 (Anuchar) won the Excellence Award in the conference.

teams of Quality Circle were present. Congratulating the members of Quality Circle on their achievement during the programme, CGM Prakash called upon all to work on new Quality Circle projects related to better pro-

कार्यालय नगर पंचायत, हरिहरांज, पलामू

ज्ञापाक — / नोपा

दिनांक

आम सुचना

विषय:- DAY-NULL के तहत स्वयं सहायता समूहों में से क्षेत्रीय महिला के बचन के संबंध में।

हरिहरांज नगर पंचायत एक नवमुनित नगर निकाय है नगर विभाग एवं आवास विभाग के नगरीय

प्रशासन निदेशालय के प्रांक-181 दिनांक-17.01.2022 DAY-NULL के तहत स्वयं सहायता समूहों में से

क्षेत्रीय महिला के रूप में बचन किया जाना है जिसका उपर्युक्त विवरणी निम्नवत है।

क्रोसो	पदाधार	न्यूनतम अहार्ता	अभ्युक्ति
1.	समुदायिक संसाधन सेविका / C.R.P.	1. मैट्रिक पास 2. स्वयं सहायता समूह की सदस्य होना अनिवार्य। 3. स्वयं सहायता समूह की अच्छी जानकारी होना चाहिए।	

अतः इच्छुक स्वयं सहायता समूहों की महिलाएं जो समुदायिक संसाधन सेविका / C.R.P में कार्य करना चाहती हैं वे दिनांक-28.01.2022 के 5.00 बजे अपराह्न तक बायोडाटा के साथ मूल प्रमाण पत्र की छायाप्रति संलग्न कर कार्यालय में जमा कर सकते हैं अग्रेतर कारवाई की सूचना उन्हें ईमेल एवं मोबाइल सख्ता के माध्यम से दी जाएगी।

उपरोक्त प्रक्रिया को कभी भी निररक्त करने का शर्वित अधोहरताक्षरी की होगी।

PR.NO.262008 District(21-22) D

जिला दण्डाधिकारी—सह—उपायुक्त, पश्चिमी सिंहभूम का कार्यालय, चाईबासा (परिवहन शाखा)

प्रांक38/परि. दिनांक 18.01.2022

प्रेस विज्ञप्ति :-

संविदा पर नीलाम पत्र पदाधिकारी की नियुक्ति हेतु आवेदन परिवहन से संबंधित नीलाम पत्र वादों की अधिक सख्ती में लंबित हने एवं पदाधिकारियों की कमी के साथ संविदा, परिवहन विभाग, झारखण्ड, रोन्ही के प्रांक 03/परि.वि. (विविध)-51/2021-1172/रांगी, दिनांक 13.12.2021 के द्वारा यह निर्याय लिया गया है कि केंद्र सरकार अथवा राज्य सरकार अधिकारी जो सेवा नियुक्त राज्य पत्रित पदाधिकारी के पद पर नियुक्त किया जाय।

अतः उक्तविवाहीय पत्र पर राज्यव्यवस्था, नियुक्ति हेतु आवेदन प्रारूप www.chaibasa.nic.in पर देखा जा सकता है एवं डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है।

जिला दण्डाधिकारी—सह—उपायुक्त, पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा के आवेदनुसार।

हैं/—

जिला पदाधिकारी, परिवहन पदाधिकारी, पश्चिमी सिंहभूम, चाईबासा

PR 261986(West Singhbh m)21-22*D

कार्यालय : जिला स्वास्थ्य समिति, लातेहार

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"आयुसमान भारत-प्रधानमंत्री जन आरोग्य योजना" के अंतर्गत "जिला कार्यक्रम समन्वयक" के पद पर

संविदा/अनुबंध के आधार पर चयन नियुक्ति हेतु विज्ञप्ति

विज्ञापन सं-01/2022 (DHS) आवेदन की अंतिम तिथि 10.02.2022

झारखण्ड रेस्ट आरोग्य सोसाईटी (जसास) स्वास्थ्य विभाग, झारखण्ड, रांगी के अधीन संविदा पर अनुबंध विभाग, झारखण्ड, रोन्ही के प्रांक 2150, दिनांक 26.08.2020 कोतृष्णित पश्च रखते हुए यथा विनायिदृष्ट शर्तों के अधीन संविदा पर नीलाम पत्र पदाधिकारी के लिए विहितप्रत्र में केंद्र सरकार अथवा राज्य सरकार के सेवा नियुक्त राज्य पत्रित पदाधिकारी उम्मीदी उम्मीदी दिनांक 13.01.2022 को 64 वर्ष से अधिक न हो, से दिनांक 01.02.2022 के अपारह 5.00 बजे तक आवेदन आमंत्रित किया जाता है।

नियुक्ति से संबंधित जानकारी एवं आवेदन प्रारूप www.chaibasa.nic.in पर देखा जा सकता है।

जिला दण्डाधिकारी—सह—उपायुक्त के आधार पर चयन नियुक्ति हेतु जिला नियोजितनालय कायालय लातेहार के माध्यम से नियोजित डाक नियुक्त रूप से आवेदन पत्र अमंत्रित किया जाता है।

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 TO END CAREER
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Covid 3rd wave to peak on Jan 23: IIT-K study

Cases to remain below 4L /day, Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata past peak'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With 2,82,970 new coronavirus infections, including 8,961 Omicron variant cases, India's active cases have increased to 18,31,000, the highest in 232 days. The infections are likely to spike further till January 23 when the third Covid-19 wave in the country may peak with daily cases likely to remain below the four lakh mark, said Manindra Agrawal, a scientist at the Indian Institute of Technology-Kanpur and one of the researchers associated with the Sutra Covid model.

Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata have already reached their peak in case numbers in the past seven days, he said.

According to Agrawal, Covid-19 cases will peak in Maharashtra, Karnataka, UP, Gujarat, and Haryana this week, while states like Andhra Pradesh, Assam, and Tamil Nadu may peak next week.

"The daily cases are projected to peak on January 23 in India and stay below the four



A crowded subway at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus railway station amid concern over rising cases of Omicron variant of Covid-19 across the country, in Mumbai on Wednesday PTI

lakh mark. Metro cities Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata have already peaked," Agrawal said.

Agrawal had earlier predicted that the Covid-19 third wave will peak by January end.

"Across the country, the trajectories are changing significantly. I speculated earlier that it is due to ICMR guidelines for a changed testing strategy. However, at many places, these guidelines are not yet implemented and still, the trajectory has changed!" he said.

According to a new Govt advisory, individuals under-

taking inter-State domestic travel and contacts of confirmed Covid cases do not need to get tested unless identified as "high risk" based on age or comorbidities. In his view, there are two plausible reasons for the change in the Omicron-led case trajectory in India.

"There are two groups in the population, one with less immunity against Omicron and the other with more. The mutant first spread in the first group causing a sharp rise. Now the first group is exhausted and so the spread is slower," he explained.

The death toll in India has climbed to 4,87,202 with 441 fresh fatalities. There has been a 0.79 per cent increase in Omicron cases since Tuesday, the Ministry said.

Agrawal noted that there was a lot of concern when the Omicron variant started spreading in November last year.

However, he said, in the last week or so, people almost everywhere have concluded that the variant causes only "mild infection" and have decided to handle it with standard remedies instead of getting tested.

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MSY's daughter-in-law, first CDS Rawat's brother join BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the season of shifting political loyalties in poll-bound Uttar Pradesh, the BJP on Wednesday won over Samajwadi Party (SP) patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav's daughter-in-law Aparna Yadav. Aparna joined the saffron outfit here at BJP headquarters.

Aparna is married to Prateek Yadav, son of Mulayam Singh Yadav's second wife. SP president Akhilesh Yadav is his son from his first marriage.

Meanwhile, Colonel Vijay Rawat, the brother of India's first Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, joined the BJP on Wednesday in Uttar Pradesh ahead of the State polls.

"My father (Gen Laxman Singh Rawat) after retiring from the Army, was with the BJP. Now I have got an opportunity. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision is special. All his work is for the progress of this nation. That is what encouraged me to join the BJP. His plan for Uttarakhand is a product of a great vision," Colonel Vijay Rawat said.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami was also present.

General Bipin Rawat, who was born in Uttarakhand, his wife, and 12 others died last month after their chopper crashed in Tamil Nadu's Conoor.



Aparna Yadav, former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav's daughter-in-law, joins THE BJP in the presence of UP Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya (L) and State BJP chief Swatantra Dev Singh (R), at party HQ in New Delhi on Wednesday PTI

Aparna, in her early thirties, was making overtures to the BJP for long, joined the party in the presence of Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya and BJP state chief Swatantra Dev Singh.

The BJP may be fielding her in the UP Assembly polls, though a seat fitting her political background is yet to be decided, sources said.

Praising Aparna, Maurya said she had been from time to time expressing views that showed her inclination towards the BJP.

The Uttar Pradesh BJP president lambasted

Samajwadi Party for its alleged support to criminals in its ticket distribution in western Uttar Pradesh. Farmers and women never felt safe when the Samajwadi Party was in power, he alleged.

Singh said Aparna has faith in good governance of Prime Minister Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and her induction in the BJP will boost the party.

Expressing her admiration for Modi, she said the nation's interest has always been a priority for her and praised several schemes of the BJP Government for cleanliness, woman empowerment and

employment.

The switch, a shot in the arm for BJP, comes at a time when a number of OBC leaders have quit the BJP and joined the SP.

Aparna had contested the 2017 Assembly polls on the SP ticket from Lucknow Cantonment but lost to BJP's Rita Bahuguna Joshi, now a Lok Sabha member.

Bahuguna is now herself pitching for a seat for her son and written a letter to the BJP president JP Nadda to the effect saying she may quit her Lok Sabha seat if the party were to stick to one member one ticket guideline.

Mid-air collision of 2-IndiGo planes averted by a whisker

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Two IndiGo planes with hundreds of passengers on board came close to colliding with each other mid-air on January 7 shortly after taking off from Kempegowda International Airport (KIA), at an altitude of over 3000 feet over Bengaluru.

The incident occurred when IndiGo flights 6E 455 departing for Kolkata and 6E 246 for Bhubaneswar were given permission to depart at the same time. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), which is investigating the matter, has said that it would take the strictest action against those responsible for the incident. The incident was not recorded in any logbook and was not reported by the Airports Authority of India.

Both the aircraft took off from Bengaluru airport in a

span of about five minutes. DGCA said that the two IndiGo planes were involved in "breach of separation" at Bengaluru airport. Breach of separation happens when two aircraft cross the minimum mandatory vertical or horizontal distance in the airspace. Both these aircraft departed from the Bengaluru airport within a span of approximately 5 minutes on the morning of January 7.

"On the morning of the incident, the north runway was being used for departures and the south runway for arrivals. Later, the shift in charge decided to close the south runway but failed to inform the air traffic controller of the south tower," said officials. As a result, the two flights were given permission for take-off at the same time from the converging runways. This resulted in a situation where the aircraft moving in the same direction were about to collide with each other. A radar controller saw this and immediately intervened to alert the aircraft.

and the south runway for arrivals. Later, the shift in charge decided to close the south runway but failed to inform the air traffic controller of the south tower," said officials. As a result, the two flights were given permission for take-off at the same time from the converging runways. This resulted in a situation where the aircraft moving in the same direction were about to collide with each other. A radar controller saw this and immediately intervened to alert the aircraft.



Army jawans patrol in a snow-covered area near the LOC in Poonch on Wednesday PTI

Heads of Af neighbours, Modi to discuss situation

India hosting conclave in virtual mode on Jan 27

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Situation in Afghanistan and in the neighbourhood will figure prominently in the first summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and heads of State of five Central Asian nations on January 27. India is hosting the conclave in the virtual mode.

Leaders of the five nations were to be invited as chief guests for the Republic Day parade this year. The raging corona pandemic forced India to change the schedule. The Republic Day parade for the second consecutive year will not have any foreign country guest.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was the chief guest for last year's parade, but he had to cancel the visit due to surge in pandemic in his country.

Giving details of the forth-

coming high-profile event, the Ministry of External Affairs said here on Wednesday the Prime Minister will host the first India-Central Asia Summit. Leaders are expected to deliberate on steps to take forward relations to newer heights as well as the evolving regional security situation.

The virtual summit will be held with the participation of the five Presidents - Kazakhstan's Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Uzbekistan's Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Emomali Rahmon of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan's Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and Sadyr Japarov of Kyrgyz Republic. Most of these countries share border with Afghanistan. India has lot of stakes in the restive country. This will be the first engagement of its kind between India and the Central Asian countries at the level of leaders, the Ministry said in a statement.

The inception of the India-Central Asia Dialogue at the Foreign Ministers' level, the third meeting of which was held in New Delhi from December 18-20, 2021, has provided an impetus to India-Central Asia relations, the statement said.

During this summit, the leaders are expected to discuss steps to take forward India-Central Asia relations to newer heights. They are also expected to exchange views on regional and international issues of interest, especially the evolving regional security situation.

Preliminary investigations revealed that the female elephant, aged around 49, came in contact with an 11 KV power transmission line which was sagging at a low height in the forest and got electrocuted, he said. The electricity department has been informed for necessary action, he added.

According to the Forest Department, as many as 43 elephants died in Chhattisgarh, mainly in the northern part, between January 2019 and November 2021 due to various reasons, including electrocution.

Female elephant in Surajpur dies of electrocution

STAFF REPORTER ■ SURAJPUR

A female elephant died of electrocution after it came in contact with a high voltage electric wire in Chhattisgarh's Surajpur district, a Forest Department official said.

The incident took place on Wednesday at around 2 am in a forest near Darhara village when a herd of four elephants was passing through, Surajpur Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) BS Bhagat said.

Soon after being alerted by locals, forest personnel rushed to the spot and a postmortem was done, he said.

Air India suspends 8 flights to US over 5G interfering with altimeter

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Air India canceled eight flights on India-US routes from Wednesday onwards due to the deployment of 5G internet in North America which could interfere with aircraft's navigation systems. Air India which serves four US destinations, including New York, San Francisco, Chicago, and Newark with Boeing 777s, said those flights would be curtailed or face changes in aircraft type starting from Wednesday.

These eight Air India flights are: Delhi-New York, New York-Delhi, Delhi-Chicago, Chicago-Delhi, Delhi-San Francisco, San Francisco-Delhi, Delhi-Newark, and Newark-Delhi. "Due to deployment of the 5G communications in the USA, we will not be able to operate the following flights of January 19, 22: AI101/102 DEL/JFK/DEL, AI173/174 DEL/SFO/DEL, AI127/126 DEL/ORD/DEL AI191/144 BOM/EWR/BOM. Please stand by for further updates," said Air India, the only Indian carrier that flies to the US.

SC summons Bihar, Andhra CSs for delay in clearing Covid death claims

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday ordered the personal presence of Chief Secretaries of Andhra Pradesh and Bihar via video conference at 2 pm over non-payment of ex-gratia compensation to kin of those who died of Covid-19.

The court ordered them to disburse compensations in three days and review rejected applications. At 2 pm the CS of AP appeared through the virtual mode and assured the SC that whoever has not received the Covid compensation will have their applications reviewed or else he is "ready to face contempt."

The bench of Justices MR Shah and Sanjiv Khanna later noted in its order that the "CSs of AP and Bihar turned up through virtual mode. It is reported that by now AP has received 49,292 applications, 31,000 were found eligible and 6,000 were rejected. AP says payments to 28,000 claimants have been made. Another 10,000 is remaining out of which 5,000 clearance is there

and payment will be there in the next three days. Also, 6,000 rejected claims will be examined by the grievance redressal committee suo motu. If it is found that the rejection has been incorrect, the State shall reach out to all those claimants and give them the opportunity to remove defects. The AP CS has assured the court that AP shall ensure that not a single claimant who is eligible for compensation shall be deprived of it. We trust and hope that the CS will stand by what he has assured to this court.

The CS of Bihar could not speak to the bench despite being connected due to audio issues.

However, the advocate appearing assured the SC that all attempts will be made to reach the poor and illiterate so that they can submit their applications. "Looking into the peculiarity of the State, more effort is needed by the State of Bihar to reach the eligible persons, / kin/ family members of the ones who succumbed to Covid-19," the court ordered. The top court further ordered that "no claims be rejected on technical grounds."



Cabinet nullifies locals' recruitment policy of 2016

51 proposals approved at Cabinet Meeting

PNS ■ Ranchi

The Jharkhand Cabinet on Wednesday gave its nod for nullifying the policy under which locals in 13 scheduled districts were given priority in Class III and IV Government jobs. In the light of the order of the Jharkhand High Court, the Department of Personnel, Administrative Reforms & Rajbhasha has withdrawn the 2016 resolution issued by the government and the revised resolution issued in 2018. A resolution in this regard has been issued on Wednesday by department Secretary Vandana Dadel.

The department has said that the resolution of the personnel regarding giving priority to the locals of the

concerned district in the appointments to the Group B non-gazetted, Group C and Group D posts at the district level is withdrawn with immediate effect.

In the new resolution of the department, it has also been said that all advertisements related to competitive examinations for appointment to the posts of Group B, gazetted, Group C and Group D which were issued in the light of the earlier resolution of the Personnel Department and appointment letters in them have not been issued, they have been cancelled too.

It may be recalled that in 2016, the then Raghubar Das government made a recruitment policy under which locals in 13 scheduled districts were given preference in government jobs in Class III and IV. The 13 scheduled districts included Sahibganj, Pakur, Dumka, Jamtara, Latehar, Ranchi, Khunti, Gumla, Lohardaga, Simdega, East UP Singhbhum, West Singhbhum and

Seraikela Kharsawan. In other decisions, the Cabinet gave its nod for petrol subsidy BPL families owning two wheeler vehicles. The government has launched CMSUPPORTS app for registration of poor people covered by National Food Security Scheme or Jharkhand State Food Security Scheme for their two-wheeler under "Petrol Subsidy Scheme".

From 26 January 2022, through the scheme, the beneficiaries covered by the ration card will be transferred a subsidy of Rs 25 per liter i.e. Rs 250 per month to their bank account for a maximum of 10 liters of petrol per month for their two-wheeler. The Chief Minister will launch the scheme from Dumka on 26 January 2022.

In other decision under the welfare department, the State government will give mobile-tabs to 21,000 students of 136 residential schools for their studies. The government will incur Rs 26 crore in this scheme.

The Cabinet also gave its nod for approval of rules of para teachers of the state, under which, Jharkhand Assistant Teacher Service Condition Rules 2021 has been formed. With the new rules 62,876 para teachers will be benefited. As per the new rules para teachers will now retire at 60 years, their honorarium will increase on the basis of assessment test. Compassionate jobs will be available on the basis of merit.

The Cabinet also gave its nod for appointment of Chhattisgarh State Marketing Corporation Limited as consultancy to Jharkhand State Beverages Corporation Limited. The Chhattisgarh State Marketing Corporation Limited will provide marketing skills to state Beverages Corporation for sale of liquor in the State. In today's Cabinet meeting, 51 proposals of different departments were given nod to. This included finance, land revenue and registration, drinking water and others.

CM launches App for subsidised petrol in State

Formal launch of scheme from Dumka on Jan 26

PNS ■ Ranchi

Chief Minister Hemant Soren today launched CMSUPPORTS App for registration of poor people covered by National Food Security Scheme or Jharkhand State Food Security Scheme for their two-wheeler under "Petrol Subsidy Scheme". Now by registering in the App or <http://jsfss.jharkhand.gov.in>, ration card holders will be able to take advantage of the scheme. From 26 January 2022, through the scheme, a subsidy of Rs 25 per liter i.e. Rs 250 per month for a maximum of 10 liters of petrol per month for two-wheeler to the beneficiaries covered by the ration card will be transferred to their bank account through DBT. The CM will launch the scheme from Dumka on 26 January 2022 and will benefit the eligible beneficiaries for the scheme.

The eligibility criteria of the scheme include -- The applicant should be a ration



Chief Minister Hemant Soren along with ministers and senior officials during the launch of an App for subsidised petrol in Ranchi on Wednesday. PNS

card holder of the National Food Security Act or Jharkhand State Food Security Act. The verified Aadhaar number of all the family members should be mentioned in the ration card. The bank account number and mobile number linked with Aadhaar of the applicant should be updated. The registration of the vehicle

the applicant should be in the name of the applicant. Applicant should have valid driving license. Applicant's two-wheeler vehicle should be registered in the state of Jharkhand. By going to the CMSUPPORT app or <http://jsfss.jharkhand.gov.in>, the applicant will have to enter his ration card and

Aadhaar number, after which an OTP will be sent to the mobile number linked to his Aadhaar. The applicant's ration card number will be the login and the password of the last eight digits of the Aadhaar of the head of the family. After OTP verification, the applicant will enter the vehicle number and driving license number while choosing the name in the ration card. The vehicle number will go to the DTO's login, which will be verified by the DTO. After verification, the list will go to the login of the District Supply Officer. Ministers Alamgir Alam, Dr. Rameshwar Oraon, Champai Soren, Satyanand Bhokta, Banna Gupta, Mithlesh Thakur, Joba Manjhi, Badal, Hafeezul Hasan, Chief Secretary Sukhdev Singh, Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Rajiv Arun Ekka, Secretary to Chief Minister Vinay Kumar Choubey, Himani Pandey, Secretary Food Supplies and Public Distribution and Consumer Affairs Department and others were present on the occasion.

To provide petrol subsidy scheme's benefits to people work on mission mode'

PNS ■ Ranchi

With an aim to provide benefits of the petrol subsidy scheme to maximum numbers of people launched by the State Government, Ranchi Deputy Commissioner (DC), Chhavi Ranjan on Wednesday directed all the nodal officers to work on Mission mode.

Petrol subsidy scheme is constantly being reviewed by the DC. In the virtual meeting, along with DDC, ADM Law and Order, District Supply Officer, all BDOs and COs and other concerned officials of the district were present. While reviewing the entry of eligible people so far for the benefit of the petrol subsidy scheme in the urban and rural areas of the district, Ranjan directed them to work at a faster pace. In all the blocks, he directed work by forming a team of Panchayat servants, public servants etc. He has also asked the concerned Circle Officer and BSO in the urban area to ensure the entry of maximum ration card holders. He also directed to report the daily entries on the por-



Ranchi DC Chhavi Ranjan holding a meeting on virtual mode in Ranchi on Wednesday. PNS

tal. It may be mentioned that with the launch of the scheme, petrol will be made available under the Petrol Subsidy Scheme to ration card holders under NFSA and JSFSS in the state. Meanwhile, a meeting of the District Level Monitoring and Monitoring Committee was held to approve the payment of the amount under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Prevention of Atrocities Act 1989. In the meeting, the committee deliberated regarding payment of compensation to the victims in total 19 cases. The committee has given approval on 18 proposals related to payment of compensation.

Birth Anniversary of Ranadeb Chaudhuri



PNS ■ Ranchi

Ranadeb Chaudhuri was the founder of Surendranath Centenary school, named after his grandfather Rashtraghuru Shri Surendranath Banerjee. He was born on 19th January 1907, he was a Barrister specializing in company laws. He was a Philanthropist and a guide. On this occasion of his birth anniversary Surendranath Centenary School organized a campaign for a noble cause, which is also the part of the project RAHAT. Principal Samita Sinha paid a

floral tribute and distributed masks and hand sanitizers to the office staff and also to the security guards of the school family. She said that the stakeholders of the school need to follow his ideals. "Our mentor Shri Ranadeb Chaudhuri has contributed a lot to our nation. He has served the nation by promoting quality education and providing opportunities to the local people in the surrounding. The family of Surendranath Centenary school feels proud to be the part of this institution," he said.

33 labourers of Giridih and Hazaribagh had sought help from CM

PNS ■ Ranchi

During the launch of SRMI (Safe Responsible Migration Initiative) scheme in a programme on December 16, 2021, Chief Minister Hemant Soren expressed concern about the workers going from across the State to other states and abroad in search of work. It was said that in view of the tragedy that happened across the country with the migrant workers during the Corona period, the State government is constantly trying to solve the problem. Also, this scheme is being started for a permanent solution to the problems of migrant workers. It is our endeavour that if the labourer or any worker of the State goes to any place outside the State for earning, then he should feel fearless and safe that the government of his state is with him in case of any kind of problem.

Before the start of this scheme and even after the start of the scheme, there were many such occasions when the workers trapped outside the state in any adverse situation requested for help from the state government and the CM showed full sensitivity in those matters for the safe return of the workers.



Migrant workers stranded in the African country of Mali.

Agriculture Minister launched 'Kisan Call Center'

PNS ■ Ranchi

With the aim of getting aware of the farmers' problems and suggestions of the State, the Agriculture Department of the State Government on Wednesday launched "Kisan Call Center". Agriculture Minister Badal launched "Kisan Call Center" online at Nepal House. Secretary of the department Abu Baqr Siddiqui and Director Nisha Oraon also present on the occasion.

On this occasion, Badal also launched a song prepared by the Agriculture Department to motivate for "Block Chain Technology" and for COVID-19 vaccination. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that Badal said that the State Government is sensitive about the problems of the farmers, as well as that the Government wants to be



Agriculture Minister Badal Patraekh, Secretary Abu Baqr Siddiqui and Director Nisha Oraon launching 'Kisan Call Center' in Ranchi on Wednesday. PNS

aware of their suggestions. He said that keeping this objective in mind, the Government has started 'Kisan Call Center', which will be operated from the Directorate of Agriculture. "Farmers of the State can register their problems and suggestions from anywhere in this Kisan Call Center whose toll free number is 1800-123-1136. Efforts will be made to solve their problems from block level to headquarter level but after receiving the suggestions of the farmers, action will be taken on that. At the same time, the officials will also monitor it continuously," he added.

"Different types of "languages and dialects" are spoken in the state. Farmers should not face any problem in communication, so that they will be answered according to the language of the farmers in the "Kisan Call Center," said Badal.

INBRIEF

IWCS members plant medicinal herbs



In the chairmanship of President of Inner Wheel Club Swarnrekhya Ranchi District 325, Neeta Narayan and Secretary Mala Srivastava 35 different types of medicinal plants were planted in the Inner Wheel Park at Sai Temple, Pundag by the club. It was inaugurated by district president respected Poonam Thakur. A rose garden was also built in the park, to take care of it, the club also provided employment to a needy person to make a living. In the programme, CCC Deepa Chauhan, Ambuja Sharan, Nita Singh, Nishi Srivastava, Sushma Sinha on behalf of our club and Namrata Kumar, Vice President of the club were present.

DPS student bags 3rd Prize at KALAUTSAV



DPS, Ranchi student Ritiraj added yet another feather in the cap of his alma mater by emerging victorious in KALAUTSAV nationals. This National Level Competition (Virtual Mode) was conducted from 1st January 2022 to 2nd January 2022, in which 600 students were selected from all the states and UT's in their respective fields of expertise. Crossing the District and State Levels Ritiraj seized the opportunity to represent his state at the National Level where his magnificent piece of art was ranked 3rd. His painting will be displayed at the Exhibition organised by NCERT at New Delhi and he will be awarded with a trophy, bronze medal and cash prize of Rs 15,000 from the Ministry.

JSMB to start online registration from Jan 24

The website of Jharkhand State Medical Board (JSMB) has now started. This will help in the registration of medical students and other important works. Dr Bimlesh Singh, Registrar cum Secretary, Medical Board, Ranchi gave the information. According to him, with the launch of the website, apart from the registration of medical students who wish to do medical practice in the state, PG degree inclusion, NOC and Good Standing Certificate and other work will start from January 24. For this, one has to log on to the Board's website www.jharkhandmedicalcouncil.org. Applications can be made for PG degree inclusion till January 31. After that late fine will be taken of Rs 200 will be charged annually from February 1 as a late fine.

Cong applaud State Govt on petrol prices

Senior leaders of the State Congress Committee, Alok Kumar Dubey, Lal Kishore Nath Shahdeo and Dr. Rajesh Gupta Chhotu have welcomed the cabinet's decision to give relief to poor, lower middle class families in petrol prices. Congress leaders said that it will be the first such government in the country which has announced to give a subsidy of Rs 250 per month to all card holders. Congress leaders said that Chief Minister, Hemant Soren and Finance Minister, Dr Rameshwar Oraon deserve congratulations for their contribution to the people of the state. The BJP ruled state governments should also follow this step of the Jharkhand Government and the BJP leaders of Jharkhand should come out on the streets and praise the Government.

Kerala Govt calls situation grave after 2 yrs of Covid-19 breakout

37% people found +ve after testing over 91K in 24 hrs: Min KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

For the first time since Covid-19 broke out in Kerala in 2020, the Kerala Government has termed the situation grave as well as serious and called for urgent restrictions and regulations. Veena George, health minister who addressed the media on Wednesday after a Cabinet meeting said that 34,199 persons were diagnosed with the pandemic after testing 91,983 samples during the last 24 hours.

The death toll reached 51, 160 as 49 persons succumbed to Covid-19 during the last 24 hours as Kerala is experiencing the death continuing its "Thaandav"

across the State, according to a Government doctor. The Test Positivity Rate on Wednesday was 37.17 per cent.

A review meeting has been called for Thursday in which ministers, department secretaries as well as health professionals would take stock of the present situation. "The meeting scheduled for Thursday would decide whether to shut down schools and colleges in the State. We will consider bringing in night curfew and week end shut down," said Veena George.

The minister denied the allegations made by Leader of the Opposition that the CPI(M) district conventions and the Mega Thiruvathiras (traditional dance and song programme presented by hundreds of women at Thiruvananthapuram, Thrissur and Ernakulam praising Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan) were responsible for the spurt in the number of patients.

She said the double attack by the delta variant of the Covid and the Omicron were responsible for the shooting up of the pandemic cases in Kerala. Pinarayi Vijayan, suffering from a serious ailment, is undergoing treatment in a United States Hospital and would be back only by the end of January.

There are 645 Omicron patients in the State, according to the Health Minister. Though she said that only 3.2 per cent of the 1.68 lakh Covid patients have been admitted to the hospital, a Kerala Government Medical Doctors association said that they were under orders not to admit patients tested positive to the hospital. "The attempt is to portray all was well in the State and we do not know how long this would succeed," said a Government physician in General Hospital, Ernakulam.

Netaji tried to convince Aparna not to join BJP, claims Akhilesh

Lucknow: Samajwadi Party patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav tried hard to convince his daughter-in-law Aparna Yadav to not join the BJP, party chief Akhilesh Yadav said on Wednesday and expressed his happiness that the SP's socialist ideology is expanding its reach.

Akhilesh Yadav, who sent his sister-in-law best wishes for her move to the BJP, also addressed speculation on whether he would contest the assembly elections and said he would consult the people of his parliamentary constituency Azamgarh.

"If I contest the assembly election, it will be after taking permission from the people of Azamgarh who have elected me as MP," he told reporters when asked if he would enter into the electoral fray for the

coming elections.

In his first response to Aparna Yadav joining the BJP, Akhilesh Yadav said he would like to congratulate her and extend her best wishes.

"I am also happy that our

socialist ideology is expanding.

I hope that our ideology will

reach there and work to save

the constitution and democracy," the SP president said.

"Netaji (Mulayam Singh

Yadav) tried very hard to con-

vince her," he said when asked if efforts were made to stop Aparna Yadav from joining the ruling party.

Aparna Yadav is married to

Prateek Yadav, the son of

Mulayam Singh Yadav's second

wife, while Akhilesh Yadav is

his son from the first marriage.

She joined the BJP in the

presence of Uttar Pradesh

Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya and its state chief Swatantra Dev Singh. Expressing her admiration for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, she said the nation's interest has always been a priority for her and praised several schemes of the BJP government for cleanliness, woman empowerment and employment.

There had been much speculation about her joining the BJP, and the development highlights the rift in the SP's ruling family at a time Akhilesh Yadav has been working to rally the party's base in the run up to the state assembly polls beginning next month. Maurya was also quick to attack Akhilesh Yadav, saying he has not been successful in his family and was also "unsuccessful" as chief minister and MP. PTI

Omicron causing hospitalisation, deaths: WHO chief

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid an ongoing resur-

gence across the world,

WHO chief Tedros Adhanom

Ghebreyesus has warned that

the Omicron variant of the

coronavirus is causing hospitali-

zations and deaths the world over,

and the narrative that it is a mild disease is misleading.

The global coronavirus caseload has topped 333.5 mil-

lion, while the deaths have

surged to more than 5.55 million

and vaccinations to over 9.68 bil-

lion, according to Johns Hopkins

University. India on Wednesday

reported 2,8970 fresh Covid

cases in the last 24 hours, which

is a rise of over 18 percent from

the previous day's count.

"Make no mistake, Omicron is causing hospitaliza-

tions and deaths, and even

the less severe cases are inundat-

ing health facilities," the

WHO chief said late on

Tuesday.

"Omicron may be less

WhatsApp rebellion on in Bengal BJP

Rebel faction holds secret talks; 30 leaders meet to chalk out future plan

SAUGAR SENGUTA ■ KOLKATA

WhatsApp rebellion con-

tinued in Bengal BJP

with the rebel faction of the

State party unit holding secret

meetings with at least 30 saf-

MLAs, inside sources said

adding the leaders met virtually

on Tuesday to chalk out future

plans.

Curiously the rebel fac-

tion of the party is being led by

junior Union Minister

Shantanu Thakur who has

already threatened to launch a

movement for implantation of

the Citizenship Amendment Act.

According to sources the

rebel faction of the State BJP

unit --including former State

vice president Jayaprakash

Majumdar, Ritesh Tewari,

Sayantan Basu --- held a secret

meeting with the 30 legislators

"to know their views about the

new office bearers who had

been inducted in the State unit

of the party."

Out of the 77 seats won by

the Bengal BJP in this year's

election it lost 5 to the ruling

TMC on account of resigna-

tions and defection.

The rebel leaders are like-

ly to hold meeting with the BJP

MLAs of Bankura and Purulia

later this week before taking a

'final decision.'

On what the final decision

could be one of the senior lead-

ers of the rebel group said "this

does not mean that we are quit-

ting the party and going to the

Trinamool Congress ... we

want the party State unit to

function properly ... we want

to save the BJP from dissolu-

tion in Bengal as some of the



leaders are trying to do ... these

leaders are sold out to the

TMC leadership... they are

hand-in-glove with the

Trinamool which is why they

are misleading the national

leadership into taking decisions

not favourable to the party in

Bengal."

Some rebel leaders were

likely to visit Delhi where later

this month may meet national

functionaries, sources said.

"We will tell how some of the

leaders are trying to sell out the party to the TMC," one of the leaders said apparently aiming at former BJP State president and national vice president Dilip Ghosh. The Bengal BJP underwent a massive reshuffle last month with a number of leaders losing their jobs giving way to new faces. Many leaders see Ghosh's hand in the reshuffle.

The rebellion had started about a month ago when one after the other at least 10 MLAs from North 24 Parganas and Bankura left the designated party WhatsApp group.

When asked, Ghosh said he was not concerned with what was going on in WhatsApp. "I am a man of the people and don't get much time to peep into what is happening in the WhatsApp," he said.

Akhilesh still evasive on contesting Assembly poll

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Wednesday refused to confirm reports that he has decided to contest the February-March Uttar Pradesh election. He was also evasive when asked to specify the constituency for his poll debut in UP.

Yadav is presently MP from Azamgarh. "I will seek the permission of the people of Azamgarh if I decide to contest the election. I need to seek their permission because they elected me from there," the SP chief said.

He was replying to media questions on whether he would contest the election from a constituency in Azamgarh from where he is Lok Sabha member. Akhilesh Yadav is under tremendous political pressure to contest the assembly election as the Bharatiya Janata Party has already announced that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will be the party candidate from Gorakhpur.

COVID BULLETIN

Over 4K Covid-19 cases logged in Maha; Mumbai records 883 alone

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The daily Covid-19 cases in Maharashtra shot up by 4,490 cases to touch a tally of 43,697 cases on Wednesday, even as the pandemic cases went up in Mumbai by 883 cases to reach the daily tally of 6,032 cases.

The State, meanwhile, recorded 214 fresh Omicron cases during the day, taking the total number of new Covid variant registered to 2074.

On a day when the Covid-19 claimed 49 lives as against 53 deaths registered on Tuesday, the state recorded 43,697 fresh infections as against Tuesday's tally of 39,207 deaths. With fresh infections, the total number of Covid-19 cases in the state went up from 10,01,7999 cases.

As 46,591 Covid-19

patients were discharged from

the hospitals across the state

after full recovery, the total

number of people discharged

from the hospitals since the

second week of March 2020

increased from 68,68,16 to

69,15,407 cases. The recovery

rate in the state rose from

94.32 per cent to 94.4 per cent.

The number of "active cases" in the state increased

cases to 73,25,825 cases.

Mumbai, which has been

witnessing drop in the number

of cases for the last few days,

witnessed an increase in the

fresh Covid-19 cases from 5,149

cases on Tuesday to 6,032 cases

on Wednesday. With the fresh

tally of fresh cases, the total

Covid-19 cases rose from 10,

11,967 cases to 10,01,7999 cases.



Food for thought

Starvation deaths remain a stark reality even in this time and age, and the Govt must not shut its eyes

The Attorney General of India told the Supreme Court on Tuesday that no one died of starvation in recent times. That is a sweeping statement considering, as the court pointed out, the officer was relying on old data. The court was hearing a petition seeking a national community kitchen policy to avoid starvation deaths. The officer replied that the Centre has to depend on the States reporting starvation deaths, and they have not reported a single death in recent years. The court came back asking him about media reports on a starvation death in Tamil Nadu. The last reported starvation death occurred in Villupuram in Tamil Nadu on December 19, 2021, where the victim was a five-year-old boy and the autopsy revealed no trace of food in the intestine; that meant the boy had had no food for at least two days before his death. In July 2018, three children died of starvation in Delhi. Authorities performed a second post-mortem to doubly confirm the cause of death. The children had not eaten anything eight to nine days before their deaths. There is no way of saying that starvation deaths do not occur. Current data indicates the presence of pre-starvation stages among children. A total absence of food leads to starvation. Intermittent availability of food leads to hunger which in turn leads to malnutrition that harms children by stunting their developmental milestones. What the hungry need is not just any food but nutritious food.

That is the key to India's food security policy that sees hunger as an aspect of malnutrition. A person having meals of only rice may not feel hungry but will develop nutritional deficiencies. Millions of people are out there today who have to make do with a single meal or skip meals altogether. The pandemic has made access to food more difficult. Surveys show a shocking amount of food and perishables are thrown away in Indian homes every year while tonnes of grains rot in godowns across India. The Government must ensure diet diversity and adequate and subsidised animal source foods to the poor. An elementary, nutritious diet apparently costs around ₹30 per person per day. The cash transferred to the poor at present cannot sustain a family of four for a month. That is why the food policy must be rational. India today has surplus food grains. The poor can, therefore, access thrice their normal monthly rations, irrespective of ration or Aadhaar cards. The public distribution system can expand from grain and pulses to include essentials such as eggs, milk and fruits. Some States already provide eggs to mothers and children through the Anganwadi system. It is worthwhile exploring alternative foods using millets and legumes which contain nutrients and can store for long periods. We can do without religious controversies in making eggs mandatory in mid-day meal schemes; fruit or milk being the option for non-egg eaters. Nutrition, not merely food, is the great equaliser.

PIC TALK



Enthusiasts take part in a boat race at Dumas beach, in Surat

PTI

Poll heat

As the Assembly election battle enters the last lap, the campaign is getting fiercer

As the dates for Assembly election to five States steadily approach, the electoral arena is agog with activity in all quarters. The Election Commission is busy taking swift decisions aimed at ensuring maximum voter participation while making sure that all the stakeholders are kept out of harm's way, lurking at every corner in the form of the highly transmissible Omicron variant of the Coronavirus family. The political players, as is their wont, are busy raking up mud at their opponents and running one another down, and the candidates are leaving no stone unturned to woo the voters and weighing their options to switch allegiance to another party that may form the next Government in their State. From the looks of it, the BJP — which is in power at the Centre and in most of the States going to polls over the next 50 days — is under considerable pressure because it has the most at stake. Even central leaders such as Narendra Modi and Amit Shah have been forced to unleash their charisma in the hinterland as they well realise that it is the virtual semifinal before the 2024 general elections.

Of course, the saffron party is playing covertly, too, to ensure that it has the upper hand in political exchanges. After going through a series of setbacks in the shape of some of its OBC leaders recently joining the SP camp, it recently staged a coup of sorts when it took into the fold Samajwadi Party patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav's daughter-in-law Aparna in Uttar Pradesh, the country's most populous and one of the most politically crucial States. Meanwhile, SP chief Akhilesh Yadav is deeply involved in a fierce battle of the ballot and pulling out all the stops to cement the place of his party in the Assembly and the Government. While the BJP is hesitant of naming any chief ministerial candidates, apparently for fear of triggering a factional feud, the young AAP has gone ahead and announced that its leader Bhagwant Mann would be the Chief Minister if the party comes to power in Punjab. To give it credit, the AAP national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal really went by people's choice (or so he claims) after nearly 15 lakh people responded to the his party's Janta Chunagi Apna CM' drive, in which the party had asked people to name their choice for the Punjab CM. With just days to go for voting, it's really down to the wire.



Meanwhile, the number of people permitted to attend the Republic Day

The Ummah and its Israeli connect

The ever-present shadow of Israel looms large over the goings-on in the Islamic world, sometimes for real and at other times only in imagination

Fixation with Israel haunts the Ummah (pan-Islamic community), sometimes credibly so, other times imagined rather creatively. Even the distant, multicultural and multi-confessional (with Muslim majority) Malaysia insists on its passport with the inscription: "This passport is valid for all countries except Israel." With no territorial or commercial disagreement besetting any Israeli-Malaysian dimension, yet former Malaysian leader Mohammad Mahathir had called it a "State of robbers", "the enemy" and described Jews as "hook-nosed", "rule this world by proxy" etc. At the heart of this deep-rooted angst is the emotive and unresolved issue of Palestine by a narrow stretch of country, Israel, with a population of less than 7 million Jews, that irks and rankles many in the global Ummah of nearly 2 billion. Even as the Ummah itself remains mired in disagreements of sectarian, ethnic and political nature — almost all within attribute the overt or covert hand of Israelis *a la* 'Zionist Conspiracies', that contextualises their perceived problems. Indeed, Israeli spy agency Mossad does play a hyper-intrusive role in safeguarding its sovereign interests, but perhaps not as fantastically as popularly imagined.

Three recent, simultaneous and completely unrelated incidents in distant lands illustrate this Israeli-Jewish fascination. A US citizen of Pakistani origin, MIT-trained neuroscientist Dr Aarifa Siddiqui, currently convicted for 80 years in the US on charges of shooting at US Army and FBI officers while in custody in Afghanistan, was at the centre of a hostage drama. The intensely followed and disputed trial had all the elements of intrigue, counterespionage and murky trails and the Pakistan Government was forced to defend her case publicly, in vain. However, during the long-drawn court proceedings, she had tried to fire her lawyers as they were Jewish and she explicitly wrote to the courts that Jews were "cruel, ungrateful and back-stabbing" people! Recently, a gunman in a small town in Texas took four

hostages at a synagogue, including the resident Rabbi — the hostage taker's singular demand was the purported release of the incarcerated 'Lady Al Qaida' Dr Aarifa Siddiqui. The telltale symbolism and conflation of the synagogue, rabbi and hostage drama for a convicted terrorist of Pakistani descent picked up from Afghanistan — usual admixture, somehow commingling Israel/Jews into the same, perhaps unwarrantedly. Around the same time, as part of the longstanding sectarian shadowboxing between the Shia Iranian leadership and the Sunni Saudi Arabian royal family, an unprecedented accusation by Gen Alireza Tangsiri, Commander of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps Navy, seeks to shame the other. He implied that the Saudi royal family is descendants of Jews who fought the holy Prophet; "We cannot bear to see injustice in a Muslim country that is perpetrated by the Zionists and the seeds of the Jews", adding, "These are the very same Jews, and I'd better say Zionists, whose hearts have never aligned with Islam, and even with the Prophet in his time". Again, the political blame game within the Ummah was sought to be set-

ISRAEL OFFICIALLY DENIES ANY PERNICIOUS ROLE IN THE TUMULT WITHIN THE UMMAH, THOUGH IT HAS MADE STRATEGIC INROADS WITH THE NOW-EXTREMISM-WARY SHEIKDOMS IN THE ARAB WORLD

tled by invoking the familiar watermarks of Zionism and Jews, following the taint and hate associated with the same, irrespective if factual history or the modern-day State of Israel has anything to do with the same.

Concurrently, another eerie spectre of the fabled Israeli connect (more indelibly so this time) unfolded within the Ummah's irreconcilable adherents with the mysterious landing of a private plane belonging to the notorious Libyan warlord, Khalifa Haftar, at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion Airport. Embroiled in violent clashes with various factions (backed by various international powers) for the spoils of Libya in the post-Gadhafi era, Khalifa was supposed to be supported by powers like Syria, Russia and, incredulously, even the UAE, who would rather have a Gadhafiesque dictator in Khalifa to keep the extremists out. So, while Khalifa's nemesis and current Libyan Prime Minister Abdulhamid Mohammed Dbeibeh is believed to have recently met Mossad director David Barnea to 'normalise' relations with Israel — yet it is the surreal landing of Khalifa's plane in Israel to seek its support for his presidential candidature, that speaks volumes of the Israeli

acquiescence in the Ummah's muddle. The clear sign of the importance of garnering Israel's support in any domestic power bid, even if thousands of kilometres away, is unmistakable.

Israel officially denies any pernicious role in the tumult within the Ummah, though it has made strategic inroads with the now-extremism-wary Sheikdoms in the Arab world. It has tellingly opened an Embassy in the UAE and plans to do so in Bahrain and Morocco soon (it already has one in Jordan and Egypt). Saudi Arabia's heir apparent, Mohammad Bin Salman (MBS), also had to convincingly deny reports that he last year secretly met the then Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu at the Red Sea port of Eilat. Clearly, a lot of backroom plotting, machinations and emotions are vested in the 'Israeli connect' that underlie the regional turmoil — how much of it is real or imagined, remains unanswered but what is true is that the issue of Palestine is on the backburner, and Israel looks stronger than ever.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal.)



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PUBLIC INTEREST VS PERSONAL CHOICE

Sir — The Centre's statement in the Supreme Court that it does not want to implement forced vaccination has sparked off a debate over balancing "public interest" with "personal choice". The Government further said that though the Union Health Ministry urged everyone to take the anti-COVID vaccine, it never forced anyone to get "vaccinated against their wishes". Likewise, the Centre does not advise making a vaccine certificate mandatory for any purpose. While the Centre's stand on vaccination is fair in terms of people's rights, it must be noted that many States have made vaccination more or less compulsory. The vaccination certificate is compulsory in several parts of the country where infection is on the rise.

Such restrictions are accepted by people because these are imposed in public interest. Hence, people need to comply with vaccination rules as well. There is no denying that people's freedom and rights must be preserved. On the other hand, reckless behaviour on flimsy pretext cannot be tolerated. While forcing people to get vaccinated without their consent is against personal liberty, being unvaccinated poses a threat to public health. It must be understood that several countries have made vaccination compulsory. Public interest and personal choice must be properly balanced. There must be exemptions where required. Public safety is more important than personal liberty when there is a health crisis.

Venu GS | Kollam

MUTED R-DAY CELEBRATIONS

Sir — There will be no chief guest for the second year in a row at the Republic Day parade as the plan to host foreign leaders has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. According to news reports, the plan to host the heads of five Central Asian countries — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — has been cancelled owing to the pandemic conditions in India as well as in these respective countries.

Meanwhile, the number of people permitted to attend the Republic Day

Humans are humans, above all



ASHES

With Australia winning the Ashes in Hobart, the cricketers were posing with the 'urn' in front of the camera amid a champagne shower. Noticing the absence of Usman Khawaja in the huddle due to his religious reservations about alcohol, captain Pat Cummins instructed teammates to put the bottle away and invited him to join in the celebrations! And now the frame has no trace of champagne bottles; rather Khawaja is seen embraced in the middle of the front row just beside the captain, with all heartily laughing and sharing the joy. Can

there be any better picture of divinity, humanity and brotherhood in these communally vitiated times where feelings of hatred with dominant mindset have been turned into synonyms of 'masculinity' and 'nationalism'.

Recently, Ajaz Patel had praised the atmosphere in the New Zealand cricket team and the country as a whole where his religious sentiments are given special consideration, with his right to offer *namaz* fully respected. While Patel had taken birth in Mumbai as an Indian Muslim, Khawaja was born in Islamabad. Yet both have been embraced into Australian/New Zealand society warmly with due rights, equality and dignity. Instead of zealously beating their trumpet of 'liberalism', Indians should draw inspiration from such instances and learn to treat human beings as human beings by transcending the petty barriers of religion, ethnicity or nationality.

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

The Government must ensure that the devotees follow all COVID protocols properly, otherwise it can prove to be a super-spreader. In addition to this gesture, the EC has taken another good initiative which has remained largely unnoticed and which needs to be highlighted for all voters in general and the disabled in particular who want to cast their vote from home.

I am a disability activist and recently nominated icon for persons with disability (PwD) for the Assembly elections to be held in February 2022. If any PwD wants to vote from home, s/he can contact the local BLO. This procedure is being adopted for the first time. Your identification will be done by the BLO and your vote will be blocked, so nobody else can cast your vote. It is our duty to cooperate with the EC to strengthen democracy at the grassroots.

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandhar

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

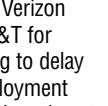
SOUND BITE

Goa wants a change and the AAP has been getting a tremendous response in the coastal State.



Delhi Chief Minister —Arvind Kejriwal

I thank Verizon and AT&T for agreeing to delay 5G deployment around key airports.

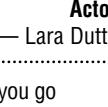


US President —Joe Biden

Akshay Kumar still wakes up before anybody else ever wakes up in their life.



When you go towards a stump mic it doesn't look good, so that was something avoidable.



Former India captain —Sunil Gavaskar



The youth wants to stand on its feet and these are the things that make a country strong.



Congress leader —Priyanka Gandhi



BHOPINDER SINGH



FIRST COLUMN

INFLATION MUST NOT IMPACT ECONOMY

Debt management is a priority for the Government



SHSHANK SAURAV

US Economist Milton Friedman had said that inflation is taxation without legislation. A price rise hurts most to those who sit at the bottom of the pyramid in the social structure. Recent data released by the government shows that consumer price index (CPI) has increased to 5.59 percent in December. If we just see the data on the face of it then it will appear that rural inflation crossed 5 percent and food inflation has also peaked to 4 percent in December. In a way this is worrying because CPI numbers are reaching the RBI mandated upper limit of 6 percent. But the Devil lies in the details. A closer look at the data reveals that inflation has gone down in December as compared to previous month and the index has shown a decline of 1.18 percent. Despite the pandemic and the farmers' protest, food prices have increased moderately but skyrocketing prices of edible oil needs to be kept under control. Initiatives like National Edible Oil



Mission are good for long run but immediate measures must be taken to contain the increasing price. Providing free ration to large part of the population has certainly helped the lower class which faced issues of job loss and decline in income. Wholesale price index (WPI) for December has shown price rise of 13.6 percent. The stark divergence between CPI and WPI is another point which indicates the strong domestic demand. It can be taken as a positive indicator where Indian manufacturers are using their pricing power and the volume is allowing retailers to make profit even after absorbing some of the wholesale price rise. There can be counter arguments that such kind of divergence between these two indicators means retailers are losing their profit margin but the increased indirect tax collection doesn't support this view. In pandemic, people used more goods as compared to services and therefore price rise in goods were more. WPI covers only goods and therefore this divergence includes this aspect also. All the major economies of the world are facing inflationary trends and US inflation hit 39 years high in December when it touched 7 percent. There are concerns that Federal Reserve will hike the interest rate and pandemic era stimulus will be cut back. If this happens then it will impact India also and capital outflow can be seen. Our foreign exchange reserves are sufficient to cover such short-term impacts. This situation is not all bad from Indian perspective. Action taken by US Fed will have impact on exchange rate also and in all likelihood, INR will weaken against USD, if RBI doesn't intervene. This situation will be favorable for Indian exporters, particularly IT and IES industry.

RBI is entrusted with the responsibility of managing the inflation rate within the given range of 2 to 6 percent. Recent surge in inflation is transitory in nature and it is largely due to increase in input prices (cost push) caused by interruption in global supply chain. In the current scenario, the central bank should continue to prioritize growth and employment over inflation. Real interest rate in India is near to zero and a low borrowing cost is good for a developing economy. The Government has increased the spending in the pandemic era and increased borrowing but RBI's balance sheet expansion cannot continue forever in the same manner and debt management should be one of the priorities for the government. The pandemic is still not over and therefore the low interest regime should continue to push the growth as governments alone can't shoulder the expansion.

(The writer is a Chartered Accountant, and public policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)

Area planning better alternative to guaranteeing MSP

India's experience with cropping patterns is overproduction of a commodity that causes an abrupt fall in prices and heavy losses to farmers

The committee set up by the Union Government at the end of the long-drawn farmers' protest to decide on the issue of MSP should consider dismantling the discriminatory price policy and instead adopt the Area Planning approach with an inbuilt guarantee of MSP.

This will reduce the huge Government expenditure and help in optimum utilisation of our scarce land and water resources, fertilisers and other inputs by controlling overproduction.

The practice of Area Planning, already adopted as the alternative mechanism by developed countries like the USA, Australia and the UK, is a tested approach and has proven its worth. In Australia, the departments of agricul-



BRIJENDER SINGH PANWAR

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ture and food provide information and advice to the Australian Planning Commission and local governments to ensure strategic planning at the farmers' level for the growth of agriculture as per demand of domestic human and animal requirements and industrial use and exports.

In the US and Australia, the zoning process regulates the types of activities that can be accommodated on a given piece of land as well as the amount of space devoted to those activities. Subsidies are also linked to area allocated under a crop. In case of the UK, all farms above five hectares have to get approval for use of land, not only for growing crops but also for constructing buildings, carry out excavations and engineering operations for



allied activities.

In India, we have been observing that the overproduction of any commodity causes an abrupt fall in prices and heavy losses to farmers. If procurement is done by the Government, it leads to heavy loss to the exchequer when international prices are lower. Implementation of Area Planning can take care of both these problems and also save on costs of inputs and post-harvest management. Besides,

Area Planning will help in optimising the use of scarce resources such as water and fertilizers by preventing a glut in the production of individual commodities.

Before appraising the new approach, we have to understand the ground realities of MSP at the all-India level. As per the estimate reported by NSSO (77th round) in the Situation Assessment Survey (SAS) of agri-households for the agricultural year July 2018 to June 2019, just 8.8 per cent of them sold any crop to the government agencies at MSP. The value of agri-produce was just 8 per cent of the total value of agriculture (crops plus livestock).

Going by the Census and National Accounts data, the percentages come down to 5.6

and 2.2, respectively. At the national level, that translates to less than one per cent in most of North-Eastern states to as high as 50 per cent in Chhattisgarh, 30 per cent in Telangana, 28 per cent in Punjab, and 23 per cent in Haryana.

Past experience indicates that farmers from Punjab and Haryana have benefitted the most from the MSP regime because they are more organised and enjoy a lead in resources and production due to the onset of Green Revolution in the 1960s. Of late, procurement has spread in states like Chhattisgarh and Telangana for paddy and Madhya Pradesh for wheat. It has resulted in lopsided production. Even though MSPs are announced for 23 commodi-

ties, the price support essentially runs for wheat and rice and that too in selected states. We see a highly distorted picture of incentive structure which favours the wheat and rice producing states.

Agricultural economists and experts say MSP distorts the basic logic of the supply-demand mechanism, slows down the process of diversification and is economically a very expensive and inefficient policy instrument besides leading to massive leakages and corruption. It cannot augment incomes of small and marginal farmers who represent almost 87 per cent of the total farming community. With an average holding size of 0.9 ha, unless farmers move rapidly towards high-value agriculture, there is not much scope to

The lives of train passengers matter



SUDHANSU MANI

Even if a derailment does occur, in spite of all the precautions and measures, the damage the coaches suffer should be minimal to reduce casualty figures

Nine passengers died and nearly forty were injured following the derailment of several coaches of Bikaner-Guwahati Express around 5 PM on January 13 at Domohani in Mainaguri area of West Bengal's Jalpaiguri district. The derailment caused many of the twelve coaches which derailed to capsize or climb over another coach. Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnav announced that he was personally monitoring the rescue operations. An ex-gratia of ₹5 lakh each to the kin of the deceased, ₹1 lakh for those injured grievously and ₹25,000 for those who suffered simple injuries was announced.

The safety record of Indian Railways (IR) has improved in recent years. Without going into the nitty-gritty of statistics, it is clearly seen that the number of fatalities has come down drastically if we leave aside run-over and level crossing accidents for which IR is not directly culpable. This has become possible due to many factors, like greater stress on upkeep of track and allied infrastructure and large-scale induction of LHB coaches.

The LHB coaches were developed by Linke-Hofmann-Busch of Germany. They are considered to be "anti-telescopic", which means they do not get turned over or flip in case of a collision (chiefly head-on). These coaches are made of stainless steel and the interiors are made of aluminium which makes them lighter as compared to conventional rakes. They come equipped with "advanced pneumatic disc brake system" for efficient braking at higher speeds. These modern coaches offer a higher carrying capacity, have higher speed potential, lighter in weight and have increased codal life.

This accident has, however, brought into focus once again, the issue of avoidable fatalities in an accident by switching over to a safer coach design. The causes of the accident can be many, which incidentally, in this case is a traction motor of the locomotive falling down, something which is rather bizarre as this equipment is secured very strongly. The idea should be that even if a derailment does occur, in spite of all the precautions and measure, the damage it causes to the affected coaches should be so controlled that it causes minimal casualties.

It is being said that had the train been provided with LHB type coaches instead of the vintage ICF (Integral Coach Factory) type, no life would have been lost. This premise in itself is correct as successive accidents have shown that whenever ICF type coaches are involved in derailment at high speeds, coaches climb and capsize causing heavy casualties whereas similar accidents with LHB coaches have practically no casualties and certainly no fatalities.



THE RAILWAYS CAN DECIDE TO USE ITS FUNDS MORE MEANINGFULLY, TAKING THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BITE THE BULLET AND LET THE OLD MAKE WAY FOR THE NEW, WHICH WOULD NOT ONLY MEAN MORE LHB TYPE COACHES BUT ALSO MORE MODERN TRAIN SETS LIKE TRAIN 18 AND THEIR UPGRADED VERSION IN ALUMINIUM BODY

(The writer is a retired General Manager, Indian Railways. The views expressed are personal.)



IR principally employs two types of coaches. One is the ICF type which is based on a design imported in 1950s. The other is the LHB type which follows a German design imported in the late 1990s. For common understanding, the latter coaches are designed with a coupler, which gets strongly interlocked with the coupler of the adjacent coach, preventing relative sideways and vertical movements of the coaches with respect to each other and, therefore, coaches do not climb or capsize, even if there is a derailment. ICF type coaches, on the other hand, have no such restraining arrangement, causing them to mount each other or capsize individually when facing absorption of kinetic energy in case of a derailment. At the same time, the more recent Train 18 type coaches are even safer with their semi-permanent type couplers, anti-climbing feature and safer structural designs.

After such an accident occurs, much ado follows berating the IR for delaying faster proliferation of LHB type coaches. Railways, however, huffed and hawed on the issue till 2017, when a series of such accidents forced it to stop manufacture of ICF type coaches, switching over completely to LHB types as far as new manufacture was concerned. The problem of a large legacy fleet of ICF type coaches with years of useful life

still remained, given that an ICF type coach has a useful life of 25 years. As of today, the number of coaches on IR is around 40000 ICF type and 25000 LHB type which means that a large number of even faster trains run with ICF type coaches.

The crescendo which has built up, just as in the past when such an accident took place, runs down ICF type coaches calling them coffins on wheels. This is an exaggeration as this type of coaches have served the country well since 1950s. Lives of railway passengers always mattered, but in recent years, perhaps due to the penetration of social media, they matter much more and rightly so. Some drastic measures are, therefore, called for. The solution is rather plain. Scrap ICF type coaches in a greater haste and increase the pace of manufacture of LHB type coaches to replace them.

The order is not tall; thanks to some measures taken by railway Production Units, particularly Integral Coach Factory since 2016, IR can be geared to manufacture 9000 coaches per year. If that is achieved from April 2022, as many as 25000 oldest ICF type coaches can be replaced, prematurely, by safer LHB type coaches or train sets, relegating the balance to inferior services which can then complete their full useful life without putting lives of passengers

to danger. IR is a large system and some derailments of passenger trains would occur even if the rail infrastructure is improved further but more and more LHB type coaches would mean that the risk of fatalities in such derailments would be greatly reduced.

The inevitable question would be about the extra ₹15000-20,000 crore that it would cost. First of all, it is not a big amount given that it would definitely save hundreds of lives in the years to come. Second, IR has shown unprecedented haste in abandoning and stabilizing a large fleet of its functioning diesel locomotives, speeding up electrification and manufacturing a large number of electric locomotives to showcase its commitment towards use of green energy; that the power consumed by its electric locomotives is hardly green is another matter.

IR can, therefore, decide to use its funds more meaningfully, taking this as an opportunity to bite the bullet and let the old make way for the new, which would not only mean more LHB type coaches but also more modern train sets like Train 18 and their upgraded version in aluminium body. Modern train sets would not only mean safer travel but also more comfortable passenger experience. It is time for IR to decide on a bold initiative to provide safer travel to its passengers.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

ITNA JHOOTH TELEPROMPTER BHI NAHIN JHEL PAYA (NOT EVEN THE TELEPROMPTER COULD HANDLE SUCH LIES). —CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI



DON'T THOSE GETTING EXCITED AT THE TECH GLITCH REALISE THAT THE PROBLEM WAS AT WEF'S END? —BJP LEADER TAJINDER PAL SINGH BAGGA

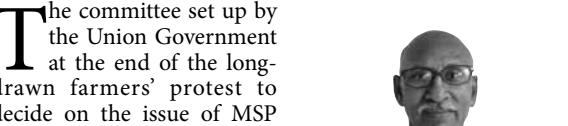
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achieve better incomes for small land holders in an economically efficient and sustainable way.

It is much better to directly help small and marginal farmers with an income policy or through a diversification package towards high value agriculture, the experts advise. The issue of optimum utilisation of land, water, fertilisers, labour and other inputs also needs to be considered. With a growing population, we have limited land which meets the basic needs of cereals, pulses, oils, milk, meat, fruits, vegetables, clothing, fuel and shelter. The cropping system should be tailored to local consumption patterns rather than for only getting the maximum price, irrespective of whether the produce has a demand or not.

Major airlines cancel, change flights to US over 5G dispute

AP ■ DUBAI

Major international airlines cancelled flights heading to the US or changed the planes they're using Wednesday, the latest complication in a dispute over concerns that 5G mobile phone service could interfere with aircraft technology.

Some airlines said they were warned that the Boeing 777, a plane used by carriers worldwide, was particularly affected by the new high-speed wireless service. The aircraft is the workhorse for Dubai-based Emirates, a key carrier for East-West travel, and its flight schedule took one of the biggest hits.

It was not clear how disruptive the cancellations would be. Several airlines said they would try to merely use different planes to maintain their service. The cancellations and changes came a day after mobile phone carriers AT&T and Verizon said they would postpone new wireless service near some US airports planned for this week.

The US Federal Aviation Administration has cleared a number of aircraft to fly into airports with 5G signals, but the Boeing 777 is not on

list. Similar mobile networks have been deployed in dozens of other countries—sometimes with concessions like reducing power of networks near airports, as France has done. But in the US, the issue has pitted FAA and airlines against Federal Communications Commission and the telecoms Commission.

The 5G service uses a segment of the radio spectrum that is close to that used by radio altimeters, which are devices that measure the height of aircraft above the ground and help pilots land in low visibility.

The FCC, which set a buffer between the 5G band and the spectrum that planes use, determined that it could be used safely in the vicinity of air traffic. AT&T and Verizon have said their equipment will not interfere with aircraft electronics. But FAA officials saw a potential problem, and telecom companies agreed to a pause while it is addressed.

On Wednesday, Emirates announced it would halt flights to several American cities due to "operational concerns associated with planned deployment of 5G mobile network services in US at certain airports." It said it would continue

flights to Los Angeles, New York and Washington. "We are working closely with aircraft manufacturers and relevant authorities to alleviate operational concerns, and we hope to resume our US services as soon as possible," the state-owned airline said. Of particular concern appears to be Boeing 777. Emirates only flies that model and Airbus A380 jumbo jet.

Japan's All Nippon Airways said that FAA "has indicated that radio waves from 5G wireless service may interfere with aircraft altimeters."

"Boeing has announced flight restrictions on all airlines operating the Boeing 777 aircraft, and we have cancelled or changed the aircraft for some flights to/from the US based on the announcement by Boeing," ANA said.

It cancelled 20 flights over the issue to cities such as Chicago, Los Angeles and New York. Japan Airlines similarly said that it had been informed that 5G signals "may interfere with radio altimeter installed on Boeing 777." It said it will stop using model in continental US for now. Eight of its flights were affected Wednesday—three passenger trips and five for cargo.

Omicron wave may cut future severity of COVID disease: S African Study

PTI ■ JOHANNESBURG

The Omicron variant of coronavirus may reduce the incidence of severe COVID-19 disease, and the infection may become less disruptive to individuals and society in future, according to a study conducted by researchers in South Africa.

The findings of the yet-to-be-peer-reviewed study are consistent with the previous observations of Omicron displacing Delta, since the variant can elicit immunity which neutralises Delta.

The researchers from Africa Health Research Institute observed in samples from 23 people infected with Omicron in November and December that the variant escapes neutralising immunity elicited by Delta infection.

This indicates that Omicron can re-infect Delta infected individuals but not vice-versa, giving Omicron an advantage over Delta, they said. The implications of such displacement would depend on whether Omicron is indeed less pathogenic than Delta. If so, then the inci-

dence of COVID-19 severe disease would be reduced and the infection may shift to become less disruptive to individuals and society," they authors of the study noted.

The finding is an update to the study by the same research team which found enhancement of immunity against Delta variant with Omicron infection.

"We were able to add study participants to see more clearly the effect of vaccination," Professor Alex Sigal, from Africa Health Research Institute tweeted on Tuesday.

The earlier part of the study, posted on the pre-print repository MedRxiv, used data from 15 previously vaccinated and unvaccinated people who were infected with the Omicron variant.

The scientists used plasma, a blood product which contains antibodies, from the participants to test the ability of the antibodies to control both Omicron and Delta in the lab -- a so-called 'neutralisation' test. The results show a developing antibody response to Omicron, with neutralisation increasing 14-fold over this time.

Israel minister denies police used NSO spyware on protesters

AP ■ JERUSALEM

An Israeli Cabinet minister reported five new COVID-19 cases of the Delta variant on Wednesday, days after the first Omicron case was detected in the city bracing to host the Winter

Olympics from next month. Four of the infected people are the employees of a cold storage company in Fangshan district.

The fifth person, who lives with one of those employees, also works in the cold storage industry. Liu Xiaofeng, deputy director of the Beijing Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, (DCP) told a news conference here.

The Delta variant was detected from samples. All of the cases have been transferred to designated hospitals for medical treatment, he said.

The city which is bracing to host the Winter Olympics from February 4 reported first case of Omicron variant on January 16 prompting the health officials to ramp up testing and tracing. Concerns were heightened as millions of people were set to travel across the country to celebrate

Beijing grapples with Delta, Omicron infections as more Covid-19 cases surface ahead of Winter Olympics

PTI ■ BEIJING

Chinese capital Beijing reported five new COVID-19 cases of the Delta variant on Wednesday, days after the first Omicron case was detected in the city bracing to host the Winter

Olympics from next month. Four of the infected people are the employees of a cold storage company in Fangshan district.

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the week-long Spring Festival and Chinese New Year from the end of this month.

Chinese officials blamed the lone Omicron case in Beijing on international mail delivered from Canada to Beijing via the US and Hong Kong.

The single Omicron case detected in Beijing was traced back to an international document from Canada, and it was found to have similar strains from those in North America and Singapore, according to health officials.

Few days ago, the Omicron variant was found in the nearby Tianjin city. Since Beijing reported one locally transmitted case on Saturday, the infected cases have involved Haidian, Chaoyang, Fangshan and Fengtai districts by Wednesday in the current COVID-19 outbreak in the capital city, the state-run China Daily reported.

The DCP has released the tracks of the new cases and asked the residents who have been to those places during the same period to report to local communities as soon as possible. Liu said residents should not leave Beijing before receiving nucleic acid testing results.

China asks Taliban to meet 'expectations of international community' for recognition

PTI ■ BEIJING

China has asked Taliban's interim administration in Afghanistan to meet "expectation of international community" in response to Islamist group's appeal to Beijing to help it get the global recognition.

"We hope the Afghan side will respond further to expectation of international community, establish an open and inclusive political architecture, adopt moderate and prudent domestic and foreign policies, firmly combat all sorts of terrorist forces," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian told a media briefing on Tuesday.

The new Afghanistan government should also "live on friendly terms with other countries, especially its neighbours, and integrate into international family at an early date", he said responding to a question quoting reports from Kabul that Taliban had sought China's help to get global diplomatic recognition.

China has been asking the Taliban to crackdown on the separatist East Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) active in the volatile Muslim-majority Xinjiang province, which shares borders with Afghanistan.

No country has so far recognised Taliban government despite the diplomatic campaign from Pakistan which firmly backed Afghan militant group to seize power in August last year.

Taliban's failure to form an inclusive government with other Afghan political leaders, exclusion of Afghan women from public life as well as girls from education besides its alleged links with transnational terrorist groups remained main reservations of the global community to extend diplomatic recognition.

On Wednesday, acting Afghan Prime Minister Mullah Hasan Akhund appealed for international recognition of Taliban government, saying "I ask all governments, especially Islamic countries, that they should start recognition."

"Afghanistan has met all criteria and conditions needed for recognition of a government, therefore I am calling upon world countries to recognise legitimate government (of) Islamic Emirate and extend support to Afghans," China's state-run Xinhua news agency quoted Akhund as saying while addressing an economic conference in Kabul.

This is first time that Akhund made a major public appearance since he assumed role in September last year.

Xinhua report said, Zhao said China has noted that "the Afghan interim government has actively engaged in international exchange and quite a few countries".

"We hold that international community should support Afghan people in seeking a development path in keeping with their national realities and realising lasting stability and development on basis of respecting country's sovereign independence and territorial integrity," he said.

Influential fashion journalist André Leon Talley dies at 73

New York: André Leon Talley, the towering former creative director and editor at large of Vogue magazine, has died. He was 73. Talley's literary agent David Vigliano confirmed Talley's death to USA Today late Tuesday, but no additional details were immediately available. Talley was an influential fashion journalist who worked at Women's Wear Daily and Vogue and was a regular in front row of fashion shows in New York and Europe. At 6-feet-6 inches tall, Talley cut an imposing figure wherever he went, with his stature, his considerable

influence on fashion world, and his bold looks. In a 2013 Vanity Fair spread titled "The Eyeful Tower," Talley was described as "perhaps industry's most important link to past." Designer Tom Ford told magazine Talley was "one of last great fashion editors who has an incredible sense of fashion history. ... He can see through everything you do to original reference, predict what was on your inspiration board." Designer Diane von Furstenberg praised Talley on Instagram, writing: "no one saw world in a more glamorous way than you did ... no one was grander and

Blinken urges unity to fight 'relentless' Russian aggression

AP ■ KYIV (UKRAINE)

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken urged western nations Wednesday to remain united in the face of what he called "relentless" Russian aggression against Ukraine and reassured Ukraine's leader of their support.

Blinken told Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy during a visit to Kyiv that the U.S. And its allies were steadfast in backing his country and its democratic aspirations amid growing fears of a potentially imminent Russian invasion.

"The Ukrainian people chose a democratic and European path in 1991. They took to the Maidan to defend that choice in 2013, and unfortunately ever since you have faced relentless aggression from Moscow," Blinken said, referring to Ukraine's trajectory since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

"Our strength depends on preserving our unity and that includes unity within Ukraine," he said to Zelenskyy. "I think one of Moscow's long-standing goals has been to try to sow divisions between and within our countries and quite simply, we cannot and will not let them do that." The Biden administration said earlier it was providing an additional \$200 million in defensive military aid to Ukraine to help protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Zelenskyy

thanked Blinken for the assistance, which was approved in late December but not formally confirmed until Wednesday, as well as for his visit and assurances of support.

"This (military) support not only speaks to our strategic plans of Ukraine joining the alliance, but more importantly to the level of our military, our military supplies," he said, referring to Kyiv's desire to join NATO over Russia's strong objections.

"If we want dramatically fast steps in modernizing the military, we need help especially in these tough times," Zelenskyy said. "Your visit is very important."

It underlines once again your powerful support of our independence and sovereignty." The aid announcement came at the start of Blinken's hastily arranged visit as US. And western officials stepped up increasingly dire warnings about a possible imminent Russian invasion.

Blinken said Russian President Vladimir Putin is now in position to launch military action against Ukraine at will and at very short notice with more than 100,000 troops massed on its border and plans to add more. "We know that there are plans in place to increase that force even more on very short notice and that gives President Putin the capacity, also on very short notice, to take further aggressive action against Ukraine," Blinken told staff at US. Embassy in Kyiv.

These documents, which will be made public, will include all the papers sought by the ECP through the state of Pakistan, in its letter dated July 3, 2018, the newspaper report said. Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikander Sultan Raja passed the order on Tuesday, when the counsel for the petitioner said that certain critical portions of the report

Pakistan's election commission orders declassification of key documents in Imran Khan's party's foreign funding case

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's election commission has ordered the declassification of key documents linked to the foreign funding case against the ruling Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf, a move that could potentially spell more trouble for Prime Minister Imran Khan, a media report said on Wednesday.

The ECP had kept the documents away from the public domain after PTI had objected to sharing the documents with Akbar S. Babar, the ruling party's founding member and the petitioner in this case, it added.

According to a damning report released earlier this month by the Election Commission of Pakistan's Scrutiny Committee, Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) had grossly under-reported funds received from foreign nationals, firms and also concealed bank accounts. The ruling party had under-reported an amount of Rs PKR 312 million over a four-year period, between FY 2009-10 and FY 2012-13, the report said.

The year-wise details reveal that an amount in excess of PKR 145 million was under-reported in FY 2012-13 alone, it said. These documents were part of this Scrutiny Committee report, but were not released along with the report, the Dawn newspaper said.

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had been kept secret and his client was being denied access to them. The CEC directed that no part of the report should be kept confidential and the whole report should be provided to the petitioner, the report said.

The ECP had kept the documents away from the public domain after PTI had objected to sharing the documents with Akbar S. Babar, the ruling party's founding member and the petitioner in this case, it added.

Describing the Scrutiny Committee's report as 'dishonest', Babar's counsel Syed Ahmad Hassan Shah said meaningful scrutiny was not possible unless critical pieces of evidence were made public, in line with an earlier order of the commission. The CEC directed PTI counsel Anwar Mansoor to file a written reply by the next date of hearing and adjourned the hearing till February 1, the report said.

Talking to reporters after the hearing, Minister of State for Information Farrukh Habib said that PTI was the only political party that attaches any importance to transparency in the fund-collection process.

He alleged that Babar was on the payroll of opposition PML-N and had been exposed by the findings of the scrutiny committee.

Babar, told reporters that the decision on declassification of documents was historic. He said the report documents that at least PKR 836,897,508 and USD 1.6 million, collected domestically, have no source and details.

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Describing the Scrutiny Committee

Economic recovery yet to attain durability: Report

Mumbai: Rating agency Icra on Wednesday said while there is some evidence of the economic recovery becoming broad-based in the third quarter of fiscal 2022, it is yet to attain the durability being sought by the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) as a precursor to policy transmission.

The agency expects the real GDP to expand 6.6-5 per cent year-on-year in the third quarter of FY2022 (+8.4 per cent in Q2 FY2022). It also sees the RBI maintaining the status quo in the upcoming monetary policy review to be held in February.

Its Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said economic activity rebounded in December 2021, even as many sectors continued to trail the performance recorded in October 2021.

Encouragingly, the quarterly data suggests the recovery in Q3 FY2022, relative to Q2 FY2022, when compared to respective pre-COVID-19 volumes. "However, the onset of the third wave of COVID-19

has triggered state-wise restrictions, which have expectedly interrupted the momentum in the ongoing month, reiterating that the recovery is yet to attain durability," Nayar said in a report released on Wednesday.

The agency said the y-o-y performance of 10 of the 15 high-frequency indicators improved in December 2021 compared to November 2021. These include generation of GST e-way bills, non-oil merchandise exports, electricity generation, two-wheeler output as well as aggregate deposits and non-food credit of scheduled commercial banks.

The report further said the y-o-y performance of nine of the 15 high-frequency indicators in December 2021 trailed the growth seen in October 2021.

FASTag toll collections and retail payments rose to all-time highs in December 2021, while the monthly mobility for retail and recreation rose above the level of baseline period for the first time since the onset of

COVID-19, it said.

Nayar further said that following the re-imposition of state-wide restrictions to curb the third wave of COVID-19, the early data for January 2022 is expectedly weak.

The daily average generation of the GST e-way bills dipped to 2.1 million during January 1-16, 2022, from 2.3 million in December 2021.

After a y-o-y growth in December 2021, the sales of petrol and diesel of state refiners slipped back to a contraction in the first half of January 2022. Even, the y-o-y growth in electricity demand eased to 1.9 per cent during January 1-16, 2022, from 2.8 per cent in December 2021, she said.

The agency said that with the fresh uncertainty triggered by Omicron and the associated restrictions, it expects a status quo on the stance of the monetary policy as well as the reverse repo rate in the upcoming RBI policy meeting, in spite of the rise in the retail inflation in December 2021.

PTI

Economy needs more nursing; Budget shouldn't focus on fiscal consolidation alone: SBI

Mumbai: House economists at the nation's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) have urged the government to budget for nursing the pandemic-ravaged economy and not to focus too much on fiscal consolidation as there is a need for more stabilisation measures to sustain the fledgling recovery.

And one of the best way to begin the new fiscal is to complete the share sale of LIC this fiscal. This can go a long way in repairing the overstretched balance sheet which in turn will bring down fiscal deficit to a much lower 6.3 per cent in FY23 as the public coffers will be left with a cash surplus of at least Rs 3 lakh crore to begin the new fiscal, SBI chief economist Soumya Kanti Ghosh said in a pre-Budget note on Wednesday.

He said the Budget should not correct the fiscal deficit by more than 30-40 bps as most sectors of the economy still need support.

Pencilling in a 6-6.5 per cent fiscal deficit for FY23, down from 6.8-7.1 per cent from FY22, he said the Budget should also allow for very

gradual fiscal consolidation. For FY23, the fiscal consolidation should remain limited to 30-40 bps from the current fiscal. He also cautioned against any new taxes like wealth tax or others at this point as that could do more harm than benefit.

Assuming the government keeps the expenditure growth at 8 per cent over FY22 estimates at Rs 38 lakh crore in FY23 and receipts (minus borrowing and other liabilities) would grow by 10.8 per cent, it would lead to fiscal deficit of around ₹ 16.5 lakh crore or 6.3 per cent of GDP in FY23.

If LIC share passes through in FY22, the government might be ending fiscal with a large cash balance of ₹ 3 lakh crore. This can come handy in supporting a large part of government fiscal deficit without taking recourse to market borrowings, as per the note.

Against this background, the net market borrowings of the Centre is likely to be around ₹ 8.2 lakh crore and with repayments of ₹ 3.8 lakh crore, gross borrowings is expected at

₹ 12 lakh crore (73 per cent of the fiscal deficit and same as in FY22 and FY21), Ghosh said. Overall gross borrowings by the Centre and states are likely to be around ₹ 21 lakh crore (₹ 19.7 lakh crore in FY22) and net borrowings at around ₹ 14.8 lakh crore (₹ 15 lakh crore in FY22).

Ghosh also pointed out that unlike in FY22, when RBI has done OMOs of around ₹ 2.6 lakh crore, helping government borrowing programme without disruptions, in FY23, such support is not likely.

He specifically called for continuing support to MSMEs saying the 6.33 crore of such units contribute 29 per cent of GDP, employing over 11 crore.

And one of the ways to help them is let bank lend them more by verifying their cash-flows seamlessly through GST 4/ITR on real-time basis.

Another step could be extending the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) till end FY23 to enable completion of the entire targeted ₹ 4.5 lakh crore of credit flow under it. PTI

Sensex crashes 656 pts, Nifty cracks below 18K tracking global rout

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Tech Mahindra, PowerGrid, M&M and Reliance Industries.

In the broader market, BSE Midcap declined by 0.34 per cent while Smallcap ended almost flat.

Sectorally, BSE IT index dropped 1.95 per cent, Teck fell 1.79 per cent, Bankex was down 0.52 per cent and Telecom was 0.97 per cent lower.

Market breadth was largely negative as 1,827 stocks out of 3,495 trading stocks declined while 1,579 stocks advanced and 89 ended unchanged on the BSE.

"Globally, risk sentiments took a blow as rising inflation resulting in elevated bond yield along with the on-going geopolitical tensions and surge in oil prices weighed on investor confidence. This along with consistent FII selling forced the domestic market to trade in favour of bears for the second consecutive day," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

NSE world's largest derivatives exchange for 3rd straight year

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The National Stock Exchange of India has emerged as the world's largest derivatives exchange for the third consecutive year in 2021 in terms of the number of contracts traded, according to the Futures Industry Association (FIA).

In addition, the exchange was ranked fourth by the number of trades in cash equities, as per the statistics maintained by the World Federation of Exchanges (WFE) for 2021.

In a statement on Wednesday NSE said it has ranked as the largest exchange globally in equity derivatives as well as currency derivatives by the number of contracts traded. "It is a matter of great pride for us and our country that NSE has emerged as a global leader and achieved the distinction of being the largest derivatives exchange in the world for the 3rd consecutive year and the 4th largest exchange in cash equities by the number of trades," Vikram Limaye, MD & CEO, NSE, said.

The year 2021 witnessed the total registered investor

Cut import duty gradually on alcoholic beverages under India-UK FTA; not unfairly: CIABC to Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The apex body for liquor firms Confederation of Indian Alcoholic Beverage Companies (CIABC) has urged the government not to reduce customs duties on British alcoholic beverages under the proposed India-UK free trade agreement to support domestic players unless Indian liquor manufacturers get a fair deal.

CIABC has also suggested

the government to ensure that the UK allows the selling of

domestic whiskies as 'Indian Whisky', irrespective of whether they are made from malt, grain spirits or molasses-based spirits.

India and the UK have formally launched negotiations for an FTA, under which duties would be reduced or eliminated on several goods traded between the two countries.

They should also remove the condition of a minimum three years maturation period for whisky and rum, the body said in a letter to the commerce ministry.

The domestic alcoholic beverages industry only seeks just and fair level playing field for Indian producers and help them achieve global scale and success... It is therefore vital that the interests of the domestic industry are not compromised, and opportunities are created for Indian products to

reach out and conquer the world," CIABC Director-General Vinod Giri said.

He added that the alcoholic beverages industry contributes ₹ 2.5 lakh crore annually in taxes to the states, employs 20 lakh people and supports 50 lakh farmers.

"We urge our government to ensure (in the FTA) that Indian alcoholic beverage industry is permitted a truly level playing field by way of an effective customs duty that is reflective of the higher cost of production driven by the regulatory restrictions and capital cost in India; equal opportunities are created for export of Indian products to the UK, and measures are put in to prevent dumping or predatory price exports to India," Giri added.

Giri also informed that the UK has imposed non-tariff barriers, related to product recipe and ageing, on Indian alcoholic beverages, which prevents most domestic products from accessing the British market. "These must be removed to ensure genuine quid pro quo," he said in the letter.

On January 13 this year, India and the UK formally launched negotiations for the proposed free trade agreement (FTA), which is expected to help double bilateral trade to over \$100 billion by 2030 and boost economic ties between the two countries.

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Rising premium growth, Govt reforms to strengthen insurers' profitability: Report

New Delhi: Post-pandemic

claims, it said.

Meanwhile, the Government's plans to recapitalise India's dominant state-owned insurers and list the country's biggest insurer, Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), on the stock market will

encourage a more disciplined approach to underwriting in the respective general and life insurance sectors, it said.

This will pave the way for price increases across the market, further supporting insurers' profitability, it said.

It added that rising premiums and prices, in turn, will help insurers absorb higher claims. This pushed the average net loss ratio for general insurers to 95 per cent in the first three months of the financial year 2020-21 from 81 per cent in the previous year.

In anticipation of profitable growth opportunities, the report said that 20 of India's 34 general insurers and four of its 24 life insurers raised capital in the financial year 2019-20. PTI

• CHANGE OF NAME •

It is for general information that I, Imran Ali S/o Shri Furqan Ali, residing at 1-47, Street No.-12, J-Extension, Laxmi Nagar, East Delhi, Delhi 110092, declare that name of mine has been wrongly written as Imran Khan in my both sons' (Mohd Kamran Ali and Mohd Farhan) educational documents.

The actual name of mine is Imran Ali respectively, which may be amended accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given by the General Public on behalf of ICICI Bank Ltd. that Mr. R.K. Ahuja & Mrs. Meena Ahuja, owners of property located at Plot No. 10, Sector 19, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, (UP) (the said property) by virtue of Transfer deed dated 14.01.1993 registration No. 4748, and after demise upon R.K. Ahuja his wife Meena Ahuja, the said property was owned by Mr. R.K. Ahuja by virtue of Mutation Letter dated 01.01.2018 in the record of Noida Authority. All persons including other legal heirs if any are hereby informed that the said property is now owned by Mr. R.K. Ahuja and is being used by him for residential purpose. The said property is situated in the possession of Mr. Om Prakash Mehendu who is taking Loan from ICICI Bank Ltd. for purchase of the said property, if anybody has any objection/s upon the ownership of Mrs. Meena Ahuja upon the said property, its sale, Mortgage, Registration, any kind of mutation, transfer, partition, etc. can be undertaken within the below mentioned address within 10 days of the present.

Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Associates) 200, 11th Floor, 23, Shyam Marg, Mori Nagar, N. Delhi-15

Ph.: 011-412527-28 Kumarandassociates@gmail.com

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General Public is hereby informed that one person Namely: **Lalu Gupta, S/o: Satyanarayan Gupta, R/o: H.No. 2013/4A, Street No. 14, Prem Nagar, Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped since **24.12.2021** in the area of P.S. Patel Nagar, Delhi. In this regard a case vide DD No. 60-A dated 30.12.2021 has been lodged at P. S. Patel Nagar, Delhi. The description of the missing person are as under:

under: Age: 45 years, Height: 5'6", Hair: Black & long, Face: Round, Complexion: Shallow, Built: Thin, Wearing: Blue colour coat, white colour shirt, blue colour pant and white colour shoes in his feet. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing person but no clue has come to light so far. Any person having any information or clue about this missing person kindly inform to the following.

Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>

E-mail Id : cic@cbi.gov.in

Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641

Fax No. 011-24368639

DP/1201/CD/2022

Tel.No. 011-25872637, 8750870434

SHO

P.S. Patel Nagar, Delhi

SEARCH OF MISSING/KIDNAPPED

General public is hereby informed that one female (depicted in the photo), Namely: **Komal, W/o: Udhama Singh, R/o: Jhuggi No-95/255 Phase-I Shahzada Bagh Inderlok, Delhi** Aged: 26 years, has been missing from her residence, since 28.09.2021. In this regard a case FIR No. 585/21 u/s 365 IPC Dated 30.09.2021, has been lodged at P.S. Sarai Rohilla, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:

Komal

Height: 4' Feet, Complexion: Fair, Face: Round, Built: Thin, Clothing: Yellow Colour Suit and Pajami and Cream Colour Chappal on Foot. Any person is having any information/clue about this missing female, may inform SHO, Sarai Rohilla, Delhi at E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in or website: <http://cbi.nic.in> Tel No.: 011-23014046 (Direct), 23015229 & 23015218.

S.H.O

P.S. Sarai Rohilla, Delhi

Ph. 011-23691106, 23693611

SEARCH OF MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one girl (depicted in the photo), Namely: **Rinki, D/o: Dhanna Lal, R/o: H.No. E-60/183, Jhuggi Sunder Nagri, Delhi** Aged: About 23 years, has been missing from her house since 20.12.2021. In this regard vide DD No. 53-A, Dated 28.12.2021, has been lodged at P.S. Nand Nagri, Delhi. Her physical description is as under:

Rinki

Complexion: Fair, Height: 5'1" Feet, Face: Round, Built: Thin, Wearing: Yellow Colour Saree and Bare Foot. Any person is having any information/clue about this missing girl, may inform SHO, Nand Nagri, Delhi at E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in or website : <http://cbi.nic.in> Tel No. : 11-24368638 or 24368641

S.H.O

P.S. Nand Nagri, Delhi

Ph.: 011-22585985, 22583307

India's oil production continues to slip, down 2% in Dec

New Delhi: India's production of crude oil, which is refined to produce petrol and diesel, continued to decline in December 2021, with lower output from state-owned ONGC leading to a near 2 per cent drop, official data showed on Wednesday.

Oil production in December 2021 was 2.51 million tonnes, down from 2.55 million tonnes a year earlier and a target of 2.6 million tonnes. The output was, however, higher than 2.43 million tonnes production in November 2021.

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONG

DDA HOLDS MEETING

Delhi Development Authority held a meeting on January 18 through video conferencing under the chairmanship of Shri Anil Baijal, Hon'ble Lt. Governor, Delhi/Chairman, DDA attended by Shri Manish Kumar Gupta, IAS, Vice Chairman, DDA and other members including Shri Vijender Gupta MLA, Shri Somnath Bharti MLA and Shri O P Sharma MLA. The following major decisions were taken:

♦ **DDA unveils a sustainable development-oriented budget:** The Authority approved the annual budget for 2022-23, with an annual outlay of ₹7,935 crore and receipts have been projected at ₹7,943 crore.

The main highlights of the budget are given below:-

Civic Infrastructure

1. A total allocation of ₹2,922 crore has been made in BE 2022-23, for the development of land and physical infrastructure which includes roads, sewerage, water supply, power lines and drainage mainly in the sub-cities of Narela, Dwarka and Rohini.

2. DDA has signed an MoU with NHAI for the Construction of Urban Extension Road-II (UER) by NHAI as a national highway. This road will significantly enhance the connectivity of the sub-cities of Dwarka, Rohini, Narela and the proposed land pooling areas with the rest of Delhi and the neighbouring states. By connecting the major national highways, it will contribute significantly towards easing heavy traffic congestion on Delhi roads and improving the air quality. Out of the approximate Project Cost of ₹7,700 crore (approx.), DDA has agreed to provide the viability gap funding of ₹3,600 crore which is to be released in a phased manner.

₹1,787 crore out of this will be funded from Urban Development Fund and the rest by DDA. As the work on the project has gathered pace, ₹900 crore have been released during 2021-22. For this, BE 2021-22 of ₹100 crore has been enhanced and a sum of ₹725 crore has been kept in BE 2022-23 for this project.

3. DDA is committed to providing ₹1,000 crore as a grant to

DMRC in a phased manner for the Delhi Metro Phase-IV project. In BE 2022-23 also, provision of ₹240 crore has been provided for this purpose.

4. Provision of ₹47.49 crore in BE 2022-23 has been made for the construction of sewage water drain at Sector-8, Dwarka to cater the discharge of drain water from Airport and Rehabilitation of Trunk Drain No. 2 and Trunk Drain No. 5 for reusing the drain water for horticulture purpose. Once completed, this project is expected to comprehensively address the problem of inundation of IGI Airport, every time there is heavy rainfall.

Housing Projects & In-situ Development for Slum Rehabilitation

♦ **Housing:** An allocation of ₹2,543 Crore has been provided in BE 2022-23 for the completion of the ongoing housing projects. DDA has launched a special Housing Scheme 2021 on December 21 consisting of its existing inventories of around 18,000 flats. In addition, several projects are also likely to be completed during 2022-23 in Dwarka and Narela, DDA has projected revenue of ₹2,761 crore from the sale of flats in BE 2022-23.

♦ **In Situ Rehabilitation:** For in-situ rehabilitation of Slum dwellers, the following Housing Projects are in progress:

- KALKAJI EXTENSION: Construction of 3024 EWS dwelling units on Design and Build Model. Provision of ₹46 crore & ₹30 crore has been provided for this in RBE 2021-22 & BE 2022-23 respectively.
- JAILORWALA BAGH: Construction of 1,675 EWS dwelling units on Design and Build model. Provision of ₹120 crore & ₹168 crore has been made in RBE 2021-22 & BE 2022-23 respectively.
- In addition to the above, DDA has floated RFPs of six projects comprising 10 JJ Clusters.

♦ **Environmental initiatives: Parks, Water Bodies and Yamuna River Front**

1. The work for the development

of the iconic Bharat Vandana Park with a project cost of ₹560 crore in Dwarka Sub-city is already in progress. The project spread over an area of 80 hectares is being executed by NBCC. Provision of ₹280 Crore has been provided in BE 2022-23.

2. DDA has played a key role in the overall development and management of green spaces in the city. DDA has prepared an action plan for rejuvenation of water bodies across Delhi accordingly a provision of ₹17.90 crore has been provided in BE 2022-23 under this head.

3. DDA has also undertaken the work of rejuvenation and restoration of the floodplains of River Yamuna at a total cost of ₹928.92 crore. The work is being taken up in a phased manner at 10 separate sub-projects. A sum of ₹35.77 crore has been provided as BE 2022-23.

4. An outlay of ₹77 crore has also been provided towards development, up-gradation, modernisation and maintenance of city parks maintained by DDA. In addition to this, there are 787 parks under DDA having a total area of 11,258 acres the total maximum average daily water requirement is 34.3 ML per day. The work of setting up Decentralised STPs/Wastewater Treatment Plants to close bore wells supplying water to the city parks is being taken up in a phased manner and steps are also being taken to recharge the bore wells. Provision of ₹7.90 crore has been provided in BE 2022-23 for setting up STPs.

♦ **Promotion of Sports:** A sum of ₹546 crore has been provided in BE 2022-23 for the promotion of sports in Delhi by DDA. This includes expenditure on the ongoing project of construction of three new sports complexes at Dwarka, one at Rohini and a Golf Course at Dwarka. Apart from this, DDA is also maintaining the existing 18 sports complexes and two golf courses.

Other projects:

1. DDA has undertaken the integrated development of the East Delhi Hub project at Karkardooma with mixed land usage based on "Transit-Oriented Development norms" with mixed land usage on 30

hectares of land. This project is being executed by NBCC and involves the construction of 1524 houses in the first phase with a project cost of ₹1,168 crore. Provision of ₹426 crore has been made for the year 2022-23.

2. DDA has planned a dedicated corridor track for cyclists and pedestrians. The Delhi Cycle Walk project is being planned with the objective to take a large number of car rides off the Delhi roads. The work on Phase 1 of the Delhi cycle walk with a dedicated corridor for cyclists and pedestrians named "Neelgai line" from Badarpur to Malviya Nagar is in progress and a provision of ₹6 crore has been made in BE 2022-23.

3. DDA had identified three commercial centres namely, Nehru Place, Bhikaji Cama Place and Basant Lok Community centre for upgradation. While the work of upgradation of the Basant Lok Community Centre has already been completed, the work in respect of Nehru Place and Bhikaji Cama Place is in progress and a provision of ₹26.60 crore has been made in BE 2022-23.

4. Provision of ₹6 crore has been made in BE 2022-23 for construction of Utsav pandals at Madangir, Dwarka, Rohini and CBD Shahdara Utsav Pandal.

♦ Extension of Time for Addl FAR and Use Conversion Charges:

The Authority has also approved the extension of time up to June 30 for applicability of existing rates in respect of following as it is felt that enhancement of rates at this stage may not be in the larger public interest during the Covid 19 pandemic period:

i) Additional FAR for residential properties, Coop. Group Housing, Mixed-Use/ Commercial streets and commercial properties (excluding hotel and parking plots) arising out of MPD 2021; and

ii) Use conversion charges for Mixed-Use/Commercial Use of Premises and Shop-cum-residence plots/Complexes later designated as LSCs Now, it shall be forwarded to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India for approval.

solved in record time. Cases registered by courts decreased from 30 to 16 per cent

Shri Gehlot said that the policy of compulsory FIR registration has yielded better results in the state. In 2018, more than 30 per cent rape cases were registered through courts. It has come down to 16 per cent which shows the policy's success. He directed the police to follow this policy irrespective of the increase in the number of registered crimes to ensure justice.

Shri Gehlot was addressing the review meeting of the Home Department through VC at the Chief Minister's residence. He said that as a result of steps for preventing crimes against women, the average time for disposal of cases of POCSO Act and women atrocities has come down considerably. The research time in rape cases has come down from 211 days in 2018 to 86 days in 2021. Due to the constitution of the Special Investigation Unit under an additional superintendent of police in the districts, the number of pending cases of atrocities against women has come down from 12.5 per cent to 9.3 per cent. He directed that this should be further reduced.

Speedy punishment in 510 cases of POCSO

Shri Gehlot expressed satisfaction that the police have punished criminals in 510 cases of the POCSO Act in 2021, out of which death penalty has been awarded in four cases and life in 35 cases. Several cases were

Dedicated unit to prevent the illegal trade of narcotics

The Chief Minister directed the setting up of a dedicated unit to check the illegal trade of narcotics, drugs and narcotics in the state. He said that police should use IT and social media.

Action against organised crimes

The Chief Minister directed the police to take action against frauds by credit cooperative societies and organised crimes. He appreciated the self-defence training by the police to women and girls and said that more women should be trained. So far, more than 4,40,000 women and girls have been trained.

Timely promotion and service benefits to Police Personnel

Shri Gehlot said that police personnel discharge their responsibilities in difficult circumstances and, to maintain their morale, they should be encouraged, given promotions and other service benefits on

Additional chief secretary, Home, Shri Abhay Kumar said that the percentage of pending cases in Rajasthan is much less than the national level. In 2019, Rajasthan has been ranked second in the least pending cases and in 2020, it is third. To strengthen the police 497 sub-inspector police and 4,748 constables have been appointed.

Director-general of Police Shri ML Lather said that the noose around gangs involved in organised crime had been tightened. Reception rooms have been set up in 674 police stations and work is in progress in 147.

ADG Crime Mr RP Mehrada, ADG SOG Mr Ashok Rathod, ADG Civil Rights Mr Smita Srivastava, ADG Telecom Mr Sunil Dutt, ADG Security

Mr S. Sangathir gave a detailed presentation regarding innovations, achievements, challenges and departmental activities. Principal secretary, Finance, Shri Akhil Arora and other senior officers were also present.



Police should be prompt and sensitive: CM Ashok Gehlot

Rajasthan Chief Minister Shri Ashok Gehlot said that strong law and order and effective prevention of crimes are top priority of the State government.

Police officers should work readily and with sensitivity for this. Any crime should be investigated thoroughly in the shortest possible time and the culprit should be punished. Police should work without any pressure, with fairness and positive thinking.

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CLW turns out 350 electric locomotives in the FY 2021-22

Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW) scripted history by producing 350 electric locomotives in the current Financial Year 2021-22 in record 223 working days. This is the fastest in terms of working days in any Financial Year. This feat was possible under the leadership and guidance of Shri Satish Kumar Kashyup, General Manager/CLW and with his continuous motivation and encouragement to the workforce of CLW.

Shri Satish Kumar Kashyup, General Manager congratulated the entire team of CLW and appreciated their commitment and progress of production. With this trend in production, it is expected that CLW will achieve another milestone of producing the highest number of locos in a financial year.



CISF organises special Covid vaccine booster dose camp

CISF personnel working at DMRC, Delhi are at the forefront in ensuring smooth operations of the lifeline of Delhi-Delhi Metro. More than 12,000 personnel are deployed in the DMRC unit of CISF to ensure the safety of passengers and property of Delhi Metro that connects Delhi to neighbouring districts of UP and Haryana and provides mass rapid transit to more than 35 lakh passengers in Delhi.

To combat the raging wave of the Covid pandemic and to ensure the safety of its personnel performing duties at Delhi Metro, a special drive camp for administering Covid vaccine booster has been organised at Shastri Park campus of CISF unit DMRC. The camp was inaugurated on January 9. A team of doctors from East Delhi District along with civil defence volunteers are running two centres for the administration of booster dose to CISF personnel. More than 2,500 personnel of CISF unit DMRC have been administered booster dose of vaccine to date. CISF aims to cover all eligible personnel of DMRC under

over 9,000 of its personnel with the Booster Dose across the country.

At the Shastri park camp, an additional counter for vaccination of eligible wards (children between age 15-18) of personnel has also been opened.

CISF has already vaccinated

the protection of the booster vaccine by January 20.

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BHEL's Coal to Methanol (CTM) plant dedicated to nation



As part of the ongoing Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, Hon'ble Union Minister for Heavy Industries, Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey dedicated India's first, BHEL-built Coal to Methanol (CTM) pilot plant, to the Nation. Dr Nalin Shinghal, CMD, BHEL, Shri Jeetendra Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Heavy Industries, Functional Directors on the Board of BHEL and senior officials of the Ministry of Heavy Industries and BHEL were present in the virtual ceremony.

Dr Pandey also inaugurated an exhibition on 'Products Developed under Aatmanirbhar Bharat' organised at BHEL's Hyderabad unit. In addition, an audio-visual presentation was made on the 'Unsung Heroes of the Indian Freedom Struggle' belonging to the Telangana Region. BHEL employees joined the programme virtually.

The Minister said that one of the important goals of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision is to build a self-reliant nation. The role of the manufacturing sector will be crucial in this. The capital goods industry is the backbone of the manufacturing sector. As

celebrations, thanked the Ministry of Heavy Industries and the Government for supporting BHEL. He said that R&D has always been one of BHEL's core strengths and the organisation is focussed on playing a role to achieve the Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26).

Notably, the 0.25 TPD capacity CTM pilot plant, indigenously designed, developed and installed by BHEL, is currently producing methanol with a purity of more than 99 per cent from high ash Indian coals. This conversion of high ash coals to methanol through gasification is the first of its kind technology demonstration in India.

The ICSI elects its New President and Vice President for the year 2022. CS Devendra P. Deshpande, elected as President and CS Manish Gupta, elected as Vice President of the Institute of Company Secretaries of India for the year w.e.f. January 19

Feminisation of poverty

Women are yet to attain freedom from the patriarchal setup, says ESHITA SINGH

Poverty is not just a lack of income and the inability to purchase, it is a deeply-rooted multifaceted complex structure comprising economic, social, demographic, cultural, political, and psychological factors.

Feminisation of Poverty and Responsibilities

More women are affected by poverty as compared to males. This has not

South Africa go 1-0 up after India self-destruct in first ODI

PTI ■ PAARL

India's inexplicable middle-order collapse ensured that fine half-centuries from Shikhar Dhawan and Virat Kohli did not count for much as the team was handed a 31-run defeat by a resolute South Africa in the opening ODI here on Wednesday.

Chasing a challenging 297, India were cruising at 138 for one before wickets fell in heap dashing the hopes of the visitors who trail 0-1 in the three-match series. India's innings ended at 265 for eight.

South Africa skipper Temba Bavuma (110 off 143) and Rassie van der Dussen (129 not out off 96) had scored contrasting hundreds en route to their 204-run stand to take South Africa to 296 for four after opting to bat. India were comfortably placed to get home when Kohli (51 off 63) and Dhawan (79 off 84) were in the middle but it all came crashing down with the end of their 92-run stand.

India have been guilty of relying too much on their top three in the past and once again, the middle-order could not capitalise on the platform provided by Kohli and Dhawan after they lost skipper K L Rahul (12) cheaply.



Chase master Kohli, playing his first game since his captaincy tenure ended across formats last week, hardly broke a sweat in reaching his half-century before a sweep shot off Tabraiz Shami, a stroke he doesn't play regularly, led to his downfall leaving him in disbelief.

Dhawan looked in sublime touch during his stay and played the Test series rising star Marco Jansen rather comfortably, collecting five of his 10 fours off the tall left-arm pacer.

The stage was set for the likes of Rishabh Pant (16), Shreyas Iyer (17) and debutant Venkatesh Iyer (2) to get

the job done but they fell in quick succession, leaving India at 188 for six from a strong 138 for one.

While Pant was stumped by a lightning quick Quinton de Kock, the shot selection of Shreyas and Venkatesh could have been better.

Shardul Thakur (50 not out off 43) tried his best towards the end but the damage had already been done.

Earlier, Jasprit Bumrah (2/48) was the stand out bowler for India in an otherwise ordinary bowling effort.

After a sluggish start, van der Dussen and Bavuma shared the second highest partnership ever against India in ODIs to ensure a competitive total for the home team.

South Africa opted to bat on a slow surface at the Boland Park.

The white ball did a bit early on with both Bumrah and Bhuvneshwar Kumar getting to move it off the pitch as well as in the air.

After an inaccurate first over, the usually accurate Bumrah got his act together and had opener Janneman Malan (6) caught behind with an outswinger. Expecting an incoming ball, Malan was caught on the crease with his loose push taking the outside edge. South Africa struggled to 39 for one in 10 overs with Indian bowlers

restricting the flow of runs. De Kock (27 off 41), playing his first game since announcing his Test retirement, and Bavuma found the going tough with the ball not coming on to the bat.

De Kock perished while trying to break the shackles. Ashwin, featuring in his first ODI since June 2017, found de Kock's stumps with a slider as the opener went for a cut shot.

It became 68 for three in the 18th over when Aiden Markram got run out from a direct hit by Venkatesh after he went for a single that was not for the taking. At that stage, it seemed South Africa would find it tough to get past 200 but a fighting stand between Van der Dussen and Bavuma changed the course of the innings.

Indian bowlers looked rather ordinary in the middle overs with the well-set South African pair rotating strike regularly besides picking up an odd boundary. Van der Dussen was the aggressor in the partnership from the word go as Bavuma played anchor.

Van der Dussen used the reverse sweep for four runs off Yuzvendra Chahal to put the leg spinner under pressure before using the conventional sweep twice to collect more boundaries.

Yash Dhull test positive for COVID

PTI ■ TAROUBA (TRINIDAD)

India Under-19 skipper Yash Dhull, his deputy Sheikh Rasheed and four of their teammates have tested positive for COVID-19, forcing them out of the Group B World Cup game against Ireland here on Wednesday.

Apart from Dhull and Rasheed, batter Aaradhyay Yadav, Vastu Vats, Manav Parakh, and Siddharth Yadav were also found infected with the virus, because of which India barely managed to field an XI against Ireland.

"Three Indian players had tested positive yesterday and were already isolated. In the morning before match our captain and vice captain also tested positive in Rapid Antigen Test which is not (not considered) conclusive," a BCCI official told PTI.

"So they, as precautionary measure, were pulled out. The players included skipper Yash Dhull and his deputy Shaikh Rasheed. We only had 11 available players and six isolated,"



the official added.

While skipper Dhull and Rasheed featured in the opening game against South Africa, Aaradhyay was not part of that game. Nishant Sindhu led the team in the absence of Dhull on Wednesday.

India are scheduled to take on Uganda on Saturday and it remains to be seen whether that match goes ahead. "In case all players remain in isolation, some of the stand-by players could make the main list."

NZ's white-ball tour of Aus postponed

PTI ■ CHRISTCHURCH

The Black Caps' white-ball tour of Australia scheduled to start from January 30 has been postponed indefinitely after the New Zealand government could not guarantee relaxation in mandatory hard quarantine upon return of players back home in view of COVID-related restrictions.

The tour comprising three ODIs and one Twenty20 International was scheduled to be played between January 30 and February 8, but it now stands postponed until further notice as there is no guarantee as to when the players could return to New Zealand.

A change of stance from the New Zealand government to impose a hard 10-day mandatory quarantine in response to the Omicron wave of COVID-19 infections meant New Zealand Cricket could not secure guarantees that the Black Caps players would be allowed back into the country.

"The BLACKCAPS tour of Australia, initially scheduled for January 24–February 9, has been postponed until further notice, due to the lack of certainty over when the squad would be able to return to New Zealand," the country's cricket board said in a statement. The players were originally scheduled to depart on Monday. No tour squad had been announced.

No managed isolation and quarantine (MIQ) spots had been booked for the players and team management when the tour was confirmed last year, in anticipation of quarantine-free travel between the two countries in February.



"Despite a proposal from New Zealand Cricket and Cricket Australia to extend the length of the tour so that the BLACKCAPS could return home at a time more manageable for the MIQ process, the Government confirmed today it had no capacity to meet the request," the NZC added.

Discussions are now continuing with Cricket Australia over when the postponed fixtures will be played. NZC and Cricket Australia officials had discussed the possibility of rescheduling the matches to push back the date the Black Caps would be looking to return home in the hope that might be more achievable for the Government.

restrictions or increased availability in spots in the country's overburdened managed isolation and quarantine (MIQ) system.

NZC chief executive David White said the tour was initially scheduled last year, after the Government signalled its intention to relax MIQ restrictions relating to the trans-Tasman border. "As we now know, the advent of Omicron prompted a change of strategy from the Government, resulting in a hard 10-day mandatory isolation period being imposed on all incoming travellers," said White. "NZC and CA had explored a proposal to expand the tour and to push out the date on which the squad might return to New Zealand, in the hope that might be more achievable for the Government.

Rahul was handed the captaincy for the three-match ODI series after newly-appointed skipper Rohit Sharma wasn't fit for the series and the selectors had decided to move on from Virat Kohli, after he had resigned as the T20 captain.

Rahul third player to captain India in ODIs without captaincy

PTI ■ PAARL (SOUTH AFRICA)

In-form batter KL Rahul, who is leading India in the ongoing first ODI against South Africa, has become only the third player to lead his country in 50 overs game without having captained in 'List A' cricket previously.

The other two India players, who achieved this rare feat are wicket-keeper Syed Kirmani and flamboyant opener Virender Sehwag.

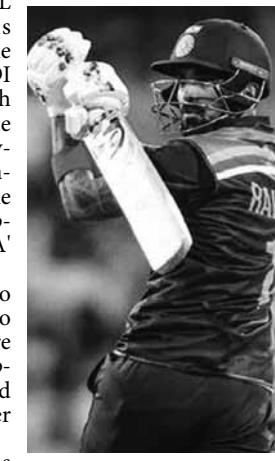
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KL Rahul, who hails from Karnataka, is also captaining India for the first time in his 39th ODI and the last time a player led the country before playing 50 ODIs was Mohinder Amarnath in October 1984.

It was 'Jimmy' Amarnath's 35 ODI, when he captained the side.

South Africa has decided to bat first in the ongoing game and Madhya Pradesh all-rounder Venkatesh Iyer will make his ODI debut.



Laughable to blame The Hundred for England's Ashes defeat: Morgan

PTI ■ BARBADOS

Limited overs skipper Eoin Morgan feels it's "laughable" to use The Hundred as an excuse for England's recent Ashes debacle and insisted that Test cricket has "always been the priority."

England's Test side slumped to 0-4 Ashes series defeat in Australia last week. They were completely outplayed in four games by the hosts, while Joe Root and his men managed a draw in the fourth Test by the skin of their teeth.

Morgan's comments come after Test skipper Root urged the ECB to 'prioritise' his side following the Ashes defeat, implying there has been too much focus on limited-overs cricket since 2015.

"People that use that as an excuse don't watch cricket," Morgan told talkSPORT.

"Test match cricket has always been the priority – it's the format for our elite players. Obviously times at the moment have been tough down in Australia during the Ashes but they always are. We've lost the last two series 4-0," he added.

Rohit has argued for changes in the domestic structure to incorporate more red-



ball matches at the height of summer when The Hundred - the ECB's professional franchise 100-ball cricket tournament -- takes place.

"That happens in all formats, but I stress Test match cricket has always been the priority." It has been claimed that Morgan has been given full-strength squads throughout the last two years in preparation for T20 World Cups but the limited overs skipper pointed out that the white ball side has often not had the luxury of a full strength team available.

"Our formats in county cricket and the Hundred, in the way they're structured, are exactly the same as Australia's. People need something to blame so they'll point to reality because nobody wants to say, 'You know what, we've not had the prep we'd have liked, we probably haven't played as we'd have liked, and we've lost.'

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Mandhana named in ICC T20I women's Team of the Year

PTI ■ DUBAI

Star India opener Smriti Mandhana was on Wednesday named in the ICC T20I women's Team of the Year for her superlative show in the format in 2021 but no Indian made the men's side.

The stylish Southpaw, who is the Indian team's vice-captain in the format, was the country's highest scorer in 2021 with 255 runs at an average of 31.87.

The 25-year-old scored two fifties in the nine matches she played and got her team off to rapid starts regularly, as evident up by her

strike-rate of 131.44.

While Mandhana was the only Indian, several members of the English side feature in the team with Nat Sciver being named captain.

The experienced England all-rounder produced many impactful performances throughout the year. Batting in the middle-order, Sciver scored a total of 153 runs, including one fifty, and she also picked up 10 wickets at an excellent average of 20.20.

Accompanying Mandhana at the top is England's Tammy Beaumont.

The 30-year-old's reliable presence at the top of the order

helped England off to steady starts regularly. She played nine matches and amassed 303 runs at an average of 33.66, including three fifties.

Danni Wyatt, wicket-keeper Amy Jones and spinner Sophie Ecclestone are the other English players in the side. Gaby Lewis of Ireland, South African trio of Laura Wolvaardt, Shabnim Ismail and Marizanne Kapp and Zimbabwe's Lorlyn Phiri make up the rest of the playing XI.

There was no Indian representation in ICC Men's T20I Team of the Year 2021, which featured three Pakistanis including skipper Babar Azam, who has been named captain.

Apart from Azam, opener Mohammad Rizwan and Shaheen Afridi, who had a sensational T20 World Cup were name in the squad.

All-rounder Mitchell Marsh and pacer Josh Hazelwood, who played a vital role in winning Australia's maiden T20 World Cup title, featured in the team while the trio of South Africans Aiden Markram, David Miller and Tabraiz Shamsi also made it to the playing XI. Flamboyant wicketkeeper Jos Buttler was the sole member of the England team.



'Never edgy', Langer ready for contract extension talks with Cricket Australia

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Content" after guiding Australia to its maiden T20 World Cup title and a dominant Ashes victory, head coach Justin Langer is looking forward to the impending contract discussion with the country's cricket board which has been subject to a lot of speculations.

Langer was appointed head coach in the aftermath of the ball-tampering scandal in 2018 to overhaul the team's culture and regain the respect of the Australian public. His contract is due to end in June.

"I'm never edgy about my future," Langer told SEN Radio on Wednesday. "Before the World Cup and before the Ashes, we've never been better prepared. So it's not a coincidence I don't think that we've had the success that we've had."

Langer faced criticism for his coaching methods from the players but in the past four months, he has guided Australia to a maiden Twenty20 World Cup title and a 4-0 Ashes series victory.

"Whatever happens from now on, we can all be incredibly proud of this little period. We had two missions: To win the World Cup and to win the Ashes," he said.

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

T railblazing India tennis star Sania Mirza on Wednesday announced that she will hang up her racket at the end of 2022 season as her body is "wearing down" and the motivation and energy for everyday grind is not the same anymore.

Winner of six Grand Slam titles, including three mixed doubles trophies, Sania will retire as India's most accomplished woman tennis player.

The 35-year-old made the retirement announcement after losing the Australian Open women's doubles first round with partner Nadiya Kichenok.

They lost to Slovenia's Tamara Zidansek and Kaja Juvan.

"There's a bunch of reasons for it. I do feel my recovery is taking longer and considering my son is three years old, I do feel I am putting him at risk by travelling so much with him. Unfortunately the pandemic is making us take certain decision for the well-being of ourself and family," Mirza said at the post-match press conference.

"Also, my body is wearing down. My knee was really hurting today and I'm not saying that's the reason we lost but I do think that it is taking time to recover as I'm getting older," she said.

Sania, who became world number one in doubles during her successful partnership with Swiss legend Martina Hingis, said there were a certain issues that influ-

SANIA MIRZA TO END CAREER AFTER 2022 SEASON

enced her decision.

"Also for me to find that motivation everyday to come out, the energy is not the same anymore. Right this minute, it's there but there are days where I don't feel like doing that."

I've always said that I will play until I enjoy that grind, the process and not just winning but you have to enjoy the process and I am not sure I'm enjoying it anymore.

"I am enjoying it enough to play this season. I've worked very hard to come back, get fit, lose the weight and try to set a good example for mothers, new mothers to follow their dreams as much as they can. Beyond this season, I don't feel my body doing it. It's beat," said the world number 68.

She reached top-30 in singles with 27 being her career best rank. Sania quit singles after a wrist

injury to focus on doubles and enjoyed exceptional results.

Sania said she feels that she was playing at a decent level but she always knew that 2022 will be her last season and Wednesday's defeat was no trigger for it.

I am playing at a good level. First week in Adelaide (event), we (she and Kichenok) beat top-10, 20 players. I am playing at a decent level. I was pretty sure this is my last season, if I do finish it. I am sure I am not coming to Melbourne to play Australian Open again.

I had great memories here, singles, doubles and mixed doubles.

It's been a great journey. I am not looking forward to June or July, I am literally going week to week, with my body, with virus, there is so much uncertainty."

"I've always said that I will play until I enjoy that grind, the process and not just winning but you have to enjoy the process and I am not sure I'm enjoying it anymore."

"Every time I play, I feel I have a chance to win, that's why I am here."

It is not because of disappointment of today's match. Just the way my body is. I am not sure if I can finish the season. I want to play full season, I am still (ranked) 50-60 in world, I do feel I have the level to play.

"As an athlete I feel I can go deep in tournament. But I have a bit of a meniscus issue going on my right knee, I



woke up with wrist pain couple of days ago. There is nothing wrong with it.

"At 35, I am waking up with couple of things that I don't know where they're coming from. I want to finish the season, try to play until US Open, that is my goal. But I still have to take it week-to-week," she said.

Talking about her first round match, Sania said the conditions were tough but they could have handled the match better tactically.

"Definitely conditions were tough, very gusty, sometimes it's not about tennis. We should have won the second set. "When the wind is blowing one side and the stadium is on the other side, the ball bounced on leave and changed directions when I was hitting the ball. It was tough conditions but when you come to Australia, you can have days like this.

"On days like that, you should take a little bit more charge at net. That's where we made a mistake."

Sindhu cruises into second round of Syed Modi International

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

T wo-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu stormed into the second round of the Syed Modi International Super 300 tournament with a dominating win over compatriot Tanya Hemant in the women's singles competition, here on Wednesday.

The 26-year-old from Hyderabad, who lost in the semifinals at India Open Super 500 last week, thrashed Tanya 21-9 21-9 in a lop-sided contest at the Babu Banarsi Das Indoor



Stadium. A former world champion, Sindhu will square off against USA's Lauren Lam, who managed to get past a fighting Ira Sharma 15-21 21-16 21-16. In other women's

singles matches, Samiya Imad Farooqui, who had won the Bulgarian International and finished runners-up at Polish Open last year, overcame a stiff resistance from Shruti Mundada 17-21 21-11 21-10, while Sai Uttejita Rao Chukka, a quarterfinalist in 2018 edition, trounced Anjana Kumari 21-9 21-12 in all-Indian matches. Samiya will square off against compatriot Kanika Kanwal, who saw off USA's Disha Gupta 21-15 16-21 21-6, while Sai will cross swords with Akarshia Kashyap, who had reached the quarterfinals at India Open. Prerana Neeluri, Smiti

Toshniwal, Anupama Upadhyaya, Kriti Bharadwaj also entered the second round of women's singles.

In the men's singles, Kaushal Dharmamer, Chirag Sen, Mithun Manjunath and Raghu Mariswamy also made winning starts to their respective campaigns.

While Kaushal stunned Singapore's Jia Heng Jason Teh 14-21 21-11 21-16, Chirag, elder brother of Lakshya Sen, registered an easy 21-9 21-6 win over Ansul Yadav.

Mithun beat Alap Mishra 21-15 21-8 and Raghu edged out Siril Verma 21-19 13-21 21-18 in another match.

Osaka, Barty advance toward Australian Open showdown

AP ■ MELBOURNE

F or the first set, Naomi Osaka's rediscovered love of the game meant it was anything but fun for Madison Brengle celebrating a service hold like she'd finished a long-distance race, but gradually the

No. 54-ranked American

conceded only four points in the

first four games Wednesday

and rifled forehand winners

seemingly at will as she breezed

to 6-0 in a mere 20 minutes.

The second set started with

Brengle celebrating a service

hold like she'd finished a long-

distance race, but gradually the

last nine points to complete

a 6-0, 6-4 victory.

Top javelin thrower under dope scanner

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A top Indian javelin thrower has been provisionally suspended after failing an out-of-competition dope test and is awaiting a hearing by the National Anti-Doping Agency's Disciplinary Panel.

According to sources tracking the development, the test was conducted after the Tokyo Olympics when there was no national camp in operation. PTI is withholding the identity of the athlete in question as no official is willing to confirm it at this point.

His name was there in the list of athletes announced by



the Sports Authority of India for the camp from October 15 to December 31. But he was dropped when the camp was extended till March 31 this year.

"He failed an out-of-competition test during the around two month period from the end of Tokyo Olympics and start of the national camp.

He is now under provisional suspension pending a NADA hearing," a source privy to the development told PTI on condition of anonymity.

It is learnt that the athlete is an Asian Championships medallist and an Olympian as well.



With eye on quarterfinals spot, India seek winning start against Iran

PTI ■ NAVI MUMBAI

A FIFA World Cup play-offs spot within their grasp, hosts India would seek a winning start against an under-prepared and lower-ranked Iran in their women's AFC Asian Cup campaign opener here on Thursday.

Hosting the continental showpiece for the second time after 1979, India would look to script history by qualifying for the quarterfinals of the 12-team tournament, which will see some of Asia's and world's best players in action.

India had finished runners-up twice -- in 1979 and 1983 -- and third in 1981.

A win against Iran at the DY Patil Stadium will assure India of at least a third-place finish in Group A. Besides the two top teams, two third-placed sides across the three groups will also qualify for quarterfinals.

Iran are the lowest ranked team in the group which also has China and Chinese Taipei. They are ranked at 70th in the world as against India's 55th. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indian team had

the luxury of a good number of exposure tours and international matches last year, including against former World Cup runners-up side Brazil.

These international match experience is expected to keep Thomas Dennerby's team in good stead even though the hosts are playing without star striker Bala Devi who is recovering from a surgery.

On the other hand, debutants Iran, who began their journey in international football only in 2005, have not played any international match in the last six months.

Dennerby understands the importance of Thursday's match in the home side's bid for a knockout-out berth.

"Our first target is to get to quarterfinals, we have a realistic chance to do that. Anything can happen from there on," the experienced Swede said. "They (Iran) have strong defence and it's going to be a challenge for us to score. It's not going to be an easy game. We are hoping that with some creative and good passing game, we can break down their defence," he added.

रायपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, पथ निर्माण विभाग, पथ प्रमंडल, रौची

(प्रयोग निविदा का PR No.-260680/Road(21-22)_D

टेक्सर रेफरेंस नं-५०निवि०/रौची-५८/२०२१-२२ दिनांक :- 18.01.2021

1. कार्य का नाम

मिलन चौक (तुपहाना, एस.एच.-75

Ext. पर) -रामकृष्ण मिशन टीवी

सेनिटोरियम एवं हाईस्पिटल पथ (कुल

लंबाई-2.555 किमी) के पुनर्निर्माण

कार्य वर्ष 2021-22

2. प्राक्कलि राश्य (रु० लाख में)

रु० 218.36446 लाख

(रूपये दो करोड़ अठारह लाख

छत्तीस बजार चार सौ छियालीस)

मात्र।

3. अग्रधन की राशि (रु० लाख में)

रु० 43.7 लाख

(रूपये चार लाख सैंकेस हजार)

मात्र।

4. कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि

03 (तीन) महीना

5. वेबसाइट पर निविदा की

तिथि

28.01.2022

12.00 बजे दोपहर तक

6. निविदा खोलने तिथि/समय

31.01.2022

12.30 बजे

7. निविदा प्रकाशित करने वाले

कार्यालय का नाम एवं पता

8. निविदा प्रकाशित करने वाले कार्यालय का अभियंता

पथ निर्माण विभाग, पथ प्रमंडल, रौची

9. प्रोक्लोरमेंट पदाधिकारी का सम्पर्क संख्या

0651-2361018

10. ई-प्रोक्लोरमेंट सेल का हेल्पलाइन संख्या

0651-2403007

प्राक्लिनित राशि एवं अग्रधन की राशि घट-बढ़ सकती है, जिसे Tender Online Upload के देखा जा सकता है, एवं किसी भी प्रकार का बदलाव

http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है।

पथ निर्माण विभाग, प्राक्लोरमेंट रास्करार में निवेदित संघरको के लिए UCAN निवेदित आवश्यक है।

नियम एवं शर्तें के लिए वेबसाइट http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in पर देखें।

PR 261960 Road Construction Dept कार्यालयक अभियंता

Road Division Ranchi (21-22)_D पथ निर्माण, पथ प्रमंडल, रौची

Two members of Indian team test COVID positive on eve of tournament

PTI ■ MUMBAI

COVID-19 breached the Indian women's football team's bio-security bubble here on Wednesday ahead of the AFC Asian