



### BRIEF



A beneficiary shows the message received in her mobile phone after receiving a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine, at a health centre in Kolkata, Monday.

### Fire

Mumbai: A pushback tractor caught fire while readying to tow out an aircraft at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport here on Monday, police said. The vehicle was getting engaged with the aircraft before pushing it back when the incident took place, an official said. The airport fire services were rushed to the spot to douse the fire, he said.

### Gas leak

Mumbai: One person died and two others were hospitalised apparently after inhaling a gas which leaked in Ghatkopar area of Mumbai on Monday morning, a civic official said. The incident took place at Kurla Industrial Estate in Narayan Nagar at around 8.15 am when methanol and cyanuric chloride leaked there, he said. Three people were rushed to the nearby Rajawadi Hospital where doctors declared one of them as brought dead, the official said.

### NIA charge sheet

Kolkata: The NIA has filed a charge sheet against four Bangladeshi and an Indian operative of the proscribed Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh for their alleged involvement in radicalising Muslim youth and their recruitment by JMB/AQIS (al-Qaeda in Indian Subcontinent), an official said on Monday. Najjur Rahman Pavel, Mikail Khan, Rabiul Islam and Mohammad Abdul Mannan Bachu, all Bangladeshi nationals, have been named in the charge sheet along with Lalu Sen, a resident of West Bengal's North 24 Parganas, the official said.

### Shot dead

Imphal: Two men, including an India Reserve Battalion (IRB) personnel, were shot dead in Manipur's Imphal West district, leading to tension in the area, police said on Monday. The incident happened around 9 pm on Sunday in Samuro in the Wangoi police station area, they said.

### Interim bail

Chandigarh: The Punjab and Haryana High Court granted interim bail to SAD leader Bikram Singh Majithia on Monday in connection with a NDPS case registered against him. Majithia's counsel D S Sobti said the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader will join the investigation on Wednesday. He said the court has granted Majithia interim bail in the matter.

**Weather**  
High 24 Low 15

**MARKET**  
NIFTY 60,395.63  
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### PM SECURITY BREACH

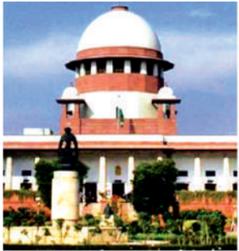
## SC set up panel headed by ex-SC judge

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):

The Supreme Court Monday said it would set up a panel headed by its former judge to probe the security breach during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Punjab and stayed the parallel inquiries by committees of the Centre and the state government into the lapses.

Stressing that the apex court was not undermining the importance of the security of the Prime Minister and dealing it with all seriousness, a bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) N V Ramana said that the separate inquiries by panels set by the Centre and the state government will be stayed.

The bench, also comprising Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli, took note of the submissions of Solicitor General Tushar



### Stays inquiries by Centre, Punjab

Mehta about the time frame within which the court-appointed panel should give the report and said it will keep this aspect in mind.

The top court was hearing the plea of an organisation, Lawyers Voice, seeking a thorough investigation into the breach in Modi's security in Punjab to ensure there is no such incident in the future.

On January 5, the Prime Minister's convoy was stranded on a flyover due to a blockade by protesters in Ferozepur after which

he returned from poll-bound Punjab without attending any event, including a rally.

We are thinking on these lines... One retired Supreme Court judge will head the committee and the members would be DGP (Director General of Police) of Chandigarh, the Inspector General of the NIA (National Investigation Agency), the Registrar General of the Punjab and Haryana High Court and one more person from Punjab...and he can be Additional DGP

### 'Threat calls over PM security lapse case'

Several Supreme Court lawyers on Monday wrote to the apex court alleging that they have received calls threatening judges over the case involving the security breach that left Prime Minister Narendra Modi stuck for 20 minutes on a flyover in Punjab last week. The letter, written by Supreme Court Advocate-On-Record Association (SCAORA), claimed that the calls were made allegedly by a pro-Khalistan organisation Sikhs for Justice (SJF).

(Security), the CJI observed, hinting at the broad parameters of the proposed order which will be passed later.

The top court also took note of the concerns of the Punjab government that

## Naxal carrying Rs 3 lakh reward surrenders



Bijapur/Konta, Jan 10: A Naxal carrying a reward of Rs 3 lakh on his head surrendered in Bijapur district on Monday, police said. Pandu Ram Savlam was the self-styled deputy commander of the Vajedu local operation squad (LOS), which functions under the Naxals' Telangana state committee, and was involved in the Tekulagudem encounter last year, an official said. Police data showed that in 2021, as many as 553 Naxals surrendered statewide, while 499 ultras were arrested and 46 gunned down.

Maolist rewarded with three lakhs surrendered in front of the police. Pandu Ram has surrendered after being fed up with the hollow ideology, lifestyle, discriminatory behavior and torture of the Maoists. Maoist Pandu was involved in many big incidents, due to which a reward of three lakhs was kept on him. On surrendering, Maoist Pandu was given 10000 cash as incentive. Under the guidance of Senior Superintendent of Police Bijapur Kamlochan Kashyap, a joint Maoist eradication campaign is being run in the district with the border state Telangana, influenced by the increasing pressure of the police and the dedication policy of the Chhattisgarh government, Telangana State Committee, Jaishankar-Bhupalpalli, Mulgu, Warangal, Peddapalli Division (JMWP) Maoist - Pandu Ram Sawalam (Wajedu LOS Deputy Commander) surrendered before the police.

## 'Low Covid hospitalisation rate may change quickly'

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):

Five to 10 per cent of the active Covid cases this time so far needed hospitalisation but the situation is dynamic and may change rapidly, the Centre said on Monday and asked states to keep a watch on cases under home isolation and in hospitals.

During the second surge of Covid infections in the country, the percentage of active cases that needed hospital care were in the range of 20-23 per cent, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said in a letter to states and Union territories.

The rise in COVID-19 cases in various parts of

### 'No time limit set for functioning of Covid vaccination centres'

New Delhi: The Centre on Monday made it clear to states and UTs that no time limit has been set for the operationalisation of Covid vaccination centres, and that they can operate till 10 pm daily based on availability of human resources and infrastructure. In a letter to states and UTs, additional secretary in the Union Health Ministry, Manohar Agnani, said there is an impression that Covid Vaccination Centres (CVCs) can operate only from 8 am to 8 pm daily. "In this regard, it is to reiterate that no time limit has been set for the operationalisation of the CVCs. The session timings are subject to the demand and the requirement at a particular CVC.

the country appears to be driven by the Omicron variant as well as by the continued presence of Delta, he said and stressed on augmenting human resources, particularly healthcare workers, for Covid management. "In the present surge, five to

10 per cent of active cases needed hospitalisation so far. The situation is dynamic and evolving. Therefore, the need for hospitalization may also change rapidly," Bhushan said. All states and Union Territories are advised to keep a daily watch on the

situation of the total number of active cases, cases under home isolation, the number of hospitalized cases, cases on oxygen beds, ICU beds and on ventilatory support, he wrote.

"Based on this monitoring, the requirement of healthcare workers and their availability health facility wise must also be reviewed daily as was done during the second surge," the health secretary said.

Appreciating that while various states and Union Territories initiated steps for the establishment of jumbo health facilities, field hospitals, temporary hospitals among others, Bhushan said both infrastructure and human resources have their limitations.

### MILITARY TALKS WITH CHINA

## India looking forward to constructive dialogue

New Delhi, Jan 10 :

India is looking forward to "constructive" dialogue with China to resolve issues in remaining friction points in eastern Ladakh, sources in the security establishment said on Monday ahead of the 14th round of military talks between the two sides on the 20-month row.

The talks will take place on January 12 at the Chushul-Moldo meeting point, on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh, the sources said.

The 'Senior Highest Military Commander Level (SHMCL)' talks will begin at 9:30 am, they said. "Indian side is looking

forward to constructive dialogue to resolve the balance friction areas," a source said.

It is learnt that major focus of the talks will be on disengagement in the Hot Springs area.

The Indian side is expected to press for disengagement as soon as possible in all the remaining friction points including resolution of issues in Depsang Bulge and Demchok. The 13th round of talks had taken place on October 10, 2021 and they ended in a stalemate.

Both sides failed to make any headway in the talks with the Indian Army saying after the dialogue that the "constructive suggestions" made by

it were neither agreeable to the Chinese side nor it could provide any "forward-looking" proposals.

In their virtual diplomatic talks on November 18, India and China agreed to hold the 14th round of military talks at an early date to achieve the objective of complete disengagement in remaining friction points in eastern Ladakh. The eastern Ladakh border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas.

Both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry.

## LOW FOOTFALL



Tourists walk in front of the historic Taj Mahal amid low footfall due to third wave of COVID-19, in Agra, Monday.

## I-T detects Rs 800-cr hidden cash transactions

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):

The Income Tax Department has detected unaccounted cash transactions of Rs 800 crore after it recently raided three real estate groups in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the CBDT said on Monday. The unidentified groups are engaged in the business of land development and construction and the taxman raided over two dozen premises linked to them on January 5 in Kurnool, Ananthapur, Kadapa, Nandyal, Bellary and some other locations, it said. Incriminating documents like handwritten books, agreements and digital data have been seized from a specialised software

application as well as from other electronic gadgets, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a statement. One group has been using a software which has been "systematically modified" to eliminate the unaccounted cash element of the consideration received and to record in the regular books of account the sale consideration that matches with registered sale price, the policy-making body for the Tax Department said. These groups have been found to be "accepting cash" over and above the registered value of the properties and such unaccounted cash is used for cash payments towards the purchase of lands and incurring other expenditure, it claimed.

### PRECAUTIONARY DOSE DRIVE

## Lakhs of 60-plus, healthcare workers get third Covid jab



A health worker administers a booster dose to a senior citizen at Civil Hospital in Lucknow, Monday.

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI): Lakhs of 60-plus citizens and frontline as well as health workers queued up for their third Covid jab on Monday as India began administering a precautionary dose against the infection, a critical step that

comes as cases spike alarmingly in the country. Braving snow, plummeting winter temperatures, rain in some places or unrelenting sun in others, many people could be seen waiting their turn outside vaccination centres across

## Chh'garh procures 67.65 lakh tonnes

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):

The Centre has procured 532.86 lakh tonnes of paddy so far in the ongoing 2021-22 marketing year season, with maximum quantities being purchased from Punjab, the Union food ministry said on Monday. "Till now, about 64.07 lakh farm-

### Govt's paddy procurement reaches 532.86 lakh tons

ers have been benefited with an MSP (minimum support price) value of Rs 1,04,441.45 crore," the ministry said in a statement. Out of the total procurement undertaken so far, maximum of 186.85 lakh tonnes of paddy has been

procured from Punjab, followed by 67.65 lakh tonnes from Chhattisgarh, 65.54 lakh tonnes from Telangana, 55.30 lakh tonnes from Haryana and 46.50 lakh tonnes from Uttar Pradesh till January 9 of the ongoing marketing season. The paddy marketing season normally begins from October and runs through September.

### Rajnath Singh tests positive for COVID-19

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday said he has tested positive for COVID-19. In a tweet, he said he has "mild symptoms" and is under home quarantine. "I have tested positive for Corona today with mild symptoms. I am under home quarantine. I request everyone who have recently come in my contact to isolate themselves and get tested," Singh said.

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# Rs 77 lakh booty recovered from notorious thieves

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 10:** With the arrest of six ruffians and recovery of stolen booty worth Rs 77 lakhs, police claimed to have solved 41 cases of thefts which occurred in the urban areas of the district. The notorious gang of thieves used to target the locked houses.

While addressing media persons here at the Police Control Room on Monday, IGP (Durg Range) Om Prakash Pal informed that considering the rising cases of thefts and burglaries, police are maintaining vigil on the activities of suspects and criminal record holders. The network of informers has also been activated for the purpose. Teams of various police stations are working in this direction under the su-

per vision of Senior Superintendent of Police Badrinarayan Meena, Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Sanjay Dhruv, City Superintendent of Police (Durg) Jitendra Yadav, City Superintendent of Police (Bhilai Nagar) Rakesh Joshi, Deputy Superintendent of Police (Crime) Nassar Siddhiqui. A special team was also formed to arrest the accused involved in cases of thefts.

Recently in the month of December 2021, Police received a complaint from Gautam Bhattacharya of Awadhपुरi Risali regarding theft at his locked house. The unidentified thieves had trespassed into the house by breaking the door lock and had

stolen gold, silver jewelry and cash. While investigating this case, police examined the CCTV cameras to identify the possible suspects. In this sequel, police received a tip off regarding some suspicious persons who resided in a rented house in Shyam Nagar Risali. They often returned home late at night and were seen roaming in suspicious conditions in different localities. Police collected information about the suspects and came to know that one Anwar Khan resides in this rented house with his accomplices Sagar Sen and Dwarka Das.



Police started monitoring the daily routine of Anwar Khan and his accomplices and found that the trio used to conduct recce near the locked houses in different localities. Police constantly maintained vigil on them very cautiously. After

confirming the involvement of Anwar Khan and his associates in crimes like theft, the civil team of police conducted a raid at Anwar Khan's rented house in Shyam Nagar Risali when all the three were at home. Anwar Khan, his other

accomplices Sagar Sen and Dwarka Das were taken in custody. During the interrogation, all the three tried to misguide the cops. They were strictly questioned at Newai Police Station where they confessed involvement in thefts and burglaries. The accused disclosed that they have been working together for the last 03-04 years and had been targeting the locked houses in Newai, Padmanabhpur and Pulgaon areas.

Anwar Khan, the prime accused, disclosed that while serving life imprisonment in Raipur

Jail for murder, he came in contact with a rape accused Somchand alias Guddu Soni, a resident of Bilaspur. They became friends in Raipur Jail and continued to meet even after getting released from the jail. Anwar with his accomplices started committing thefts. On the other hand, Somchand Soni alias Guddu and two others identified as Raju Soni and Jitendra Panwar used to purchase the stolen booty including gold and silver ornaments from them. The accused used to travel by different means to reach the targeted house and after committing theft, they left the venue separately. During interactions, they used code words like Chawal for silver and Gehu for gold.

On the basis of information provided by the accused, gold and silver jewellery, cash and a Honda Shine bike used in the crimes, total worth Rs 77 lakhs were seized. The accused were arrested and sent to jail on judicial custody.

Inspector Bharti Markam, Inspector Santosh Mishra, Sub Inspector Dhaniram Narange, Sub Inspector Dharam Mandavi, ASI Purna Bahadur, Constables Anoop Sharma, Upendra Yadav, Pankaj Kumar, Santosh Gupta, Shamim Khan, Shahbaz Khan, Jugnu Singh, Panne Lal and Cyber Cell, staff of PS Newai and Padmanabhpur Chowki played vital role in solving the case.

## Bashisth demands advanced life support ambulance and hearse van

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 10:** Senior Corporator Bashisth Narayan Mishra submitted a memorandum to the BMC Commissioner and raised the demand of Advanced Life Support Ambulance (equipped with ventilator) and Hearse Vans. He demanded that the funds must be sanctioned from the District Mineral Trust for purchasing these vehicles. The local civic body shall operate these vehicles for facilitating the common people.

Mishra informed that on an average 15 to 20 deaths occur in Bhilai, Township and Risali every day. There are only 3 hearse vans in BMC which are also used in Risali. Earlier the BSP Garage provided hearse vans (trucks) for its employees and their family members but now the BSP has stopped providing vehicles



but is providing Rs 5000 to its employees. This amount is provided to arrange the hearse van (truck). There is a shortage of hearse vans in the city due to which the be-

reaved families suffer unnecessary harassment. He demanded that at least three new hearse vans should be purchased by BMC to facilitate the people.

He further said that the district still does not have the advanced life support ambulance (equipped with a ventilator). Further there is shortage / unavailability of medical experts of various departments including cardiology, neurology, etc. About 25 to 30 patients from BSP hospitals and Private Hospitals are referred daily to tertiary care hospitals in Raipur. For transporting the critical patients, the ventilator equipped ambulances are to be hired from Raipur. This causes delay and often proves to be fatal for the patients. Mishra demanded that there must be an arrangement of Advanced Life Support Ambulance in the city to facilitate the denizens. He added that the funds from District Mineral Trust or support of some NGO can be taken for purchasing the hearse vans and ambulances.

## Mayor starts working as per CM's expectations

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 10:** Bhilai Municipal Corporation Mayor Neeraj Pal has started working as per the expectations of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel. He chaired a meeting of senior BMC officers at his chamber. Corporators Ekansh Banchhor and Pradeep Das were present during the meeting. Mayor said that the work of accelerating the development works should commence immediately.

He said that the time has come to conduct target oriented works. He discussed in detail the major works going on in each zone and directed the officers to prepare and submit an updated list of all the works. He said that whatever important works are left, they have to be completed within a fixed time period. For ensure it, the officers/employees will have to remain alert and work by fixing targets.

The mayor inquired about the sanctioned works, under progress work, work



started in each ward. During this meeting, the Mayor also discussed the important schemes of the government. In the review meeting, Superintending Engineer UK Dhalendra and Deepak Kumar Joshi were present.

Later he came on the field and inspected the ongoing works. Mayor Neeraj Pal reached the Chandra Maurya railway under bridge and found that during the rains last night, the mesh installed on the road was damaged. The broken

mesh was obstructing traffic movement. Mayor immediately summoned Mother Teresa Nagar's Zone Commissioner Aisa Lehre.

He instructed the Zone Commissioner to immediately get the mesh installed to ensure smooth traffic movement. The repair works were launched within an hour. After installing the mesh, checker tiles are being laid on it. Zone Commissioner informed that the work would be completed soon.

## Booster dose vaccination begins for frontline corona workers

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 10:** Vaccination is the most important weapon in the fight against Covid. In Corona Combat, precautionary doses are being administered to the frontline workers to keep them protected from infection. The booster dose drive was launched on Monday. Dr Sugam Sawant received the first vaccine of precautionary dose.

Collector Dr Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure also got the third vaccine shot. Dr Rashmi Bhure, the medical in-charge of the Covid Isolation Center, also received the precautionary dose of Covid Vaccine.

In the district hospital, CMHO Dr Gambhir Singh



Thakur and other officials also received the vaccine shots. District Panchayat CEO Ashwini Dewangan, Bhilai Municipal Corporation Commissioner Prakash Surve, Durg Municipal Corporation



Commissioner Haresh Mandavi and other senior officials got the booster dose.

Collector Dr Sarveshwar Narendra Bhure reviewed the vaccination campaign. He said that in addition to the pre-

cautionary measures, vaccination is the most important for the prevention of corona infection. He asked to continue identifying those people who have not been vaccinated so far. Along with this, there will be some people who have



not taken the second dose yet.

All such people should be identified and the process of vaccination should be accelerated. Collector also questioned the District Immunization Officer about the schedule

of vaccination of frontline workers. ADM Nupur Rashi Panna and other officers were present.

Later, the Collector reached the Oxygen Plant located at the District Hospital. Officials informed that the plant is

running smoothly. Civil Surgeon Dr P Balkishore informed that two PSA plants are operating in the district hospital and both are in working condition.

In view of the present situation of Covid transition and under essential

services, both the plants are being operated with regular budget and funds from Jeevandeep Committee.

Collector said that hospital infrastructure is very important in the fight against Covid. Constant monitoring of medical infrastructure is very important. In case of any need, the administration should be informed immediately so that action can be taken accordingly.

He said that Covid control is the first priority of the administration and for this purpose, there will be no shortage of resources in any condition. Collector also oversaw the preparation of covid treatment in the district hospital and gave necessary instructions to the medical staff.

## SRSIP organises interactive session on 'Pharma Forecasting'

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 10:** An interactive session on the topic of "Pharma-Forecasting" was organized on January 07, 2022 at Shri Rawatpura Sarkar Institute of Pharmacy (SRSIP) in which Ravi Kishore Agrawal Director, Pharm Dart Pvt Ltd, Raipur enriched the students with new vision of Pharmacy Profession.

Dr Anshita Gupta Soni, Principal, Shri Rawatpura Sarkar Institute of Pharmacy in her opening remarks encouraged students to stand out from the crowd to make new recognition to themselves and Pharma-Forecasting is a newer field to get excellence in it. MK Srivastav, Director, Shri Rawatpura Sarkar Group of Institutions Kumhari Campus welcomed the speaker of the session and appreciated the effort of Ravi Kishore Agrawal



Director, Pharm Dart Pvt Ltd, Raipur for free of cost internship program to the students of SRIP Kumhari in the field of Pharma-Forecasting.

Ravi Kishore Agrawal in his lecture enlightened the students about different forecasting methods in the pharmaceutical industry which is widely used in the pharmaceutical industry for new launch products. He said that forecasting can make or break a company. Therefore, all phar-

ma companies perform the forecasting exercise to have an idea of how their drug is going to perform in the market. Before launching a new product in the market companies make forecasts about their drug to have an idea how it is going to fare in the market where as Companies also make a demand or sales forecasts about their drugs that are already in the market. This is usually done with the help of historical sales and patient

trends. So, Pharma forecasting also opens new career options for students as a Consultant in Commercial Outsourcing Services, where they will be actively participating in the development, delivery, and management of forecasting, and related consulting projects.

Around 70 students participated in the program. Students were highly motivated and expressed their interest in internship program offered by Pharm Dart Pvt Ltd, Raipur. During this session Renjil Joshi, Saurabh Srivastav, Suman Srivastav, Pali Khobragade, Preeti Goldar, Preeti Chandrakar were present and coordinated the session well.

Dr JK Upadhya, Vice Chairman Shri Rawatpura Sarkar Group of Institutions, blessed and encouraged students to participate and always be curious to attain knowledge through these activities.

## Kritika Yadav becomes first woman CFP (USA) of Chh'garh

**Central Chronicle News**

**Bhilai, Jan 10:** Kritika Yadav of Chhattisgarh has made a big remark in the world of finance. She has passed the CFP (USA) exam. She has become the first woman in the CHHATTISGARH state to do so, as well as celebrated the role of women empowerment. By attaining this position, she has made the name of the state known throughout the country. At present there are only 1500 CFPs in the country and the name of Kritika Yadav has now been included in it. The thing to note is that highest number of CFPs in India are male and from large states like Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Gujarat. In this way, Kritika, belonging to a developing state like

Chhattisgarh, has created a buzz by achieving such a great height. According to the FPSB (Financial Planning Standards of India), the state of Chhattisgarh currently has only 7 CFPs and has a role in it among which, Ms Yadav is the only woman.

Here it needs a mention that CFP is a USA based course. In India, it is being conducted by FPSB (Financial Planning Standards of India). In simple words, these professionals are discharged with responsibilities of achieving various financial goals, and the proce-

dures can be designed for their respective clients (if they are doing their own business), or for the Government of India. To be granted with the degree of CFP, one has to give the exam for 3-4 times which covers different subjects like Tax planning, Investment Planning & Retirement Planning. After passing these exams, they are supposed to give a 4 hour test followed by submission of a project. The route doesn't end here. It is mandatory to have work experience of at least 3 years. Because of such a tedious examination pattern, this exam is considered one of the

toughest exams of India. Earnings of Ms Yadav is now counted in Lakhs After doing CFP, now Kritika is the CEO of 'Market Maestro' and her earnings are in lakhs. According to Indian government, she has paid a tax of Rs 3 lakh last month. Kritika Yadav's office is in Nehru Nagar, Bhilai, Chhattisgarh and her celebrity status is astounding as she deals with only High Net worth Individuals. Apart from that she offers her services to either companies or to the Government of India. Kritika Yadav is now an inspiration for the entire state and also has redefined the concept of Success. Even after coming from a small place, today her name is echoing in the finance industry.

**Kritika Yadav**

## Guidelines issued to Collectors for controlling COVID infection

● Area affected by the infection, the particular development block can be kept in Category-A

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Jan 10:** State government has instructed district collectors to take all precautionary steps to control rising COVID-19 infection in Chhattisgarh. The state government in its instructions to district collectors made it clear that specific areas in the district where Covid infection is 4 percent or more, can be kept in Category-A for prevention of infection.

In the instructions issued to the collectors, it has also been clarified that if the collector does not want to keep the entire district in category-A

of Covid infection, then such areas of his district where the infection rate is high can be kept in category-A. Therefore if the positivity rate in any one area of the district is above 5 percent, it can be placed in Category A and this will help keep other areas of the district out of it.

Similarly, if the positivity rate is 5 percent continuously for the last three-four days, the collector can take necessary preventive steps for covid control in the field offices of his district.

It is noteworthy that those districts have been kept in Category-A where the rate of Covid infection is 4 percent or more. Instructions have been given to keep all schools and Anganwadi centres, libraries, swimming pools and other public places closed in these districts

### Restrictions of the entry of outsiders in Mahanadi and Indravati Bhawan

**Raipur:** In order to control the rapidly increasing infection of Covid-19 in the state of Chhattisgarh, the entry of outsiders has been banned in Mantralaya Mahanadi Bhawan and Head of Department Office Indravati Bhawan from 11th January. Order in this regard has been issued by the General Administration Department, Government of Chhattisgarh today. According to the issued order, one-third of the employees of class III and IV will be called

daily in the offices of the Mantralaya and all the Head of Departments. For this, duty will be imposed by the departments by making roster. Presence of the Section Officer and his senior officers will be mandatory in the offices. Face masks will be compulsorily used by all officers and employees. At present, keeping in mind the transition of Covid-19, the ministerial officers and employees have been asked to give priority to the use of private or departmental vehicles instead of public buses.

during night time from 10 pm to 6 am. Apart from this, it has been asked to

impose Section 144, Epidemic Act if necessary.

## Intermittent rains lash capital city whole day

For the second consecutive day

Light to moderate rain or thunder-shower likely at many places of state

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Jan 10:** Intermittent rains lashed the city for the second consecutive day on Monday. The sky remained overcast throughout the day and the rainfalls started occurring in evening. According to the information received from the Meteorological Department, there is a possibility of light to moderate rain or thundershower at many places of the state tomorrow on January 11. There is a possibility of hailstorm along with thunder at one or two places in the state. The maximum



temperature is likely to drop and the minimum temperature is not likely to change significantly. The Meteorological Department has said that a cyclonic circulation of upper air is located over North Haryana wherein a trough is situated up to 0.9 km height up to South-East Madhya Pradesh. A trough extends from north inner-Karnataka to north-central-Maharashtra up to a height of 0.9 km.

Due to the presence of trough from Haryana to South East Madhya Pradesh, there is a possibility of hailstorm at one or two places in the central part of the state, while all parts of South Chhattisgarh are likely to be affected by inclement weather due to the presence of trough from North Interior Karnataka to North Madhya Maharashtra. Under its effect hailstorm is also likely

at one or two places in South Chhattisgarh.

A Wind Confluence Zone is likely to be formed in the northern part of the state and it will not lead to any significant change in the weather in the state for the next 3 days.

The weather may improve partially in the northern part of the state (Surguja division), but there will be a possibility of partly cloudy weather and light rain at one or two places.

## Officers-employees get precaution dose of COVID vaccine in 37 offices

● Precaution dose being administered to health care workers, frontline workers and comorbidity persons aged above 60

**Raipur, Jan 10:** Precaution dose of COVID vaccine was administered to officers and employees in 37 offices in Raipur district. Commissionerate, Collectorate, Office of Superintendent of Police, Raipur Municipal Corporation are among 37 offices where precaution dose of COVID vaccine is being administered.

Precaution dose is being administered to health care workers, frontline workers and comorbidity persons aged above 60 years in all health centres



### MP Sunil Soni gets booster dose



**Raipur:** Member of Parliament from Raipur constituency

Sunil Soni got precaution (booster) dose of COVID vaccine at vaccination centre in Shahid Smarak Bhawan here on Monday. After getting vaccine dose he talked to the employees working under vaccination programme and encouraged them. He asked people to follow Corona protocol.

from January 10. People in these categories are being administered precaution

dose nine months after they got 2nd dose of COVID vaccine.

## COVID testing gains pace, 2.72 lakh samples tested last week

Average 38845 samples being tested daily

Health Minister instructs to increase number of tests to control Corona

**Raipur, Jan 10:** The number of tests to identify persons infected with Corona virus is being increased continuously. As many as 2 lakh 71 thousand 912 samples were tested last week from January 3 to January 9.

Health Minister TS Singhdeo has instructed the health department to test maximum number of samples daily to control the corona infection. On his instructions, the number of daily tests has been increased by the Health Department in all the districts. At present, an average of 38 thousand 845 samples are being tested daily across the state whereas in the last week of December last month, between

December 25 and December 31, this average was 20 thousand 256. At present, about double the number of samples is being tested.

According to information 27 thousand 646 samples were tested across the state on 3 January, 37 thousand 705 on 4 January, 37 thousand 393 on 5 January, 48 thousand 829 on 6 January, 44 thousand 773 on 7 January, 46 thousand 495 on 8 January and 31 thousand 071 samples were tested on January 9.

### One arrested under Arms Act

**Raipur:** Devendra Nagar police on Monday night arrested from Fokapara locality after he was nabbed carrying a knife. Identified as Shiv Yadav, the accused was immediately taken to the police station where he was arrested under Section 25 of Arms Act.

## CM holds meeting with five cabinet ministers

● For pre-budget preparations

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Jan 10:** Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel held talks with five Ministers of his cabinet regarding the planning and preparations for the state's budget for 2022-23. The five ministers included Minister for Food and Civil Supplies Corporation, consumer protection, Planning, Economics and Statistics and Culture Department -Amarjeet Bhagat; Minister for Women and Child Development Department and Social Welfare deptt Anila Bhedia; Minister for Higher and Technical Education and Skill development, Manpower Planning and Science & Technology, Sports & Youth Welfare Deptt-Umesh Patel and Minister for Revenue and Disaster M a n a g e m e n t ,



Rehabilitation, Registry, Stamp Deptt- Jaisingh Agrawal and Minister for PHE and Gramudyog Guru Rudrakumar.

On this occasion Chief Secretary of State Amitabh Jain, Addl. CS Subrat Sahoo, Principle Secretary Planning, Economics and Statistics Gaurav Dwivedi, Secretary Finance Department Alarmelmangai D, Secretary Food Topeshwar Verma, Secretary Culture Department Ambalgaon and Secretary Social Welfare deptt Reena Baba Saheb Kangle, Director Finance Sharda Verma, Director Women and

Child Devp Deptt Divya Umesh Mishra; Secretary Skill Devp Prasanna R, Secretary Technical Education and Employment Reeta Shandilya; Secretary Sports & Youth Welfare NN Ekka, Director Technical Education Avineesh Kumar Sharan, Director Sports & Youth Welfare Shweta Sinha; Secretary Revenue deptt- NN Ekka, Secretary PHE Deptt Dhananjay Dewangan, Principal Secretary Gramudyog Dr Maninder Kaur Dwivedi other concerned officers from the respective departments.

## Woman duped of Rs 95000 by elderly fraud

● In Nehru Nagar locality

**Raipur, Jan 10:** In a bizarre incident of fraud reported in Kotwali police station, a woman in Nehru Nagar locality has been duped of cash and ornaments by an elderly fraud who had come her to her house.

According to police, complainant Madhumati Dani was in her house when in the morning an unidentified came and knocked at her door. Coming out, the complainant found an elderly man aged between 50-60 years. The unidentified man then started enquiring about her family members and then asked her to

bring all the cash and ornaments from the house. He also asked her to bring some wheat flour.

With the given flour he prepared flour past and inserted the valuables in the paste and asked the complainant to keep it dried for 11 days after which she could take them out.

However, when the complainant removed the paste after 11 days, she was stunned to find that there was nothing inside the paste.

She then complained the matter in Kotwali police station after which police have registered an offence under Section 420 IPC against the unidentified fraud and further investigation is now underway.

## CM Baghel to unfurl flag in Jagdalpur on R-Day

Assembly Speaker Dr. Charandas Mahant will hoist the national flag at Korea District Headquarters

State government released the list of Chief Guests to hoist the flag in the district headquarters

Central Chronicle News

**Raipur, Jan 10:** Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel will unfurl the national flag at Jagdalpur, Bastar district headquarters on January 26 on the occa-

sion of the upcoming Republic Day. Chhattisgarh Vidhan Sabha Speaker Dr. Charandas Mahant will hoist the flag at Koriya district headquarters, Baikunthpur. The state government has released the list of chief guests to hoist the national flag in the district headquarters on Republic Day. Home Minister Tamradhwaj Sahu will unfurl the flag at Mahasamund, Health Minister T.S. Singhdeo at Kawardha, Agriculture Minister Ravindra Choubey at Rajnandgaon, Forest Minister Mohammad Akbar at Durg, School Education Minister Dr. Premsai Singh Tekam at Korba, Industries and Commerce

Minister Kawasi Lakhma at Dantewada, Food Minister Mr. Amarjit Bhagat at Gariaband, Revenue Minister Mr. Jaisingh Agrawal at Gourela, Urban Administration and Development Minister Dr. Shivkumar Dahria at Ambikapur, Women and Child Development Minister Mrs. Anila Bhedia at Kanker, Higher Education Minister Mr. Umesh Patel at Balodabazar and Public Health Engineering Minister Guru Rudra Kumar will hoist the flag at Mungeli. On Republic Day, the Deputy Speaker of the Vidhan Sabha Manoj Singh Mandavi will unfurl the flag at Raigarh, Parliamentary Secretary

Gurudayal Singh Banjare at Balod, Parliamentary Secretary Vikas Upadhyay at Bilaspur, Parliamentary Secretary Chandradev Rai at Janjgir, Parliamentary Secretary Chintamani Maharaj at Jashpur and Parliamentary Secretary Shishupal Sori will hoist the National Flag at Kondagaon. MLA Mr. Brihaspat Singh at Surajpur, MLA Mrs. Anita Sharma at Dhamtari, MLA Mrs. Mamta Chandrakar at Bemetara, MLA Mr. Vinay Jaiswal at Balrampur, MLA Mr. Chandan Kashyap at Sukma, MLA Mr. Santram Netam at Narayanpur and MLA Mr. Vikram Mandavi will hoist the flag at Bijapur.

## Ch'garh sees 2,502 Covid-19 cases, 2 deaths; active tally now 15,464

**Raipur, Jan 10:** Chhattisgarh's COVID-19 count jumped to 10,23,313 on Sunday with the addition of 2,502 cases, while the death toll increased by two to touch 13,615, an official said. The number of recoveries reached 9,94,234 after 22 people were discharged from hospitals and 80 completed home isolation during the day, leaving the state with an active tally of 15,464, he said. "Raipur district reported 830 new cases, taking the caseload to 1,63,142, including 3,147 deaths. The district has 4,803 active cases. Bilaspur recorded 335 cases, followed by Korba 246, Raigarh 227, Durg 201, Janjgir-Champa

190 and Rajnandgaon 123, among other districts," he said. With 31,071 samples examined during the day, the number of COVID-19 tests in the state went up to 1,52,48,210, he added. Meanwhile, Congress MLA Dhanendra Sahu from Abhanpur told PTI he had tested positive for COVID-19. Rajnandgaon Mayor Hema Deshmukh tweeted that she, her husband and son had been detected with COVID-19.

Chhattisgarh's coronavirus figures are as follows: Positive cases 10,23,313, new cases 2,502, death toll 13,615, recovered 9,94,234, active cases 15,464, today tests 31,071, total tests 1,52,48,210.

## Two arrested under Excise Act

**Raipur:** Two persons have been arrested under excise act from separate police station areas during last 24-hours. The first one, identified as Amrit Verma, was arrested by Mandir Hasaud police from Nawagaon locality after he nabbed carrying 296 bottles of country liquor. The accused was immediately taken to the police station where he was booked under Section 34-2 of Excise Act.

lice station he was later booked under Section 34-1 of Excise Act. The other one identified as Gautam Singh Thakur was arrested by Dharsinwa police near Chhata pond while he was arrested carrying 40 bottles of country liquor. The accused was later booked under Section 34-2 of Excise Act.

## 'Control measures being adopted in various states discussed'

● Ch'garh delegation attends inter-state coordination meeting on elephant-human conflict mgmt

**Raipur, Jan 10:** Inter-state coordination meeting on elephant movement and human-elephant conflict management was held in Rourkela, Odisha the other day. The meeting was organized by the Odisha Forest Department and was attended by the concerned senior officers of the Forest Department of Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand State. Ideas

were exchanged in the meeting regarding the issue of human-elephant conflict and the control measures being adopted in different states.

On the instructions of Forest and Climate Change Minister Mohammad Akbar, the delegation of Forest Department of Chhattisgarh also participated in the inter-state coordination meeting under the leadership of Principal Secretary Forest Manoj Pingua and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief of Forest Force Rakesh Chaturvedi.

The delegation from Chhattisgarh included Chief Conservator of

Forests Surguja Anurag Srivastava, Chief Conservator (Wildlife) Sarguja Kenny Machio, Forest Divisional Officer Jashpur Krishna Jadhav and other field officers. CCF Sarguja Srivastava from Chhattisgarh made a presentation on the issue of elephant-human conflict and control and also apprised the participants about the various innovations being tried in Chhattisgarh. The meeting will go a long way in enhancing communication and coordination between the three neighboring states dealing with the issue of human-elephant conflict.

## Dr Dahria inaugurates road construction works costing more than Rs 34.41 crore

**Raipur, Jan 10:** State Urban Administration and Development and Labor Minister of Chhattisgarh Government, Dr. Shiv Kumar Dahria inaugurated various construction works of roads in different villages under Arang development block of Raipur district. These include road widening and strengthening, CC road, asphaltization and other road construction works. The cost of these works is more than Rs 34.41 crore. Urban Administration Minister Dr. Dahria started the construction works of roads under Public Works Department in Arang assembly constituency, out of which,



widening and strengthening work of Nardaha Khapri road was started at a cost of Rs. 5.51 crore. Similarly, widening and strengthening work of Dhansuli road at a cost of Rs. 6.95 crore, Chhatauna (Nakata) internal CC road at a cost of Rs.1 crore 99 lakh, widening of Baktra-Nakata road at a cost of Rs.7.83 crore and initiated other construction works in-

cluding macadamisation and Janaud Marg construction work in Rewa at a cost of Rs 12.13 crore.

On this occasion, District Panchayat Raipur President, Mrs. Domeshwari Verma, Janpad Panchayat President Mr. Khilesh Devangan, Mr. Komal Sahu and many regional public representatives were present.

## SGBS hosts virtual introductory meet

● Of eligible marriageable youths

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 10: Shri Gujarati Brahma Samaj (SGBS) on Sunday organized a virtual online introductory meet of eligible boys and girls. This meet organized for the first time in the country witnessed participation of 167 youths (57 girls and 110 boys) from Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Jamshedpur, Mumbai, Durg, Bhilai, Raipur along with UK and Canada. At the onset SGBS president Kirti Vyas thanked all the participants for participat-



ing in this programme and termed it as a joint responsibility of everyone to offer a platform to eligible marriageable youths for selecting their life partners. He added that coming generation will use latest techniques to select

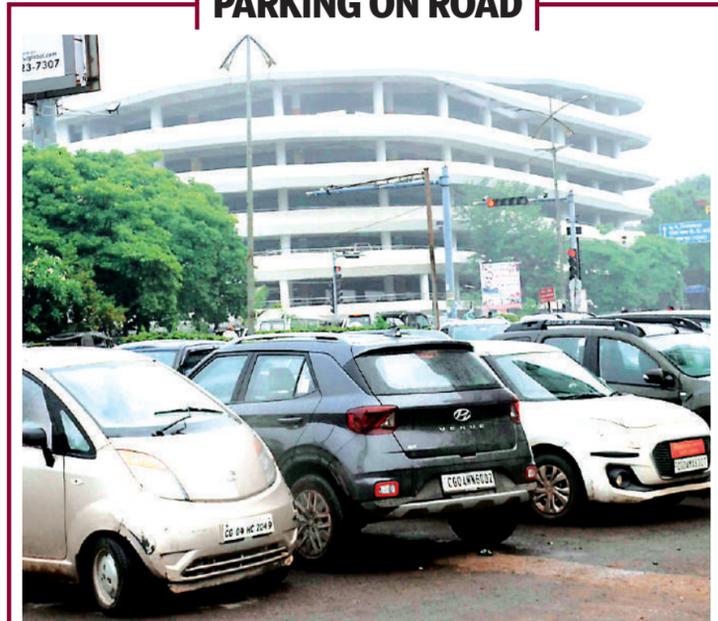
their life partners as like the one being conducted today. To make the programme successful, Jayesh Bhai Rawal, Kaushik Bhai Vyas, Neeraj Bhai Purohit and Rupal Bhatt from Bhilai played a crucial role. The

main attraction of this introductory meet was participants were graduates, post graduates, MBA and from IT sector. Many youths are working in multinational companies while others are in IT sector. SGBS president Vyas said, in the present times it is not feasible for the families to physically meet each other and then take decision for marriage. The children are now in job and getting leave is a problem, he added and hence the time has come to use latest techniques of social media to select life partners. SGBS has also taken the help of a latest technique to make this experiment successful.

### CU's convocation postponed till further orders

Bilaspur, Jan 10: As per the memo no. 319/Acad./Convocation /2021, dated Jan 13 of Guru Ghasidas University (Central University) Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh), the ninth Convocation which was to be held on January 15, 2022 in the University, has been postponed till further orders, keeping in view the present circumstances of Covid-19 and Covid-19 Appropriate Rules (of Central Government and State Government. Information about the new date will be communicated separately. This order has been issued from the Academic Section on 07/01/2022.

### PARKING ON ROAD



Despite newly constructed parking place near Collectorate, vehicles are still being parked opposite the complex near Ghadi Chowk and no action is being taken.

### Poster, model exhb organised by science faculty



● Of Govt PG College Dongargaon

Central Chronicle News

Dongargaon, Jan 10: It was under guidance of Principal Govt Post-Graduation College, Dongargaon Dr BN Meshram, a poster and working model exhibition was organised here on Monday. During this Dr CK Sahu, Asst. Prof. (Maths) gave valuable guidance.

All the students of the College from Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Zoology of PG courses prepared posters and working model related to their subjects and which would act as beneficial for poster exhibition and working models for research area. In this poster exhibition of Biology department, all the 43 students took part and in this first place was won by Sonal, second by Anamika and third by Ayushi (MSc.III) sem students.

## Long queue of tractors cause traffic jam



● Near Sugarcane factory in Pandaria

Central Chronicle News

Pandaria, Jan 10: The Sugar Factory in Pandaria faced traffic-jam and the normalcy in movement of traffic cannot be restored

for about two hours. It was due to tractors loaded with sugarcane in front of the sugarcane factory that the movement on this road remained closed till Monday evening. The people going towards Kawardha got stuck for long hours and were forced to take diverted route through Kunda in

order to reach Kawardha. Similarly the people who had to go towards Bilaspur also had to wait for long hours to get the traffic-jam cleared. The long queue of tractors were found standing in long queue from factory towards in Kawardha to Dashrangpur and towards Pandaria at

Bisheshara and Palansari and in this total of around 500 tractors were jammed. Due to rains, no place to park tractors near factory: Since there were large number of tractors parked and cutting more receipts and less place to keep the tractors resulted in jam. All the more the place where the tractors were parked had turned muddy and due to which all the tractors were parked on the road itself and this resulted in traffic-jam. The government should construct concrete parking near the factory so that the tractors can be parked. More than 5 yrs has lapsed since this factory was opened and still the farmers have not been provided sufficient places to park their tractors for unloading of sugarcane. With this the denizens of the city and nearby areas are made to face the problems day-in & day-out.

### One nabbed with stolen silver items worth Rs 2.82 lakhs



● Was trying to sell it and looking for customers

Jagdalpur, Jan 10: Bastar police succeeded in nabbing the accused involved in theft of idols, ornaments and other items in temples in Bastar region and nabbed one person trying to sell 4,350 kg silver worth Rs 2.82 lakhs and seized silver crown and other items from his possession. Jagdalpur Thana got tip from an informer that some person is trying to sell stolen silver ornaments in Bhejapadar area and on getting information about it, TI Nagarnar Budhram Nag formed a team and left for the

site and nabbed by gheraoing the person trying to sell stolen items. On interrogation he informed himself as Ghanpati Ranghari R/O Navrangpur Odisha and when the police conducted search they found 4 pieces of silver crowns and other items used in decoration of idols in temples weighing 4,350 kg. When seriously interrogated he accepted that he had stolen all these items. A case under section 379 of IPC was filed against the accused and all the stolen silverware was seized. The police informed that the items seized are expected to be worth Rs 2.82 lakh and after arrest the accused was sent to judicial custody.

## Unexpected rains throw life out of gear

● Traffic on busy routes affected; people preferred to stay indoors

Central Chronicle News

Rajim, Jan 10: The sudden change in weather since Sunday evening has thrown life out of gear in the city and nearby areas. The intermittent rains continued late at night till morning hours and this has brought chill in the weather and people preferred to stay indoors to avoid any disease.



It is notable here that during 'paush-mass' month the winter is at its peak and there is no sign of rains or cloudy weather. But this time the weather changed in last week of December with rains from Dec 28-30 and the city witnessed 37 mm of rains. It was just nine days after this the weather changed and the lanes & by-lanes of city and farms were found drenched with rainwater. The streets were muddy and this brought concern to vegetable growers and farmers taking up 'Rabi' crop. The inflow of vegetables in the wholesale local market was also very less. Tomato which was being sold at Rs 90 per kg a month back is now being sold at Rs 10 per kg and

that too with hardly any customers. The rates of other vegetables too fell flat, as the customers preferred to stay indoors. On the other hand, the labourers going out for work left a bit late for their work in the morning hours, but found less of customers. The market also got opened a bit late and shutters were found to be closed till 10:30 am. With rains since Sunday night, the streets in city turned muddy and since the

widening work from Amapara to Pokhara road is going on and the denizens of that area had to face lots of trouble, as it was difficult to walk on muddy and road full with 'murum'. Young children and adults were the one who suffered the most and had to walk cautiously. It is worthwhile to mention here that this route leads to Mahasamund district headquarters and people from dozens of villages come to Rajim for some or the other work. The government-run liquor shop is also located in the same route and therefore there is heavy rush of purchasers daily. The condition in most of other localities in city remained dull and witnessed less of activities compared to other days and people were found anxiously waiting for rains to stop.

## New twist in land issue in NP Antagarh

Central Chronicle News

Konta / Antagarh, Jan 10: After the administration's action in illegal land encroachment in Shyam Nagar, Antagarh ward number 08, Antagarh resident woman Kalpana Jain staged a protest in front of the sub-divisional office, which has ended on the third day. At the same time, a new twist has come in this matter. On the same land, in front of the Tehsil office, Halima Begum, a resident of Antagarh, has started protesting against the child due to which it has become a headache for the administration. Now it has to be seen in which mode it goes and what is the verdict. Talking about the Nagar Panchayat

Antagarh, which is always in the headlines, these days it is getting a lot of headlines. Antagarh Tehsildar started the encroachment removal campaign and the entire administration reached Shyam Nagar and JCB machine was run in the houses to remove the encroachment. While the encroachment of three houses was removed, the woman Kalpana Jain, resident of Antagarh, started a protest in front of the office of the sub-divisional officer Antagarh, talking about taking action against the rules. Many big leaders of BJP came to support the protest demonstration Kanker Lok Sabha MP Mohan Mandvi, former state president BJP and former minister Vikram Dev Usendi, former

MLA Bhojraj Nag and other workers attended the demonstration. On the third day, SDM Antagarh assured to fulfill the demands of Kalpana Jain and BJP worker in fifteen days, after which the woman ended her protest. Halima Begum accused Kalpana Jain At the same time, a new twist has come in the matter, claiming that the place where Kalpana Jain was building the house, woman Halima Begum, a resident of Antagarh, has accused Kalpana Jain of destroying the newly built house of Halima Begum. She was building her house. At the same time, pleading with the administration to get his place back, along with his child, he has started protesting in front of the Tehsil office.

Stayed in front of Tehsil office with her family all night but no one came to take care. It would be correct to say that for Kalpana Jain, sitting on a dharna for three days, from the administration to the top BJP leaders, they kept on working day and night and stood at the site, but regrettably, since yesterday, Halima Begum has been sitting on a dharna in front of the Tehsil office and even at night neither the administration nor the BJP, Congress party leaders came to take care of him. Because she is poor and helpless, that's why on that day BJP leaders went on talking many things that we are with everyone but who is with this poor, helpless woman. After all, they should also get justice.

## 'Better opportunities and innovation in agri sector: Baghel

Central Chronicle News

Raipur, Jan 10: In Chhattisgarh, we believe in all-round development of youth. A major part of the population in the state depends on agriculture. For a long time, youngsters used to hesitate in taking agriculture as profession, but in last three years this trend has changed. Certainly we have created maximum number of government jobs after state formation. Traditionally, agriculture is the biggest source of employment in Chhattisgarh. We have started undoing the damage caused by the wrong policies of previous government in Chhattisgarh in one and a half decade. We have provided better

income-oriented opportunities and encouraged innovation in the sector of agriculture. On one side, we have created better arrangements for procuring crops at support price and also for animal husbandry in Chhattisgarh. On the other side we have encouraged cultivation of new crops, and made institutionalized arrangements for processing, packaging and marketing of these crops. We have made large-scale arrangements for research, study and innovation in scientific education of agriculture. Half-a-dozen agri, horticulture college opened. Efforts like Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana, Godhan Nyay Yojana, Chief Minister's

Plantation Promotion Scheme, procurement of forest produce on support price, processing of forest produce, establishment of Food Park have convinced the youth that there is a lot of potential in agricultural sector. In last three years, we have opened half a dozen agriculture and horticulture colleges in Bemetara, Jashpur, Dhamtari, Arjunda, Lormi. Horticulture and Forestry University was established in the name of Mahatma Gandhi in village Sankara of Patan block of Durg district. Processing units are being set up in Kanker district for crops like Kodo, Kutki, Ragi and in Durg district for processing various agricultural products. Land has been allotted for

the establishment of food parks in more than 200 development blocks. Financial aid is being provided from DMF and other items to make barren land useful for agriculture. In this way, the perception of youth towards agriculture has now changed, as now farming has become a profitable business in Chhattisgarh. 'Think-B', BADAL will help preserve and develop tribal art, craftsmanship, etc. Regarding the question about Think B, Chief Minister Mr. Baghel said that Think B is an initiative for the youth of Bastar. The full form of 'Think B' is 'Technology Hub and Innovation for Knowledge Bastar'. Under this project, we

will encourage the youth of Bastar to practice innovation, self-employment and entrepreneurship. BADAL's full form is 'Bastar Academy of Dance, Art, Literature and Language'. Through this institution, various tribal arts, folk songs, choreography, craftsmanship, culture, language, literature, food, costumes will be preserved and developed. Chief Minister said that with the dedication and enthusiasm in the youth of Bastar, we have successfully established Denex readymade garment factory, cashew processing unit, and started production of coffee and papaya on barren land. The youth of Bastar have proved that with a little help, a little facilities

and a little guidance, they can change the face of Bastar. Naxalism can be removed by writing a new story of self-dependence. Relaxing the rule for educated youth of special backward tribes, we have provided them jobs as teachers in the same settlements. To further encourage education in tribal areas, recruitment of local youth has been ensured by constituting Junior Services Selection Board at division-level. News of achievements and records of our youth strengthens my belief that there is no dearth of talent among the youth of Chhattisgarh. Only with trust and facilities can we make a real youth revolution, said Chief Minister.

### Over 65% of Ch'garh's adult population fully jabbed

Against Covid-19, 98% have received their first dose  
46%W teens in 15-18 yrs age-group receive first dose of Covid-19 vaccine

Raipur, Jan 10: Over 65 per cent of the population above 18 years has been fully vaccinated against Covid-19 in the Chhattisgarh. Besides, 98 per cent people in this age group have received first shot of the vaccine. Meanwhile, the inoculation of teens in 15-18 years age group, which commenced from January 3, is also going on at a rapid pace across the state. Over 46 per cent of adolescents in this age group have been administered

first dose of Covid-19 vaccine so far (as of January 9). So far, more than half of the targeted teenagers in this age have been jabbed in Mungeli, Dhamtari, Rajnandgaon, Bemetara, Mahasamund, Balod, Kanker, Durg and Gariaband districts. A total of three crore 26 lakh 91 thousand 036 vaccines have been administered so far in the state, including both the first and second doses. One crore 92 lakh 29 thousand 213 people above 18 years of age have been administered first dose vaccine of corona vaccine while one crore 27 lakh 11 thousand 629 people are fully jabbed against Covid-19. Besides, a total of seven lakh 50 thousand 194 adolescents have been vaccinated from January 3 to January 9 since the commencement of inoculation drive for children in the age group 15 to 18 years.

## 'Awareness, safety is the only protection against virus'

Administration reviews preparations with shopkeepers, traders for protection against virus

Central Chronicle News

**Pithora, Jan 10:** In view of increasing number of Corona cases in Nagar Panchayat Pithora, a general meeting of the traders and shopkeepers of city was held to generate safety measures and steps to be taken. In this Nagar Panchayat President Atma Ram Yadav along with CEO SDM Ritu Hemmani, SDO Minj and TI City Kosale and Chief Nagar Palika Officer Mahendra Gupta were present.

The administrative officer SDM OP Minj informed that it is compulsory to follow the corona guidelines as issued by the state government's health department and for better health of all the local administration be on the alert. There are better facilities in all the hospitals in city and



nearby areas and one should not take this corona's third wave in the form of pandemic seriously. SDM said that no shopkeeper or trader should try to create artificial shortage of grocery or essential commodities. The administration apart from facilities to general public is also working for their safety and security.

At the same time the general public too should take special precautions and avoid going to crowded

place without any reasons and should not organise any social programme. He warned of taking strict action against hoarders.

On the other hand, Nagar Panchayat President also made an appeal to all the shopkeepers, traders and citizens to follow corona guidelines strict and said that they have already won over first two waves of corona and would definitely succeed for the third time as well.

So all the citizens, shop-



keepers and traders should wear mask properly, maintain social distancing and even the shopkeepers in 'Haat Bazar' should pay attention seriously and extend whole-hearted support. It is time to work for health and safety of all like a 'Sewadar' (watchman) and the shopkeepers have big responsibility and accountability towards their customers and citizens.

In this meeting, all shopkeepers put forth their views and the journalists

raised questions on the arrangements made by the local administration and all the questions were satisfactorily answered.

The meeting was attended by Bajrang Agrawal, Yashwant Chabda, Ritesh Mahanti, former corporator Ravinder Ajmani, Raju Ajmani, Akash Mahanti, Ashish Awasthi, Kuldeep Agrawal, Sumit Agrawal, Naresh Agrawal, Raju Ajmani, Gopal Sharma, Babu Mahanti, and others in large number.

## Follow the safety rules of Covid-19: Singhdeo

Central Chronicle News

**Koriya, Jan 10:** The world is once again battling the wave of Corona and the spread of corona infection is also increasing in the state and Korea district. In this situation, following the instructions of the government, it is very important to cooperate with the district administration and bring awareness to the safety rules among the people.

Parliamentary Secretary and Baikunthpur MLA Mr. Ambika Singhdeo, in a meeting held with political parties and business organizations in the District Collectorate meeting room here, appealed saying that the safety of all depends upon how careful one is to evade the infection.

She said that the number of people fixed by the government for marriages, funerals etc. should be followed. Meanwhile District Collector Shyam Dhawade appealed to all political parties and business organizations to cooperate in making people aware of following the COVID protocol in view of the security in the third wave of Corona in the meeting. Giving information about the preparations of the district administration to identify the corona infection at the initial stage itself so that the spread of infection can be stopped. For this, he talked about cooperation in random testing of shopkeepers, street vendors, carts, dump operators. The Collector appealed to the office bearers of the merchant organization to make them aware



through the traders about following the COVID protocol in rural areas as well. CMHO Dr Rameshwar Sharma said that high risk patients have been advised to stay at home. He told in the meeting that booster dose would be started in the district from next week. District Panchayat Vice President Vedanti Tiwari, Additional Collector Sukhnath Ahirwar, Joint Collector Anil Sidar, CMHO Dr. Rameshwar Sharma, District Education Officer Sanjay Gupta, office bearers of political parties and office bearers of business organizations were present in the meeting.

## 19 beneficiaries provided gas connection, 'chullah'



By Nagar Palika V-P

Central Chronicle News

**Takathpur, Jan 10:** Providing benefit of the government's scheme to the beneficiary at the right

time and place is actually the true responsibility of the public representative. If the interest and obligation of the people who have voted them to power is not fulfilled then it would be gross injustice against the oath for which they have

been administered oath. The above are the words of Nagar Palika V-P Vandana Bala Singh while distributing LPG gas cylinders to 19 beneficiaries with gas connection and 'chullah' in ward No 2 under 'Ujjwala Gas Yojana'

here on Sunday. Extending greetings to all the beneficiaries, Nagar Palika V-P Vandana Bala Singh Thakur said that this scheme of the government has been introduced so that the housewives should feel comfortable and work with ease in the kitchen and get relief from smoke arising while cooking using fuel wood or cowdung cakes.

On this occasion Lalita Kshatriya, Manisha Dewangan, Nirmala, Aruna Thakur, Ghurva Sahu, Tijmati Sahu, Sadhana Singh, Sarojini Nirmalkar, Shakuntala Vishwakarma, Rani Bai, Munni Bai, Sarita Jaiswal, Chameli Bai, Savitri Thakur, Roshini Nirmalkar, Bhagwati Bai, Kumari Nirmalkar and others were present.

## Village Gauthans being developed as multi activity center

Central Chronicle News

**Sukma, June 10:** Household working women are adopting the means of self-employment by joining the schemes of the government, and one such multi activity centre is turning out to be the village Gauthans for these women and is earning extra income from these works.

Under the government's ambitious Suraji Gaon Yojana, 88 Gauthans have been constructed in Sukma district alone, where community gardening activities are being conducted through women self-help groups under multi-activity. Women have shown



their self-reliance in the work of everyday life as well as in the village Gauthan and have made a good source of income with self-reliance by doing organic manure production, poultry (Kadakhnath) egg production, fish farming, vegetable production as well as mushroom production in Gauthans. Gidmanala Ramapuram

and Ramaram Gauthan have been established as ideal Gauthans of the district, and here new dimensions of self-reliance have been achieved through employment-oriented works by women's groups. Gayatri Self Help Group has earned Rs.68000 by producing eggs through Sabari layer farming and Rs.24,421 from mushroom

production. Similarly, Durga Self Help Group has earned a profit of Rs 39457 from vegetable production and Rs 36847 from vermi compost production. At the same time, fish seed has been supplied to Gayatri Self Help Group by the schemes of the Fisheries Department.

Along with poultry farming, fisheries are being done by the group under the system. After the next one year, the income of the group will be 25000 to 30000 thousand rupees, along with this, banana cultivation is being planned by the self-help group. Under which the group will get additional income.

## 8500 children vaccinated in 3 days



In Takathpur block

Central Chronicle News

**Takathpur, Jan 10:** There is great deal of enthusiasm among the school children and their parents for vaccination of their children in the age-group of 15-18.

Considering vaccine to be main weapon to deal with corona virus, the children are ensuring their full presence to get the vaccination done. On third day of vaccination in area under Takathpur block headquarters, around 8500 school children were vaccinated in different centres.

The parents are bringing their children to vaccination centre. On the other hand, many other

**3 found positive on Wednesday**

A 47 yr old woman near Gurudwara road was found to be positive and this created sensation in the region. It is just 100 mts vicinity of this case that members of four elite families have been found to be corona positive. This includes 40 yr youth from Ward No. 5 and a 48 yr old youth from Barela.

parents are still in doubt about the vaccination and are waiting for result of the vaccination, despite knowing the fact that with increasing number of corona positive cases, this vaccination cannot be avoided.

## Malnutrition rate reduced by 14 %, Sukma secures second place in state

Central Chronicle News

**Konta, Jan 10:** Well-nourished women and well-nourished children are the first steps to a golden future. With the aim of improving the health and development of women and children, efforts are being made by the Department of Women and Child Development to improve and improve the nutritional level.

For the purpose of nurturing and nurturing malnourished children, supplementary nutrition diet program, Chief Minister Child Reference Scheme, Chief Minister Suposhan Mission Scheme, Mahtari Janan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Matruvandan Yojana are being run by the Department of Women and Child Development. As a result of systematic implementation of these schemes, there has been a reduction in malnutrition by 14 percent.

The level of malnutrition among children in the



age group of zero to five years was 51.6 percent in Sukma district as per National Family Health Survey-4 year 2016. According to the currently released National Family Health Survey-5 year 2021, there is 37.4 percent of Sukma district, that is, according to the latest released data, there has been a decrease of 14 percent in malnutrition in Sukma district. Sukma district ranks second in the state in terms of reduction in malnutrition rates.

Under the guidance of the district administration, three Chief Minister Nutrition Centers (NRCs) are being operated in the district at Chhindgarh, Dornapal and Konta. Chief Minister Nutrition Center has been started from 28 January 2021.

Efforts are also being made to improve the awareness about cleanliness and health, not only malnutrition but also the way of food and inclusion of locally available nutritious ingredients.

This initiative of the government administration has also brought awareness among the villagers about cleanliness, nutrition and balanced diet. They themselves bring their children to the Anganwadi center regularly to get them checked up. Along with this, the Chief Minister also gets the children admitted in nutritional centers as per the requirement.

In which earlier the villagers used to hesitate. So far the weight of 334 children has been increased by providing proper health facilities by admitting 861 malnourished children in all the three nutritional centres.

At present, with the convergence of MNREGA, an Anganwadi building is being constructed with a pucca building of Rs 6.45 lakh. In case of non-avail-

ability of building facilities in unreach and sensitive areas, temporary Anganwadi has been constructed by the Gram Panchayats and with the resources available at the district level, the Anganwadi building has been approved and constructed in the prefab also. At present 991 Anganwadi centers are operating against the approved 1040 Anganwadi centers in the district. Buildings have been approved for almost all Anganwadi centers in the district.

Out of the above approved buildings, 721 Anganwadi buildings are currently complete, in which 702 Anganwadi centers are operating in their own buildings. In this way, with the available allocation and convergence, efforts are being made to make proper operation of all the Anganwadis in their own buildings soon.

**EQUITAS SMALL FINANCE BANK LTD.**  
(FORMERLY KNOWN AS EQUITAS FINANCE LTD)  
Registered Office: No.769, Spencer Plaza, 4th Floor, Phase-II, Anna Salai, Chennai, TN - 600 002. # 044-42995000, 044-42995050

**DEMAND NOTICE**  
NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13 (2) OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002

NOTICE is hereby given that the following borrower(s) have availed loan from **Equitas Housing Finance Limited (EHFL) / Equitas Finance Limited (EFL) / Equitas Small Finance Bank Ltd (ESFB)**. The said borrower(s) had/ have failed to pay installments and their loan account has been classified as Non-Performing Asset as per the guidelines issued by RBI. The details of the secured immovable properties, loan and the amounts outstanding as on date payable by the borrower(s) are mentioned below. The borrower(s) and the public in general are informed that the undersigned being the Authorized Officer, the secured creditor has initiated action against the following borrower(s) under the provisions of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 and not to deal with the said property, on failure to repay the outstanding dues indicated against their names within **60 (Sixty) days of this notice**, the undersigned will exercise any one or more of the powers under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the SARFAESI Act, including power to take possession of the property/ies and sell the same

Name of the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) (Name of The Branch)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of Secured Asset (Immovable Property)
Branch : Pandhri L.No: SEPNDRI0240537 Borrower: Yashwant Meshram, Co-Borrower: Tulsi Bai Meshram,	17-12-2021 & Rs. 6,78,848/-	All that piece and parcel of land and building, Comprised in out of, Khasra No. Part of 796/1, with an extent of 6458 Sq. Ft., Situated at Village- Khatti, Gram Panchayat- Khatti, P.H.No.-07, R.N.M.- Abhanpur, Village Khatti, Tehsil-Abhanpur, Dist Raipur, C.G. This will be a grid with align center. <b>Boundaries :</b> North by: House of Ashok & Badi, South by: Omkar & Badi, East by: Road, West by: House of Mohan & Badi Situated at within the limits of "Abhanpur" and Registration District of Abhanpur".

Place : Chennai  
Date : 08.01.2022

Sd/- Authorised Officer  
Equitas Small Finance Bank Ltd.

**Aspire Home Finance Corporation Limited**  
Registered Office : Motilal Oswal Tower, Rahimtullah Sayani Road, Opp. ST Depot, Prabhadevi, Mumbai-400025. Email :- info@ahfcl.com CIN : U65923MH2013PLC248741

**DEMAND NOTICE**  
NOTICE UNDER SECTION 13 (2) OF THE SECURITIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002

Under Section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (the said Act) read with Rule 3(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 (the said Rule) in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of said Rule, the Authorized Officer has issued Demand notices under Section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the Borrower(s) / Co-borrowers, Guarantor(s) to repay the loan amount mentioned in the respective demand notices issued to them. In connection with above notice is hereby given once again to all the parties to pay within 60 days from the publication of this notice, the amounts indicated herein below, together with further interest from the date(s) of Demand Notice till the date of payment. The detail of the Borrower(s) amount dues on date of Demand Notice and Security offered towards repayment of loan amount are as under:-

Loan Agreement No./Name of the Borrower(s)/Co-Borrower(s)/Co-Aplicant Name / Guarantor Name	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of secured asset(s) (Immovable property/ies)
LXDUR00418-190070139/ Dharmin Bai Verma/ Kailash Ram Verma / Pareshwar Verma	24-Aug-21 / Rs. 821679/- (Rupees Eight Lac Twenty One Thousand Six Hundred Seventy Nine Only)	Kh. No - 82/9, Ph. No - 46, Rnm, Near Bazar Chowk, Khairagarh, Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh - 491881

If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to AHFCL as aforesaid AHFCL shall proceed against the above secured assets Under Section 13(4) of the Act and the applicable Rules, entirely at the risk of the said Borrowers as to the cost and consequences. The said Borrowers are prohibited under the Act from transferring the aforesaid assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of AHFCL. Any person who contravenes or abates contravention of the provision of the said Act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for imprisonment and / or penalty as provided under the Act.

Date: 11.01.2022  
Place: Chhattisgarh

Sd/-  
Authorized Officer  
For Aspire Home Finance Corporation Ltd.

**Off-Line classes in CU suspended till Jan 25**  
**Bilaspur, Jan 10:** Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (Central University) Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh) in continuation of communication dated Jan 6 keeping in view the present circumstances of Covid-19, off-line classes/examinations and teaching-learning have been suspended from today till 25.01.2022. Classes/examinations, teaching-learning, and other academic activities will continue in online mode. Other instructions given in the order number 56/Estt./Adm./2022 dated June 6 issued earlier will remain the same.

**BRIEF**

**Two held**

**Ghaziabad:** Two men were arrested for allegedly selling stolen motorcycles on OLX, an online marketplace. The accused, Shadab and Mushir, were apprehended with a stolen two-wheeler during routine checking. The two told police that they used to purchase the stolen two-wheelers from a trader in Meerut who would get new chassis and engine numbers stamped on the vehicles.

**Officials booked**

**Bhadoli:** A government cowshed manager and two others were booked on charges of cruelty against animal and other penal offences for throwing two severely ill cows out of the gaushala. The three were booked after people complained that the cows were lying outside the gaushala in Hamirpur village of the district and dogs had attacked the animals, taking them as dead.

**Kills friend**

**Jaipur:** In a case of honour killing, a man allegedly killed his friend for marrying his sister after eloping with her in Churu district of Rajasthan. The body of Manish, 27, was found in a farm in the Rajgarh area, he had gone to meet his friend Vikas. Manish and Vikas became friends during their stay in Haryana jail under judicial custody few months back. Manish was rape accused while Vikas was under custody in case of petrol pump loot.

**Man held**

**Mumbai:** A man was arrested by Mumbai Crime Branch from Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir in connection with the seizure of 24 kilograms of high-quality charas worth Rs 14.4 crore in October last year. Gulzar Ahmed Khan (40) was held after a probe found that he was the prime supplier in this case, he said, adding that the accused was also once arrested by the World unit of the Anti Narcotics Cell. Source of contraband was J-K.

**Provided food**

**Jammu:** Hundreds of migrant labourers were provided cooked food and winter clothing by the army amid biting cold and heavy snowfall in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. The army went beyond the call of duty and provided assistance in the form of cooked food for the migrant labourers in Mendhar area. Essential items including winter clothing, gloves and blankets were also distributed since last few days in severe weather.

**Mows down**

**Morena:** A woman was killed and two persons were critically injured after a tractor-trolley transporting sand illegally hit them while fleeing from a forest department team in Morena in Madhya Pradesh. The incident took place on national highway number 3, some four kilometres from district headquarters, said CSP Atul Singh. Tractor-trolley was involved in illegal sand transportation from Chambal river.

## Prove that banning unvaccinated in local trains is unreasonable: HC



Local train with mostly empty coach at a platform in Mumbai.

Mumbai, Jan 10 (PTI):

The Bombay High Court on Monday said those opposing the Maharashtra government's policy to prohibit people not vaccinated against COVID-19 from travelling in local trains in Mumbai will have to prove that such a policy is totally arbitrary and unreasonable.

A bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice MS Karnik said only if the HC is led to believe that such a policy is absolutely unreasonable and it "shocks the conscience of the court", will it interfere with the restrictions imposed by the state government on

local train travel. The court also said that vaccination was "a sort of weapon" to fight COVID-19 and those who have not taken the jabs do not have access to this shield.

The bench was hearing a public interest litigation filed by city residents Firoze Mithiborwala and Yohan Tengra, urging the HC to strike down the Maharashtra government's SOPs issued in August last year, which mandated that only those who had taken both the doses of vaccine against COVID-19 could travel in local trains in the metropolises.

The petitioners' counsel, Nilesh Ojha, told the HC that such prohibition

was discriminatory to those who are not vaccinated and a violation of their rights to equality, life and freedom of movement.

The state government, however, filed an affidavit in the HC earlier this month, saying the restriction was reasonable and did not affect the citizens' fundamental right to life and liberty.

It said the state was performing its parens patriae duty, or the duty of guardian of the entire state, in imposing such restriction.

On Monday, the HC bench cited the state's affidavit and asked Ojha why must the court interfere with a state policy? It said vaccination was "a sort of weapon" to fight COVID-19.

"No one says that the vaccinated won't ever contract COVID-19. Even the most protected of people have also contracted COVID-19. However, vaccination will act as a shield against future vaccinations. Those who are not vaccinated do not have access to this shield," the high court said.

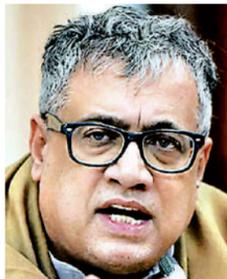
## TMC MP seeks parliamentary panel meeting on 'Tek Fog' app

● Mobile app is alleged to violate user privacy for propaganda

New Delhi, Dec 10 (PTI):

TMC Rajya Sabha MP Derek O'Brien has written to the chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs seeking a meeting of the panel to discuss the issue of "hijacking and manipulating" social media trends using "Tek Fog" app which he said is a "threat" to national security and privacy of citizens.

This is the second letter the TMC MP has written to Congress leader and panel head Anand Sharma for a meeting. A report on news portal 'The Wire' had



Derek O'Brien

alleged that people associated with the ruling BJP's IT cell were purportedly using the app to take control of inactive WhatsApp accounts, send messages to frequently contacted numbers, and hijack trending topics on social media platforms.

In his letter on Monday, O'Brien said that the expos shows that the Tek

Fog app gives cyber troops the ability to hijack WhatsApp accounts of private citizens by sending them spyware disguised as a media file. It then remotely accesses inactive accounts in their contact lists and uses the inactive number to send targeted messages to all their contacts. "All of the hijacked number's contacts are synced to a database on cloud, ripe for picking as future targets of disinformation and harassment... It is also pointed out that this hacking technique was formerly used by the Pegasus spyware, before the NSO Group developed an even more sophisticated zero-click hijacking method," he said.

He said that the application can automate the sending of WhatsApp mes-

## TRAIN BLOCKED



Jan Adhikar Party Chief Pappu Yadav with supporters stops a train at Sachivalaya during a protest on minimum support price (MSP), fertilizer crisis and special status to Bihar, in Patna, Monday.

## As EC bans rallies, political parties take to digital mode for UP polls

● Social media incharges from Assembly to booth level

Lucknow, Jan 10 (PTI):

With the Election Commission imposing restrictions on poll rallies till January 15 in the wake of rising COVID-19 cases, political parties in Uttar Pradesh are gearing up for virtual campaigning.

While the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) already has a good presence on social media platforms, the Samajwadi Party (SP) and others are putting in efforts to strengthen their



digital army and chalking out strategies to boost their support base.

"We are miles ahead of rival parties in leveraging our social media presence. Further, we are working on a strategy for virtual campaigns," BJP state media in-charge Manish Dixit told PTI.

The party has assigned separate responsibilities to booth level office-bearers to associate people on WhatsApp, Twitter,

Instagram, Facebook and other platforms, he said. BJP's main rival SP is also preparing for virtual campaigns.

The party has been tele-casting key events and press conferences addressed or attended by party chief Akhilesh Yadav on its YouTube channel. "It's difficult to reach out to rural folk through digital platforms but the party is looking at the best possible ways," SP national spokesperson Ashutosh Verma said.

"In rural areas, 40 per cent people do not use smart phones but the SP's focus is on youths, who mostly have them (smart-phones).

## 70 km long walkathon in Nagaland demanding repeal of AFSPA

Dimapur, Jan 10 (PTI):

Hundreds of Nagas from different walks of life on Monday joined the two-day walkathon from Nagaland's commercial hub Dimapur to state capital Kohima, a distance of more than 70 km, demanding the repeal of AFSPA and justice for the 14 civilians who were killed by security forces in Mon district.

The walkathon, which stemmed out of social media posts following the Mon killings, gained the support of various tribal bodies and civil society organisations in the state.

It began at the Super Market area of Dimapur



Activists hold a placard as they participate in a protest march to repeal Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, in Dimapur, Monday.

with volunteers and participants holding placards, demanding the repeal of the "draconian" Armed Force Special Power Act (AFSPA) and justice for the victims.

Rukewezo Wetsah, one

of the coordinators of the walkathon, said it was a peaceful, silent and democratic measure to convey the resentment of the people over AFSPA, and reassert "our dignity as human beings".

## When talking of SilverLine future, think of making roads: HC

● Roads cannot be left as relics of past

Kochi, Jan 10 (PTI):

When you are talking about the future with regard to the K-Rail project SilverLine, then develop roads too by keeping in view the future, the Kerala High Court said on Monday to the state government.

"When you are talking about the K-Rail project, you talk about the future. I am happy that someone is taking account of the future. Lets talk about the future in roads also," Justice Devan Ramachandran said. The court further said that if the state can acquire land for the SilverLine project, surely

it can do so for developing wider roads.

The observations by the court came during the hearing of a plea in which it has been claimed that a 14 km stretch of a road development project — from Tirurangadi to Parappanagadi — was being constructed with a reduced width citing financial constraints.

The petition has sought that the road width as initially proposed should be maintained for the entire project. During the hearing, the state government told the court that a proposal for further land acquisition will be submitted by the Public Works Department by January 31. The court, thereafter, directed that "development of roads be done by

keeping in mind the future and not the present requirements".

It said that the present width of 8 metres was "woefully insufficient" keeping in view future increase in vehicular traffic.

The court sought a report from the state government before the next date of hearing with regard to the status of the new proposal for further land acquisition. It also said that while the road work may go on, the state will not be absolved from its responsibility to widen the road.

The court had previously asked the state government that if it was going ahead with major projects, which cost hundreds and thousands of crores of rupees, then how can it claim lack of funds for widening

a 14 kilometre stretch of road. The query had come after the state government cited financial constraints as the reason for reducing the width of the road.

The state government had said that an additional Rs 150 crore would be required to construct the road in question — from Nadukani to Parappanagadi — with a width of 12-15 metres as was initially proposed by the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB). The court, previously, had also said that when a road is constructed, the competent authorities must keep an eye on the future by taking into account the rapid increase in traffic and also the constraints of increasing population density.

## Congress will perform well, TMC may flop in Goa: observers

In 2017, BJP won only 13 seats while Congress won in 17

Panaji, Jan 10 (PTI):

With just over a month to go for Assembly elections in Goa, political observers feel the Congress may upset BJP's plans for retaining power in the coastal state, but appear less enthused about Trinamool Congress, whose entry has added colour to the poll campaign.

Congress will win around 20 of the 40 Assembly seats, while the BJP will garner around 15 seats, a veteran political analyst based in the Goa capital told PTI.



Campaign by Congress members in Goa.

The Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (MGP) is likely to win 3 to 4 seats, and the Aam admi Party (AAP) will bag a seat or two, the analyst said.

He attributed the poll prospects of MGP, which came into prominence under the leadership of

Goa's first chief minister Dayanand Bhandodkar, to its alliance with the Mamata Banerjee-led TMC. On its own, MGP may have fared very badly. But TMC's monetary clout will help it, he added.

Former State Election Commissioner Prabhakar

Timblo said Congress will form the next government in the coastal state. Anti-incumbency is very high in the state, and that will work against the BJP, he added. The grand old party will win around 20-22 seats, Timblo said. Congress will do well as long as it does not project those who have crossed their expiry date in politics in these elections, he added. Timblo was emphatic that neither TMC nor AAP will have much of an impact in the February 14 elections. Giriraj Pai Vernekar, a political analyst and a BJP sympathizer, said the ruling party presented a report card of its regime's performance in the last 10 years, while seeking votes.

## Response sought on plea challenging NEET for AYUSH courses

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):

The Delhi High Court Monday sought the Centre's response on a petition by certain AYUSH aspirants challenging the common National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for taking admission to Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Unani, Siddha and Sowa Rigpa courses.

A bench headed by Chief Justice DN Patel issued notice to the Centre, the National Testing Agency and other respondents on the petition by six aspirants, and remarked that it would hear the challenge alongside the petition by allopathic practitioners



against the permission given to AYUSH practitioners to perform certain surgeries. On a lighter side, you on one hand are saying you are competitive. But when asked to appear in NEET, you are saying we are not, the bench, also comprising Justice Jyoti Singh, told the counsel for the petitioner. AYUSH (practitioners) want to do operations and now they are saying we are different. See the double standard... Both matters will be heard to-

gether, it added. The lawyer appearing for the petitioners told the court that the petitioners were not against NEET. The central government was represented by counsel Monika Arora who was asked by the court to provide details of the petition by allopathic practitioners. The petitioners said that asking them to appear for NEET in order to pursue AYUSH courses in medical institutions governed by National Commission for Indian System of Medicine Act, 2020 and National Commission for Homoeopathy Act, 2020 is in violation of Article 14 of the Constitution of India.

**BRIEF**

**Israeli library**

**Jerusalem:** Israel's national library says the number of visitors to its Arabic website more than doubled last year, driven by a growing collection of digitised materials and an aggressive outreach campaign to the Arab world. Around 650,000 users, predominantly from the Palestinian territories, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Algeria, visited the National Library of Israel's English and Arabic sites in 2021, said library spokesman Zachary Rothbart.

**No-fly zone**

**London:** British police have applied for a no-fly zone over Windsor Castle as it reviews security arrangements at the landmark where Queen Elizabeth II has spent much of the pandemic. If granted, a restricted airspace order would prevent aircraft from flying up to 2,500 feet (762 metres) above and 1.5 nautical miles (around three kilometres) around the castle.

**Skiers hurt**

**Washington:** Several people were hurt at a North Carolina ski resort when a damaged hydrant sprayed a blast of water onto skiers riding above on a lift, prompting several skiers to jump. Management at Beech Mountain Resort said a guest skied into the water and air hydrant while snowmaking operations were underway. The resort said that two people were taken to an area hospital by Avery County emergency medical workers.

**Two held**

**Islamabad:** Pakistani authorities have arrested two people in connection with Rs 200 million online business scam, days after the country's top investigation agency launched a probe into a cryptocurrency investment fraud of more than USD 100 million. The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) carried out a raid in Karachi and arrested two people involved in the Rs 200 million scam.

**Group rejects**

**Cairo:** A leading Sudanese protest group rejected a United Nations initiative to hold talks with the military aimed at restoring the country's democratic transition following an October coup. The move is a blow to international efforts seeking an end to Sudan's political deadlock, and suggest that relentless street protests are likely to continue. Over 60 people have been killed since the military takeover.

**Smugglers held**

**Madrid:** Spanish police said they dismantled a drug-trafficking ring that allegedly brought hashish and marijuana from Morocco to southern Spain by helicopter and then transported it to France by road. It seized 2.4 metric tons (2.65 tons) of hashish and 112 kilograms (247 pounds) of marijuana in the operation, as well as three helicopters, guns and ammunition. Officers arrested 11 people and a further nine are being sought in France.

## Singapore says 30% COVID-19 deaths were in fully vaccinated



Pedestrians cross a street next to a Lunar New Year of the Tiger decoration in the Chinatown district in Singapore on Monday.

**Singapore, Jan 10 (PTI):**

Fully vaccinated individuals accounted for 30 per cent of Singapore's total COVID-19 related deaths last year, Health Minister Ong Ye Kung said in Parliament on Monday.

The minister said that Singapore last year registered 802 deaths due to the coronavirus, out of which 247 were fully vaccinated people.

Most of the vaccinated individuals, who died from COVID-19 related complications, had received non-mRNA vaccines, according to crude incidence rates of deaths provided by Ong. Ong provided the crude incidence rates based on type of vaccination: 11 deaths per 100,000 for those vaccinated with Sinovac, 7.8 per 100,000 for Sinopharm, 6.2 per 100,000 for Pfizer-BioNTech and 1 per 100,000 for Moderna.

**Omicron wave to be several times larger**

**Singapore:** Singapore can expect an infection wave due to Omicron several times larger than the one caused by Delta, Health Minister Ong Ye Kung said in Parliament.

“Be mindful, we are calculating this based on quite a small sample of 247 deaths. These rates are only indicative since they do not account for other factors which can affect mortality such as the age and timing of vaccination,” Channel News Asia quoted Ong as saying in the House. The remaining 555 people who died from COVID-19 last year were not fully vaccinated.

Although the unvaccinated represents a “small proportion” of Singapore's population, those deaths accounted for 70 per cent of the total COVID-19 deaths last year, Ong said. The Ministry of Health (MOH) has managed to vaccinate “well over 90 per cent” of every eligible age group over the past months, he said.

## Suu Kyi sentenced to four more years in prison

**Bangkok, Jan 10 (AP):**

A court in Myanmar sentenced ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi to four more years in prison on Monday after finding her guilty of illegally importing and possessing walkie-talkies and violating coronavirus restrictions, a legal official said.

Suu Kyi was convicted last month on two other charges and given a four-year prison sentence, which was then halved by the head of the military-installed government.

The cases are among about a dozen brought against the 76-year-old Nobel Peace Prize laureate since the army seized power last February, ousting her elected government and arresting top members of her National League for Democracy party.

If found guilty of all the charges, she could be sentenced to more than 100 years in prison.

Suu Kyi's supporters and independent analysts say the charges against



AUNG SAN SUU KYI

her are contrived to legitimise the military's seizure of power and prevent her from returning to politics.

Monday's verdict in the court in the capital, Naypyitaw, was conveyed by a legal official who insisted on anonymity for fear of being punished by the authorities, who have restricted the release of information about Suu Kyi's trials.

He said she was sentenced to two years in prison under the Export-Import Law for importing the walkie-talkies and one year under the

Telecommunications Law for possessing them. The sentences are to be served concurrently. She also received a two-year sentence under the Natural Disaster Management Law for allegedly violating coronavirus rules while campaigning.

Suu Kyi was convicted last month on two other charges and sentenced to four years' imprisonment. Hours after that sentence was issued, the head of the military-installed government, Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, reduced it by half.

Suu Kyi's party won a landslide victory in a 2020 general election, but the military claimed there was widespread electoral fraud, an assertion that independent poll watchers doubt.

Since her first guilty verdict, Suu Kyi has been attending court hearings in prison clothes a white top and a brown longyi skirt provided by the authorities.

## 'Golden Globe Awards' carry on, without stars or telecast

**Los Angeles, Jan 10 (AP):**

The Golden Globe Awards, Hollywood's so-called biggest party that regularly drew 18 million television viewers, was reduced to a live-blog for its 79th edition. The embattled Hollywood Foreign Press Association proceeded with its film awards without a telecast, nominees, a red carpet, a host, press or even a livestream. Instead, members of the HFPA and some recipients of the group's philanthropic grants gathered at the Beverly Hilton Hotel for a 90-minute private event, announcing the names of the film and television winners on the organization's social media feeds. Steven Spielberg's 'West Side Story' won several big awards, for best picture comedy or musical, best actress for Rachel Zegler and best supporting actress for Ariana DeBose. Netflix's gothic Western 'The Power of the Dog' was named best picture drama,



A health worker inoculates a student with the Moderna Covid-19 vaccine at a school in Bhaktapur, on the outskirts of Kathmandu, Nepal on Monday.



Outfest ED Damien S Navarro presenting the Best Actress in a Limited Series or TV Movie Award at 79th Annual Golden Globe Awards in Beverly Hills, California.

along with other honors for Jane Campion's direction and Kodi Smit-McPhee's supporting performance.

Other film winners included Will Smith for 'King Richard,' Nicole Kidman for 'Being the Ricardos' and Andrew Garfield for 'tick, tick...BOOM!' The Japanese film 'Drive My Car,' also a critics' group darling, got best non-English language motion picture, while

'Encanto' won for animation. Though announcing winners on social media might seem like a straightforward task, those following along on Twitter only might have been somewhat confused at times. The tweets often left out exactly which project a person had won for. To announce the winner for best actor, motion picture musical or comedy, the organization tweeted, 'It

takes 43 muscles to smile. Thanks for the workout Andrew Garfield and congratulations for taking home the #GoldenGlobe for Best Actor Motion Picture Musical/Comedy,' failing to mention that the award was for his turn in 'tick, tick...BOOM!' Other times, the tweets were just downright baffling. In announcing the 'West Side Story' win, the group initially wrote, 'If laughter is the best medicine @WestSideMovie is the cure for what ails you' about the drama that's full of death and tragedy. They later deleted the tweet and wrote a new one about 'music' being the best medicine. Television winners included: Sarah Snook and Jeremy Strong for 'Succession,' which won best television drama, Jean Smart for 'Hacks,' which also won best television comedy, Jason Sudeikis for 'Ted Lasso,' Kate Winslet for 'Mare of Easttown,' O Yeongsu for 'Squid Game' and Michael Keaton for 'Dopesick.'

## Nearly 8,000 detained in Kazakhstan amid unrest

**Moscow, Jan 10 (AP):**

The authorities in Kazakhstan said Monday that nearly 8,000 people were detained by police during protests that descended into violence last week and marked the former Soviet nation has faced since gaining independence 30 years ago.

Kazakhstan's Interior Ministry reported that a total of 7,939 people have been detained across the country. The National Security Committee, Kazakhstan's counterintelligence and anti-terrorism agency, said Monday that the situation in the country has 'stabilized and is under control.'

The authorities have declared Monday a day of mourning for dozens of victims of the unprecedentedly violent unrest. The country's Health Ministry said that 164 people, including three chil-



Women wait a bus at a bus stop in Almaty, Kazakhstan, Monday.

dren, were killed in the unrest.

The demonstrations began on Jan. 2 over a near-doubling of prices for a type of vehicle fuel and quickly spread across the country, apparently reflecting wider discontent with the authoritarian government.

In a concession, the government announced a 180-day price cap on vehicle fuel and a moratorium on utility rate increases. As

the unrest mounted, the ministerial cabinet resigned and President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev replaced Nursultan Nazarbayev, former long-time leader of Kazakhstan, as head of the National Security Council. One of the main slogans of the past week's protests, 'Old man out,' was a reference to Nazarbayev, who served as president from Kazakhstan's independ-

ence until he resigned in 2019 and anointed Tokayev as his successor. Nazarbayev had retained substantial power at the helm of the National Security Council.

Despite the concessions, the protests turned extremely violent for several days, with government buildings set ablaze and dozens of people killed. In Almaty, Kazakhstan's largest city, the protesters stormed and briefly seized the airport. For several days, sporadic gunfire was reported in the city streets. The authorities declared a state of emergency over the unrest, and Tokayev requested help from the Collective Security Treaty Organization, a Russia-led military alliance of six former Soviet states. The group has authorized sending about 2,500 mostly Russian troops to Kazakhstan as peacekeepers.

## Bob Saget, beloved TV dad of 'Full House,' dead at 65

**Los Angeles, Jan 10 (AP):**

Bob Saget, the actor-comedian known for his role as beloved single dad Danny Tanner on the sitcom Full House and as the wisecracking host of America's Funniest Home Videos, has died, according to authorities in Florida. He was 65.

Deputies in Orange County, Florida, were called about an unresponsive man in a hotel room at the Ritz-Carlton in Orlando and found Saget dead, according to a sheriff's statement on Twitter. Detectives found no signs of foul play or drug use in this case.

Saget was in Florida as part of his I Don't Do Negative Comedy Tour. After warm audience receptions to his gigs Friday in Orlando and

Saturday in the Ponte Vedra Beach resort area, he celebrated online.

I'm back in comedy like I was when I was 26. I guess I'm finding my new voice and loving every moment of it," he posted

Saturday on Instagram. Fellow comedians and friends praised Saget not only for his wit, but his kindness.

I am broken. I am gutted. I am in complete and utter shock.

## China's Tianjin on partial lockdown after omicron found

**Beijing, Jan 10 (AP):**

The numbers are small, but the major port of Tianjin may be facing China's first local outbreak of omicron of any size, less than a month before the Winter Olympics open in nearby Beijing.

State broadcaster CCTV said the government has divided Tianjin and its 14 million residents into three levels of restrictions, starting with lockdown areas where people are not allowed to leave their homes at all. In control areas, each house-

hold is allowed to have one family member leave to buy groceries every other day, while in prevention areas, people must remain inside their immediate neighborhoods. Buses and trains from Tianjin to Beijing have been suspended and people are being told not to leave the city unless they have pressing business. The city began mass testing of all its residents after a cluster of 20 children and adults tested positive for COVID-19, including at least two with the omicron variant. Another 20 people

tested positive, bringing the total to 40. Officials said earlier that the virus has been circulating so the number of cases could rise.

China has stepped up its strict zero tolerance strategy in the runup to the Olympics, which open Feb. 4. The Chinese capital is 115 kilometers (70 miles) north-west of Tianjin and many people regularly travel back and forth by car or on a high-speed rail link that takes less than one hour. Elsewhere, millions of people are being confined to their homes in Xi'an and

Yuzhou, two cities that are farther away but have larger outbreaks traced to the delta variant. Residents of Xi'an have been under lockdown for more than two weeks, but the number of new cases in the city of 13 million fell to just 15 on Monday in a sign that restrictions could soon be lifted. Yuzhou is a city of about 1.1 million people in neighboring Henan province. Another 60 cases were reported Monday in Henan, two of them of the omicron variant, found in the city of Anyang and apparently

brought from Tianjin by a college student on Dec. 28, state media outlet The Paper reported. The provincial capital of Zhengzhou has been conducting mass testing and closed its schools. Another 24 cases were reported in the city on Monday. The first two cases confirmed in Tianjin were a 10-year-old girl and a 29-year-old woman working at an after-school center. Both were infected by the omicron variant. In subsequent testing of close contacts, 18 others tested positive and 767 tested negative.

**कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम बिलासपुर (छ.ग.)**  
संशोधन निविदा सूचना क्रमांक-01  
क्र.328/न.पा.नि./जल विभाग/2021-22 बिलासपुर दिनांक 10.01.2022  
एच आई टी क्रमांक 19 रिस्ट्रम नम्बर 90110 निविदा की अंतिम तिथि 28.01.2022 के स्थान पर 01.02.2022 एवं फिजिकल दस्तावेज जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि 02.02.2022 की जाती है।  
संप्रदाय कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापित, निविदा दस्तावेज व अन्य जानकारी वेबसाइट <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> से डाउनलोड की जा सकती है।  
कार्यालय अभियंता  
Green City, Clean City, Dream City. न. पा. नि., बिलासपुर (छ.ग.)

**कार्यालय कार्यपालन अभियंता**  
**लोक स्वास्थ्य यात्रिकी खाण्ड कबीरधाम (छ.ग.)**  
**निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना**  
ऑनलाईन निविदाएं "प्रपत्र-ए" में प्रतिशत दर पर नीचे उल्लेखित कार्य के लिये DWSM, KABIRDHAM की ओर से कार्यपालन अभियंता एवं सदस्य सचिव DWSM द्वारा एकीकृत पंजीयन व्यवस्था ई-रजिस्ट्रेशन निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।  
कार्य का विवरण :- कबीरधाम जिले के बोड़ला विकासखंड में स्वीकृत एकल ग्राम नल जल प्रदाय योजनांतर्गत पेयजल प्रदाय एवं इत्यादि कार्य।  
निविदा सूचना क्रमांक/दिनांक निविदा रिस्ट्रम क्रमांक योजना का नाम एवं विकासखण्ड अनुमानित लागत (रूपए लाख में)  
190/ Dt. 29-12-2021 89822 विकासखंड बोड़ला के ग्राम हरमो में एकल ग्राम नल जल प्रदाय पेयजल प्रदाय एवं इत्यादि कार्य। 66.70  
191/ Dt. 29-12-2021 89823 विकासखंड बोड़ला के ग्राम रघुपारा में एकल ग्राम नल जल प्रदाय पेयजल प्रदाय एवं इत्यादि कार्य। 95.70  
उपरोक्त निर्माण कार्य की निविदा की सामान्य शर्तें, धरोहर राशि, विस्तृत निविदा विज्ञापित, निविदा दस्तावेज व अन्य जानकारी ई-प्राक्वोरमेंट वेब पोर्टल <https://eproc.cgstate.gov.in> 29-12-2021 से देखी जा सकती है।  
निविदा डाउनलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि :- 19.01.2022  
**कार्यपालन अभियंता**  
**लोक स्वास्थ्य यात्रिकी खाण्ड**  
**कबीरधाम (छ.ग.)**  
G-66693/2



# CENTRAL Chronicle

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## Case for booster vaccine

India has begun giving booster doses of the Covid-19 vaccine to priority groups amid a surge in infections. Health and frontline workers and people above 60 years with comorbidities are currently eligible to take the jab. The drive began as India battles a spike in Covid cases fuelled by the Omicron variant of the coronavirus. Early studies from other countries have suggested that a booster vaccine may provide more protection against Omicron. Before Omicron, immunologists thought that third doses would be sufficient. The immune-system players that remember previously encountered pathogens, memory B and T cells were holding up well over time, and it seemed that most people with two or three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine would maintain long-term protection against severe disease and death. Among Omicron's many mutations, few seem likely to compromise T cells' ability to recognize the virus and attack infected cells. Even if the body's immune forces stays strong and vaccinated individuals remain shielded from the worst ravages of COVID-19, public-health concerns could warrant extra boosters down the line, possibly on a fairly regular basis. Case for booster vaccines depends on mutation of COVID-19 causing virus. For example, if community-transmission rates remain high, then extra doses of vaccine could control viral spread by elevating the number of 'neutralizing antibodies' that directly stop the virus from entering cells. Levels of these antibodies fall over time after vaccination, limiting their ability to suppress waves of infection. Boosters could be especially useful: they tend to elicit a broad array of antibodies, at least some of which should maintain activity against the Omicron variant.

Judging by the Israeli experience, the strategy seems to be working. Before its mass booster campaign, the country rocked by the double whammy of the Delta variant and waning immunity had one of the highest daily infection rates in the world. Case counts are now well below their September peak. And although some triple-vaccinated individuals have tested positive for Omicron in recent days, their symptoms remain mild and there is no evidence of runaway viral spread. Even if the world has vaccines in abundance, trying to juggle booster campaigns in highly vaccinated regions with first-dose campaigns in unvaccinated ones is a daunting task. Inequitable vaccine roll-out starts with an absence of leadership. Omicron should be a wake-up call about the need for collective action in response to the pandemic. The new entrants in India's basket of COVID-19 vaccines, Covovax and Corbevax didn't qualify for country's precautionary dose programme. India's conclusion on the same vaccine as booster shot, according to the officials in health ministry, is derived from the World Health Organization's (WHO) updated playbook. The WHO issued interim recommendations for heterologous COVID-19 vaccines (different vaccines) on 16 December 2021. A common reason for considering heterologous COVID-19 vaccine schedules is lack of availability of the same vaccine product in settings with limited or unpredictable supply, the WHO said. Even though there is limited research available on performance of different vaccines as booster shots, India had limited choices.

## Need global tax agency

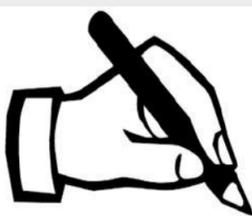
The last two years have thrown into sharp relief the structural injustices that underpin the global economy. As the COVID-19 pandemic drove an estimated 88-115 million people into extreme poverty, the world's billionaires saw their wealth increase by more than 25 percent. And while some developed and developing countries are now administering vaccine boosters, some poorer countries continue to struggle to secure even first doses for their populations. This appalling level of inequality is inextricably linked to rampant cross-border tax abuse, which is being perpetrated by both multinational corporations and wealthy individuals. By refusing to pay their fair share of taxes, the world's wealthiest actors rob poorer countries of the revenue they desperately need to confront the pandemic, such as by securing vaccine doses and supporting vulnerable citizens. USD 483 billion in public revenue is lost to cross-border tax abuse each year. Of the total losses, corporate-tax abuse by multinational companies accounts for USD 312 billion, with offshore tax evasion by wealthy individuals accounting for the rest. While wealthier countries technically bear a larger share of those losses, it is poorer countries that suffer the most. Only a global tax agency can resolve such cross border tax evasion. The double standards are astounding. After all, it was under the OECD's inclusive framework on tax base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS) that the much-touted G20 tax deal was designed. Some of the same countries that are enabling all this tax abuse most notably, the UK and Switzerland are also blocking a waiver on intellectual-property rights that would enable a massive vaccine rollout. This raises serious questions about whether the OECD is the right institution to coordinate global tax negotiations. True, the OECD opened the way for over 100 non-OECD members to have a voice in the negotiations. But several developing-country proposals were left out of the final agreement. Not surprisingly, poor countries were far from satisfied. As the G20 was meeting in Rome had endorsed the deal, the G77, representing 134 developing economies, reiterated its longstanding call to establish a global tax body at the United Nations, which would take responsibility for reforming global tax regulations and cracking down on offshore tax havens. The proposal under which the UN Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters would be transformed into an intergovernmental forum was first advanced in 2004 by then-UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The G77 echoed our call in 2015, at the UN Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa. A global UN tax body is also a key recommendation of the UN High Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency, and Integrity for Achieving the 2030 Agenda, and of the Independent Commission for Reform of International Corporate Taxation (ICRICT). ICRICT has demanded that negotiations to deliver a new global tax deal continue during the G20 presidencies of Indonesia in 2022 and India in 2023. But real progress will require changing the format of negotiations, to ensure that developing countries' voices are heard.

## WALKING 18TH CENTURY STYLE



A street actress wearing 18th century styled clothes, walks in snowfall in central St Petersburg, Russia.

## Congress has chosen path for wooing women

**DR DUGGARAJU SRINIVASA RAO**

Congress in its crisis time is forced to move away from its traditional way of campaigning in caste, religion angles. For its survival it is desperately trying to build a new vote bank and after careful consideration the party think tanks has chosen the path of wooing the women. This is apparently initiated by Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in UP and now became the main plank of campaign in other states that goes to polls in 2022. Priyanka Vadra who took charge of Uttar Pradesh affairs apparently got the feedback on the whispers the rural women folk are making regarding her similarity in appearance to that of her grandmother Indira Gandhi. Since then she started imitating Indira Gandhi in her style of walk, speech and her attire, sari, though little uncomfortable. More Sonia met the women more she felt her chance to woo them towards her party. Without even discussing the matter in the party forum and not consulting her family Priyanka in a spur of moment announced the 40 percent of Congress ticket to women in UP. This had desired effect as women started to throng to Priyanka's meeting and this led to the promise of 40 percent jobs for women in government if Congress is voted to power.

Having raised the hope of place in politics for women Priyanka is aggressively reaching out to women through the party's Shakti

Samvaad. Her appeal to women not to vote on the basis of caste and religion and make the elected representatives accountable and criticizing the women centric welfare measures implemented by BJP government Priyanka Vadra is making all right noises. The attempt to neutralize the religion lead campaign of BJP and caste centric appeals of SP through the gender appeal is a good strategy for the Congress. Though it is Sonia which evolved this new strategy the Congress is not ready to give her the full credit but attribute this new appeal to the women as Rahul Gandhi's 'breaking conventional norms' philosophy. In other states, especially in Punjab where the Congress party is in self destructive mood, is also aiming at women to erase the impact of communal statements of some Congress seniors. As the party leaders claimed the only a Sikh could become a Chief Minister of Punjab it has played into the hands of BJP as conceded by Sunil Jhakar, the in-charge of party in Punjab.

As the party top brass now fears the backlash of Hindu community. The attempt of Congress to project the appointment of Charanjit Singh Channi, a scheduled cast member as CM, as its pro-SC tilt is also back firing from the upper caste groups. The party which speaks of no cast no religion politics in UP campaign suddenly burdened with communal and caste political image. To over-

come that the Congress is now forced to take up the appealing to women route. The promise of Rs 2,000 per month to each woman and 8 free gas cylinders per year to run the house hold in smooth manner is big sop to women cutting across all barriers. In addition the Congress is promising Rs 5000 for the girls who passes class V and Rs 10,000 who crosses VIII class and 15,000 for those who clears the school final and finally 20,000 who goes to higher studies. Irrespective of the caste and economic status of the family the girls are promised a free tab and a scooty. These are all things which are offered by other parties in other states. The Punjab unit of Congress is promising to open 23 skill development centers for women to impart job oriented training and also interest free loan up to 2 lakhs to start any business of their choice. Formation of special women commando battalions for women safety is another promise and to make it attractive for all the village women the Congress announced its intention to train two women from each village in security issues. Ensuring Rs 300 per day for employable days under MGN-REGA to attract women voters is also on list.

To beat them and to make the welfare of women more attractive the Congress in Punjab is coming out with novel promise. As per the party chief Navjot Singh Sidhu 'only 1.8 percent of the properties in the state are in the name of women. So he comes out with a promise of 'no charge of fee in case the property is transferred in the name of women in the family'. This is all part of the freebies offered to the women voters and this is coming out after the highly critical statements of Punjab party chief Navjot Singh Sidhu slammed the AAP after that party offered free water, free electricity for Punjabis. No party, having the maximum number of women candi-

dates, has been victorious in the assembly elections held after 2000. The winning party's women have always performed better than the party fielding the highest number of women. They are a growing force in India's elections, with more women than men now showing up to vote in many places. Still women, like men, are not a homogeneous entity and do not form any single vote bank. They vote according to their perception of which party or candidate offers them the best choice, which has compelled political parties to offer a slew of women-centric schemes and sops during elections.

The pro-women promises are not the core Congress formula but are state specific as such pro women promises are not there in other poll bound states. In Uttarakhand, where it hopes to wrest the power from BJP, the specific promise for women is the establishment of women industrial park in 200 acre land. Himachal Pradesh, the one state where the Congress feels are already in power is not making any women specific promises but are appealing on over all development and focusing on BJP government's failures. Thus it is evident that Congress new found love for women is more electorally oriented to capture power rather than total commitment for the growth and empowerment of women. Many parties including Congress in the past have made similar promises only to forget after the electoral verdict. Mere promising moon to women is not going to help Congress in Uttar Pradesh as its organizational structure has collapsed and there was no serious attempt to rebuild it. So it is a big gamble to garner women votes and even party's leadership in Delhi is not sure of how it turns, but they all know that there is no other go but to stick to that Priyanka Vadra's projection.

(Dr Duggaraju Srinivasa Rao is political analyst and columnist based in Vijayawada.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Human rights violations

China is ruled by a dictator as the President of a communist regime at its head. The incumbent President Xi Jinping has legitimized to hold the top post for his whole life. Recently controversy has been raised on the violation of human rights in China by the global critics who are now mobilizing opinion against the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing. Criticizing the regime or speaking against a party functionary is not permitted in an authoritarian style of functioning in China. Speaking in general, human rights breaches are suppressed in the state-controlled domestic media. That is why a few cases relating to important personalities having international image and connection sneaked into outside China through social media. Meng Hongwei, the former Interpol president disappeared in 2018. It now revealed that he was later tried and imprisoned. His wife with their twin boys is presently a political refugee in France under round-the-clock police protection. In the second case, the whereabouts of two-times grand slam doubles winner Peng Shuai was not known after she accused a senior Government figure of sexual assault. The state-run media has since released a video showing her at a restaurant in Beijing. It is in such a situation and besides, a summit of Democracy is being organized by the USA on December 9-10 reportedly to unite democratic nations against the authoritarian regimes in the world. India should actively participate in the meet to mobilize international opinion against autocratic China. Because, China is increasingly engaged in continuous hostilities on Indian borders, India should take advantage of it and mightily manoeuvre to isolate China.

Pannalal, via email

### Social media addiction

During the pandemic, in-person teaching-learning remained difficult. As a result, there had been an increasing move towards children's daily overuse of social media. When a significant amount of time is spent on social networks, parents and children experience less face-to-face interaction and consequently, they miss out on an important opportunity for connection. The growth of social media addiction does have a potentially damaging impact on the strong bond between a parent and a child. Such an addiction is likely to break down family communication. It, no doubt, dilutes family relationships. It hardly needs to be mentioned that when a parent is unable to engage with the child, ruptures in the relationship between them may occur. It's understandable that due to inadequacy of time and the piling workloads, parents often have recourse to gadgets to engage their children. Also, it is, undeniably, not ideal to take children completely off social networks. As such, parents need to identify first what their child is inclined towards and use them as alternatives to screen time. This, I feel, can help nullify the impact that screen time has on children and hence can surely help strengthen the family bond.

Dipendra, via email

**WHAT THEY TWEET!**



**Tushar@TusharG**  
When Congress exploited vote banks, they only utilised pre existing caste equations. Sanghis create divisions & prejudices in their greed for electoral success via vote banks. We will see it manifested more & more in the run up to elections.



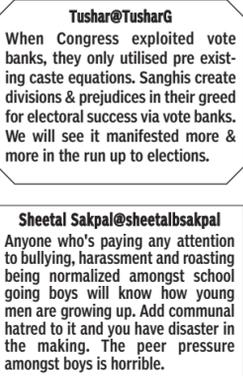
**AnnieZaidi@anniezaidi**  
An education system that focuses on marks rather than teaching independent thinking, and a larger social system that privileges obedience, adherence to the norm, rather than focusing on human morality, must reconsider itself.



**Naveen Sodem@nisar\_naveen**  
The moment anyone starts such a company that makes the child leave conventional schooling, he will most probably be arrested for contributing to the violation of RTE act (even if such a provision doesn't exist in law). Homeschooling is a crime in India till someone says it's not.

**Shahid Choudhary@listenshahid**  
#Saffron: World's costliest spice, with recorded history of 2800 years

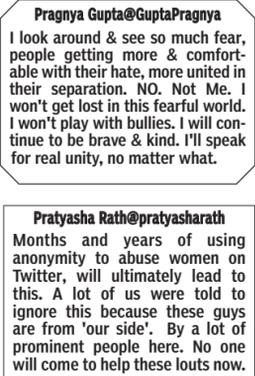




**Sheetal Sakpal@sheetalsakpal**  
Anyone who's paying any attention to bullying, harassment and roasting being normalized amongst school going boys will know how young men are growing up. Add communal hatred to it and you have disaster in the making. The peer pressure amongst boys is horrible.



**Pragnya Gupta@GuptaPragnya**  
I look around & see so much fear, people getting more & comfortable with their hate, more united in their separation. NO. Not Me. I won't get lost in this fearful world. I won't play with bullies. I'll continue to be brave & kind. I'll speak for real unity, no matter what.



**Pratyasha Rath@pratyasharath**  
Months and years of using anonymity to abuse women on Twitter, will ultimately lead to this. A lot of us were told to ignore this because these guys are from 'our side'. By a lot of prominent people here. No one will come to help these louts now.

**BRIEF**

**Signs Lol**



**New Delhi:** Anupam Rasayan signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) worth about Rs 700 crore with a multinational crop protection firm for supply of a new life science related active ingredient. MD Anand Desai said about strategy of value re-engineering to manufacture.

**Vistara fleet**

**Mumbai:** Full-service carrier Vistara, which completed seven years of its operations on January 9, said on Monday its fleet has crossed 50 aircraft with over 12 planes added in the last 21 months alone despite pandemic challenges. In addition to this, Vistara said it has flown 30 million passengers since its launch on January 9, 2015 in both domestic and overseas markets.

**Raises funding**



**New Delhi:** The ePlane Company on Monday said it has raised USD 5 million (about Rs 37 crore) in funding led by deep-tech venture capitalist Speciale Invest and fund Micelio. Co-Founder Pranjal Mehta said we are making the most compact flying taxi in the world.

**Zluri raises**

**Bengaluru:** SaaS Management Platform Zluri has raised USD ten million in a Series A round of funding led by MassMutual Ventures with participation from existing investors, Endiya Partners and Kalaari Capital. Zluri had previously raised USD two million, from Endiya Partners and Kalaari Capital, in its seed round in January 2021.

**Funding round**



**New Delhi:** Dietary supplement brand Power Gummies on Monday said it has raised USD 6 million (about Rs 44.4 crore) in funding led by 9Unicorns.

**Files IPO**

**New Delhi:** Pure play data analytics and insights company Course5 Intelligence Ltd has filed preliminary documents with markets regulator Sebi to raise Rs 600 crore through an initial share-sale. The initial public offering (IPO) comprises a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to Rs 300 crore and an Offer For Sale of equity shares aggregating up to Rs 300 crore.

## Startups can play important role in availability of healthcare



**New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):**

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Monday said startups can play a key role to socialise and democratise the availability of healthcare across the globe at a time when the world is grappling with the coronavirus pandemic.

He also said that entrepreneurs should also focus on strengthening the make in India programme, innovating in India and mentoring young startups.

"As the world is facing

successive waves of this pandemic, our entrepreneurs must start thinking of making our startups more resilient... I think our startups can play a very important role to socialise and democratise the availability of healthcare across the world," he said while addressing the inaugural session of the Startup India Innovation Week here.

The minister said that venture capitalists and financiers can also play a key role in mentoring young startups across the country particularly in

Tier 2 and 3 towns. "I suggest five mantras for growth of startups in the years to come — Share, Explore, Nurture, Serve, and Empower (SENSE)".

He said the government has taken several steps to encourage startups, including reduction in patent filing fees, relaxation in the public procurement norms, fund of funds, and seed fund scheme.

During 2018-21, startups have created over six lakh jobs and this number is growing by the day, he added.

## India INX members can now access Moscow Exchange via GIFT City

**New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):**

Sova Capital, a London-based emerging markets broker-dealer, on Monday said it has concluded a pact whereby it will offer members of India INX and their clients access to the Russian market.

The partnership will create a cost-effective bridge for Indian investors to access trading on the Moscow Exchange (MOEX), Russia's main trading venue for equities, bonds, derivatives, forex and money markets, according to a statement.

India INX Global Access IFSC Ltd, which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the BSE's India INX, has launched a platform through which Indian clients can trade foreign stocks. It is India's first international exchange set up at GIFT

IFSC.

The tie-up with Sova Capital, an international clearing member of MOEX, will provide an outbound connection to all-India INX members and their clients to access all instruments on MOEX and trade the global markets directly from India.

"We are delighted to establish access to Indian investors via our tie-up with India INX to all segments of Moscow Exchange: equities, stocks, derivatives, FX SPOT.

"The markets are integrated and India INX, as an offshore exchange, has made the first but critically important step by offering unified marketplace that provides access to global markets directly from India," Sova Capital Director (Sales) Tatiana Primak said.

## Total employment in 9 select sectors rises to 3.10 cr in Jul-Sep 2021

**New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):**

Total employment generated by nine select sectors stood at 3.10 crore in the July-September 2021 quarter, which is 2 lakh more than that of the April-June period, according to a quarterly employment survey by the labour ministry released on Monday.

The quarterly employment survey (QES) report released by Union Labour Minister Bhupender Yadav said that total employment numbers in the nine select sectors were 3.08 crore in April-June 2021.

The rise shows improvement in economic activities after lifting of lockdown restrictions by states to curb the spread of deadly virus after the second wave of the

## Rupee gains 31 paise at 74.03 against USD, gold declines Rs 54

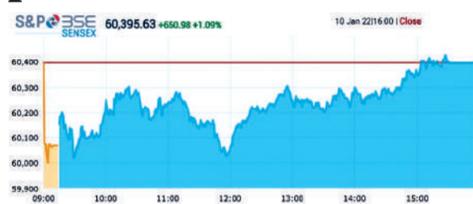
**Mumbai, Jan 10 (PTI):** The rupee surged 31 paise to close at 74.03 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday amid robust buying in domestic equities.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened strong at 74.15 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 74.03 and a low of 74.21. It finally settled at 74.03, a rise of 31 paise over its previous close.

In the previous session, the rupee had settled at 74.34 against the US dollar. On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex ended 650.98 points or 1.09 per cent higher at 60,395.63, while the broader NSE Nifty jumped 190.60 points or 1.07 per cent to 18,003.30.

## Sensex zooms 651 pts, Nifty recaptures 18,000 level

**Mumbai, Jan 10 (PTI):**



The BSE Sensex shot up over 650 points to surge past the 60,000-level while the NSE Nifty settled above 18,000 on Monday as participants showed keen interest in IT and financial shares ahead of the Q3 earnings season. Starting off on a positive note, the 30-share BSE benchmark hit the day's high of 60,427.36, before ending at 60,395.63, higher by 650.98 points or 1.09 per cent.

Likewise, the NSE Nifty climbed 190.60 points or 1.07 per cent to settle at 18,003.30. On the Sensex chart, Titan, Maruti, SBI, L&T, HDFC and Kotak Bank emerged as prominent gainers. In contrast, Wipro, Nestle India, Asian Paints and PowerGrid were among the major laggards.

Analysts said the Q3 corporate results announcements starting this week from the IT majors and HDFC Bank are likely to set the trend for the crucial tech and banking segments. Elsewhere in Asia, the bourses ended on a subdued note as investors awaited US inflation data.

In Asia on Monday, the Shanghai Composite Index advanced 0.4% to 3,593.52 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong gained 1.1% to 23,746.54. The Kospi in Seoul fell 1% to 2,926.72 and

Sydney's S&P ASX 200 lost 0.1% to 7,447.10. New Zealand and Jakarta declined. Bangkok and Singapore advanced.

In early trading, the DAX in Frankfurt gained 0.1% to 15,967.95 while the FTSE 100 in London was little-changed at 7,486.65. The CAC 40 in Paris also was flat, at 7,220.20. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital market, as they bought shares worth Rs 496.27 crore on Friday, according to stock exchange data.

## ICICI Life Insurance launches new plan

**Mumbai, Jan 10:**

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has launched an innovative term insurance product 'ICICI PruProtect Return of Premium', a customer-centric proposition offering life-stage based cover wherein the quantum of life cover is automatically adjusted based on the customer's life stages. The ICICI PruProtect Return of Premium offers return of 105% of all premiums paid on survival, besides providing cover against 64 critical illnesses, one of the highest in the industry. It offers two variants - Life Stage Cover and Level Cover. The Life-stage Cover is an innovative feature which auto adjusts the sum assured or life cover based on the life-stage of customers. It enables cus-

tomers to increase their life cover when it matters the most as responsibilities grow in the initial stages. Also, it automatically reduces the life cover as responsibilities reduce in the later stages. Importantly, the premium remains constant throughout the tenure of the policy. This is ideally suited for customers who seek adequate life cover across their lifetimes. Also, it offers customers the flexibility to get 105% of the premiums paid back at an early age of 60 or 70 years with continued protection till the end of the policy term or at maturity, as per the customer's choice. The Level Cover variant is ideal for individuals looking for a term insurance plan that offers a survival benefit along with a fixed death benefit.

## COVID battered hospitality sector demands infra status for hotels

**New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):**

With the fresh wave of COVID-19 plunging the hospitality sector back into uncertainty, industry body HAI on Monday said it has asked the government to consider granting infrastructure status to hotels, extend moratorium on loans and rationalise taxes.

In its pre-Budget memorandum, the Hotel Association of India (HAI) said policy interventions are imperative for the sector's survival and its early and quick rebound to normalcy.

"The hospitality industry was slowly getting into a recovery mode on the strength of domestic tourism leisure and events, only to be plunged



back into uncertainty on account of the Omicron threat. It is critical to protect the industry during such prolonged periods of flip-flop in business prospects," HAI said in a statement.

Among the major demands from the sector is according hotels the status

of 'Infrastructure' as it will resolve a large number of the issues being faced by hotels and hospitality companies, it added.

The step will also help survive operationally and encourage investments in the sector.

"Access to softer funding, longer periods to

repay loans, resultant shortening of the gestation period will make hotel investments more attractive and sustainable. More hotels would mean more jobs, more development," HAI said.

Stressing that the sector's cascading effect on the economy has already been well established and documented, the association said, "infrastructure status will also enable hotels to avail benefits of lower taxation, utility tariffs and simplified approval process for projects."

Additionally, it said, "the road to recovery can also be aided through measures like extended moratorium, rationalisation of taxes and facilitating ease of doing business."

## Skoda drives in all new Kodiaq at Rs 34.99 lakh

**New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):**

Czech automaker Skoda on Monday launched new version of its premium SUV Kodiaq in the country, priced between Rs 34.99 lakh and Rs 37.49 lakh (ex-showroom). The new Kodiaq comes equipped with 2-litre petrol engine mated to a seven-speed transmission sending power to all four wheels. The company said the all new version of the seven seater model, which comes with various luxury features, can accelerate to 100kph in just 7.8 seconds. The three trims Style, SportLine and Laurin & Klement variants of the model are tagged at Rs 34.99 lakh, Rs 35.99 lakh and Rs 37.49 lakh, respectively. "Kodiaq has a rich, international legacy of being a pioneering model of our SUV campaign. In



India, as in with the other markets where the KODIAQ is present, the SUV has stood out for the ample space on offer, comprehensive range of equipment and its excellent value-for-money proposition," Skoda Auto India Brand Director Zac Hollis said in a statement. With the all-new Kodiaq, the company has built on the design aesthetic, comfort, engine and dynamic capabilities, along with thoughtful additions in the cabin, he added. "With several seg-

ment leading features and uncompromising safety, Kodiaq is a complete luxury package for the family, whether it is everyday driving or off-road adventures," Hollis stated. In terms of safety, the model comes with nine airbags, adaptive front headlights, defogging across all transparent surfaces, electronic, mechanical and hydraulic brake assist, stability control, multi-collision braking and park assist with handsfree parking among others.

## India Pavilion at Dubai Expo marks 100 days of hectic activities

**Woos over 7 lakh visitors**

**Dubai, Jan 10 (PTI):**

The India Pavilion at EXPO 2020 Dubai marked its 100th-day on Monday, becoming one of the most popular enclosures at 7,40,356 footfalls, showcasing the country's business potential as well as cultural and geographic diversity. On the occasion, Minister of Commerce & Industry Piyush Goyal tweeted, "100 glorious days of the India Pavilion shining bright at the @Expo2020Dubai. The world is witnessing #IndiaAtDubaiExpo as a hub of innovation, growth and opportunities. Visit the pavilion to experience



the grand celebration of India's growth story.

The India Pavilion was inaugurated on October 1 last year by Goyal, who is also the minister of consumer affairs, food, public distribution and textiles.

The Expo, inaugurated on October 1, 2021 will conclude on March 31, 2022. It was originally scheduled for October 20, 2020 to April 10, 2021. It was postponed due to the COVID-19

pandemic. As on January 8, the Indian enclosure recorded 7,40,356 visitors - one of the highest among participating nations.

The Indian Pavilion has hosted various delegations from key sectors and states, highlighting business opportunities, focused on local diverse geographies, cultures and the socio-economic assortment. A key project at the India Pavilion is 'Elevate', which demonstrates unconventional solutions developed by 500 Indian start-ups to everyday problems.

The India Pavilion is currently hosting the Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) Week' and the Tourism Week' which were inaugurated on January 3.

## Renewable energy generation capacity addition to touch 16 GW

**Outlook for renewable energy sector remains stable**

**New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):**

The country's renewable energy capacity addition is estimated to touch 16 GW in the next financial year in view of the strong pipeline of 55 GW clean energy projects, according to ICRA. "The outlook for the capacity addition in the Renewable Energy (RE) sector remains strong with a large project pipeline of over 55 GW and the highly competitive tariffs offered by these projects," rating agency ICRA said in a statement on Monday. It expects RE capacity addition to increase from 7.4 GW reported in FY'2021 to



12.5 GW in FY'2022 and further to 16 GW in FY'2023. The commitment to climate change goals announced at the recent COP26 summit, including increasing the non-fossil power capacity to 500 GW and meeting 50 per cent of energy requirement from renewable sources by 2030, further strengthens the investment prospects in the

renewable energy sector.

The capacity addition witnessed a strong recovery in the first eight months of FY'2022 (April to November 2021) with 8.2 GW added against 3.4 GW added in the year-ago period. Girishkumar Kadam, Senior Vice President & Co-Group Head - Corporate ratings at ICRA, said the backlog

of the projects awarded by the central nodal agencies and state distribution utilities remains large with under-development solar, wind and hybrid capacities of more than 55 GW.

"Basis this pipeline, ICRA expects the RE capacity addition to increase from 7.4 GW reported in FY2021 to 12.5 GW in FY2022 and further to 16 GW in FY2023." This is also supported by the progress shown by the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) in signing of power sale agreements and power purchase agreements in the last six months. Within the RE capacity, the addition would be driven by the solar segment followed by the wind and hybrid segments, he stated.

## Saumya Kamble wins 'India's Best Dancer Season 2'



A journey that took viewers through a celebration of dance has finally come to a befitting culmination as Sony Entertainment Television's popular dance reality show, India's Best Dancer – Season 2 has found this season's BestKaNextAvatar! With a grand showcase of multiple dance acts and techniques, 'The Ultimate Finale' of India's Best Dancer has been an exceptional one.

As the country waited in anticipation to know who from amongst the Best 5 Finalists will be declared as the winner, Saumya Kamble from Pune was announced as the season winner and was awarded with the coveted trophy. Saumya Kamble was awarded with a cheque of INR 15 lakhs from Sony Entertainment Television and a Maruti Suzuki Swift car. Her choreographer Vartika Jha was awarded a cheque of INR 5 lakhs. From the Best 5 finalists, Gourav Sarwan from Jaipur was declared as the first runner-up; Roza Rana from Odisha was declared as the second runner-up; Raktim Thakuria from Assam was declared as the third runner-up and Zamroodh from Kerala was declared as the fourth runner-up. Each one of them was awarded with a cheque of INR 1 lakh by Campus Shoes respectively. Additionally, Sony Entertainment Television also awarded the runners-up with a cheque of INR 1 lakh respectively. Last but not the least, the Best 5 finalists also received the Patanjali Swadeshi Samridhi Card which is preloaded with INR 5,000. Apty titled as 'Humari Choti Helen' by Asha Bhosle, Saumya gave it her best and presented some exceptionally jaw dropping belly dancing and freestyle dance acts along with her choreographer Vartika. While her father wanted her to become a doctor and mother an aspirant dancer, the elegant dancer meticulously balanced both their wishes without compromising on her skill. She was also coined as 'India's Best Daughter' on the show by her father who was her constant support in her journey.

## Nia Sharma grooves to peppy track 'Phoonk Le'

### 'Phoonk Le'

Actress and model Nia Sharma says her latest track 'Phoonk Le' comes as the most awaited project for her as she was always willing to work in an item number.

She says: "I grew up watching item songs like 'Chaiyaa Chaiyaa', 'Chamma Chamma', 'Bidi Jalaile', 'Munni', 'Sheela ki Jawani' and always swooned over how stunning all those women looked in the songs. I never knew I'd be the one getting an item number like 'Phoonk Le'. I was killing myself thinking how I'd even pull it off, I rehearsed day and night as I am not a professional dancer."

She further shares on how she prepared herself to be featured in the dance number and adds: "I went to extreme levels where I worked out immensely, stopped eating much and gave it my all. I am nervous, I hope my audience likes it and gives all their love and support to this song. I have jitters in my body and I am tripping on my own song, I can't stop humming and dancing to the tunes."

'Phoonk Le' is a Hindi single track written by Meer and Lado Suwalka and sung by Nikhita Gandhi. The number is composed by

music composer Rangon and directed by Prince Gupta.

Singer Nikhita shares her experience of singing the song and says: "Phoonk Le' was a very fun song to sing. It has the spiciness, the tadka that you seek in a desi track. Moreover, Rangon has composed the music so beautifully. I couldn't have asked for a better song to start my new year with."

Rangon, who has composed the music for this peppy track says working on this song was not only challenging but exciting too.

He says: "Phoonk Le' is a desi song that contains the essence of India and requires the best taddedar beats. So, working on a song that demands all this was exciting, challenging and fun at the same time because I have never done an item song before. I am glad that Nikhita Gandhi did a killer job with her voice and also the entire team has done so much hard work in the song and it is getting the response it deserves."

The dance number 'Phoonk Le' will be released on January 10 on Saregama Music's YouTube channel and other streaming OTT platforms.



Having worked in the television industry for almost a decade across numerous genres, talented actress Ishita Ganguly will be now seen as Sandhya Gupta in &TV's Ghar Ek Mandir-Kripa Agrasen Maharaja Ki. Sandhya's entry will stir new hurdles and challenges in Genda's (Shreenu Parikh) life. Elated to be a part of the show, Ishita Ganguly shares, "I am extremely excited for my character's entry into the show. I have been following a few episodes, and the show has grabbed my attention with its high voltage drama and the emotional roller coaster ride that it takes you on. What I adore about the show is that most because every character has a story and is given equal importance. Now I cannot wait to see how the viewers are going to react to Sandhya's entry in the show." She further shares her character, "Sandhya Gupta is a young free-spirited girl who belongs to a traditional conservative family. The most interesting part is that she and Varun had an intense love affair five years ago, but they broke off the relationship as she was not ready to settle. But they say some stories do not end that easy, even though Sandhya decided to never come back into Varun's life. But she accidentally ends up at Agarwal's house as she is Nisha's (Kenisha Bhardwaj) cousin. Now the viewers have to wait and watch to see how my character's entry will lead the story to a whole new emotional turmoil in Genda and Varun's life."

## Ishita to enter 'Ghar Ek Mandir-Kripa Agrasen Maharaja Ki'



Watch Ishita Ganguly as Sandhya Gupta in Ghar Ek Mandir-Kripa Agrasen Maharaja Ki airing every Monday to Friday at 9:00 pm only on &TV.



## 'I was able to overcome mental health issues'

Samantha has spoken about the importance of mental health as she recounted her own struggle with mental health issues. Samantha was invited as the chief guest for the launch of the 'Psychiatry at your doorstep' initiative of Roshini Trust and Datla Foundation.

Being in the spotlight for the issues in her private life right now, Samantha has provided a window into how she has handled those issues. Samantha, who spoke at the event opened up about her mental health struggles and how many people helped her overcome those problems.

The 'Rangasthalam' actress said, "There should be no inhibitions about seeking help when you are mentally disturbed. In my case, I was able to overcome my mental health issues only with the help of my counselors and friends."

The actress also stressed the point that seeking help from psychiatrists must be normalised. "Like how we go to a doctor for physical injuries, we also should consult doctors if our heart gets hurt", she said. "If I am successful for the next part of my life, it is not because I was strong. But it is because many people around me helped me to be strong", Samantha affirms. "A lot of people are spending a lot of time and effort to help. It's time for all of us to do our bit as well," the 'Oh Baby' actress added.

## HOROSCOPE TUESDAY JANUARY 11

**Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18**  
It's an uphill struggle today! But the heavens are on your side, and you will be saved from being swindled. Otherwise, it's an eventful day at work. You may initiate big business deals and new projects as well. It will take all your energy, and Ganesha suggests you hit the deck early.

**Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20**  
While you like cooperating with your colleagues, there is nothing like a little competition to spice things up. You will nonchalantly take on the challenges coming your way, and thrive on the sweet smell of success today. Luck is in your favour as well. Make the most of it, says Ganesha.

**Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 20**  
Think positive today and watch the world around you changing. Regardless of how difficult things may seem, Ganesha advises you to take it without getting upset. If you set your mind to something, you can do it. You have the Midas touch today, so it is a good time to introduce a new strategy.

**Taurus: Apr 21 - May 21**  
Ganesha urges you to be prepared for setbacks and disappointments today. Your efforts may end in being a waste of precious time and energy. The results you get are likely to be far below your expectations. Falling short of your target is likely to weigh you down with stress and anxiety. You can, however, ease and reduce your frustration by reexamining your expectations and lowering them down to a comfortable, achievable level.

**Gemini: May 22 - June 21**  
You will be in a state of heightened sensitivity today. Therefore you need to curb down on your emotions. You will be able to successfully express your feelings to someone, and your feelings will play a vital part in your life, says Ganesha.

**Cancer: June 22 - July 22**  
You are known for your ability to set the ball rolling. Once you set your mind to do something, it is generally considered done by your peers. Today, you are eyeing a few accomplishments on the monetary front. Most part of your day will go in dealing with financial transactions, and importing and exporting goods.

**Leo: July 23 - Aug 23**  
The desire and passion for learning is a life-long quest, says Ganesha. It may be that you love to learn, but dissipating the knowledge you have acquired is equally important. So on this day, it is through teaching that you shall learn just how fascinating and frustrating children can be. Give them time and space and you shall find yourself filled with pride as they scale greater heights. Ganesha believes that now is the time to master some extracurricular activities.

**Virgo: Aug 24 - Sept 22**  
All the work done in the past will reap rich rewards today, says Ganesha. You'll direct things your own way, and in no way would you take orders from anyone. But don't go overboard with all the authority and keep a cool, calm head.

**Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 23**  
Sometimes, you lend a helping hand and people end up taking the entire arm. Well, that's kids for you! So beware, because young ones around you may try to take undue advantage of your sympathetic nature today, hints Ganesha. Minor issues and problems may dampen the high spirits that you are in today. But fret not, just keep a cool head and get back on track to being your charismatic self. Also, Ganesha sees you taking chances in money matters today.

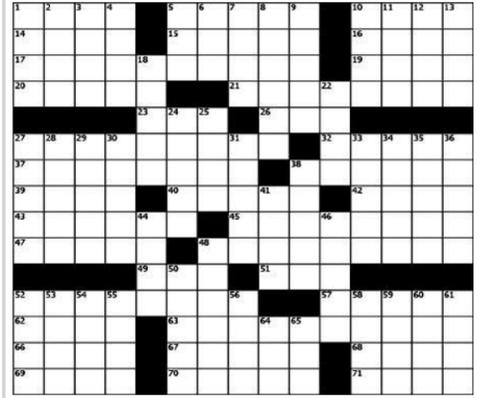
**Scorpio: Oct 24 - Nov 22**  
In all probability, your mood is extremely hawkish today. Your belligerence may even put off Lady Luck for the time being. Ganesha advises you to stay away from confrontations and troubles of any kind. The evening, however, promises to be relaxing.

**Sagittarius: Nov 23 - Dec 21**  
Remember that actions always speak louder than words. You will, in all probability, finish your work that has been seeking your attention for long now. You shall also successfully bring continuing disputes to the table and resolve them logically.

**Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 20**  
The journey from defeat to success is driven by optimism. You will be very optimistic today all about your work, future and everything that can lead you to success, says Ganesha. You will also be very careful while dealing with day-to-day work, and will capitalise on every opportunity that can get you a step closer to your goals. Determination and good luck is all you need to realise your dreams; you will have both today.

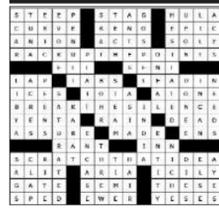
## CROSSWORD

183



- ACROSS**
- Custom auto accessories
  - Bonnie or Tony
  - Icelandic poetry manual
  - Cookie jar denizen, perhaps
  - Ultralight wood
  - Epitaph word, perhaps
  - Fragrant Asian tree
  - Gamble badly
  - Fowl entrance
  - Narcissist's affliction
  - Tidal reflux
  - "A Chorus Line" number
  - Frankie Laine hit
  - Thin, fibrous bark
  - Promoted with too much enthusiasm
  - Islamic salutation
  - Dotted-line command
  - Showing expertise
  - Three of a kind?
  - Maudie's film partner
  - Trees-lined promenades

- With subterfuge
- Old-style pressing tools
- Certain numbered hwy.
- Pro \_\_\_\_ (for the time being)
- Member of baseball's 500 homer club
- Ancient region of Asia Minor
- American author/critic/screenwriter James
- Type of rifle
- A flightless bird
- Homeric epic
- Very much a fan of
- Make money
- Heated conflict
- Unit of oil production, briefly
- Partner of order
- Skin cream additive
- Equiangular geometric shape
- Subject of a house inspection test
- Scatter Fitzgerald
- "Because You Loved Me" singer
- Arms of "I Love Lucy"
- On the ocean
- Fences the loot, e.g.
- Man who wasn't there"
- Word with shouldered or minded
- Minus locks
- Naphthalene repels them
- Pertaining to the iris and choroid
- "Turn on, tune in, drop out" advocate
- Flynn of "Gentleman Jim"
- Standard of excellence
- Birch relative
- TV game-show announcer Don
- A hymn of praise
- Out of proper order
- A star stands for it
- Plot of land
- Greek harp
- Impersonate
- Schoolmaster's rod
- Native American tents (Var.)
- Cut the fat, e.g.
- Turkish leader
- Suggestive look
- Intend to say
- Leave out
- Singer Redding
- Love potion's number
- Smidgen
- Ever and \_\_\_\_
- One way to stand
64. Dither



# Ashwin can continue to play spin all-rounder's role in any conditions: Kohli

Cape Town, Jan 10 (PTI):

Ravichandran Ashwin can play the all-rounder's role in any conditions, India skipper Virat Kohli said on Monday, impressed by the premier off-spinner's consistency with both bat and ball in recent years.

"Kohli said Ashwin has filled in the void left by the injured Ravindra Jadeja in an outstanding manner.

After their setback in Centurion, the hosts South Africa bounced back strongly in the second Test at Wanderers to chase down a tricky 240 and level the three-match series at 1-1.

"Jadeja's value everyone understands and what he has done for the team, but I think Ash has been playing that role pretty well for us," Kohli said on the eve of the third and final Test here.

"Ash knows that his game has come forward by leaps and bounds es-



pecially bowling overseas. He understands that himself from Australia onwards."

Ashwin played a stellar knock of 46 from 50 balls and was the team's second highest scorer, after stand-in skipper

KL Rahul's 50, as India managed 202 all out in the first innings of the second Test.

While Ashwin returned wicket-less in the first innings, the off-spinner bagged 1/26 from his 11.4 overs in

## All eyes on batter Kohli helping 'skipper' to win historic Test series

Cape Town: Virat Kohli's talismanic presence will be the shot in the arm that India would need in their bid to win the historic first-ever away Test series against South Africa but the hosts will also walk in with a spring in their step in the final Test starting here Tuesday. Kohli missed the last Test in Johannesburg due to back spasms and if the training session at the Newlands was anything to go by, the skipper is not going to miss the series-finale for anything with the two teams locked at 1-1. The hosts will definitely fancy their chances after a fighting performance drew them level in the second Test. And playing his 99th Test on what will also be his daughter's first birthday, the batter in Kohli would like to make it a special one for the 'Captain', who has been under tremendous pressure of late. Nothing succeeds like success and winning the first ever Test series in South Africa in three decades will certainly establish Kohli as one of the greatest to have led the country in the traditional format. And to achieve that, the team's batting, which hasn't exactly been anything more than mediocre, needs to improve by a few notches and perhaps a first innings score in excess of 300 plus will set the tone. There are players, whose mere presence gives any team an added psychological boost, and the Indian skipper is one such character.

South Africa's second essay, as they hosts secured a seven-wicket win to restore parity.

"If you look at his batting contribution in the last Test and the way he bowled in the second innings I think that's an outstanding contribution to the team.

"He's in a very comfortable space where he's willing to contribute to the team and he's doing so in the right intention, in the right way," Kohli said, giving full support to the senior player.

## 'Transition happens naturally and you can't force conversations'

Cape Town: India captain Virat Kohli on Monday made it clear that the current team management is not thinking of phasing out under-pressure senior players Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane as "transitions" can't be forced on individuals based on mere "conversations". While both the senior players have found some form with fifties in the lost second Test against South Africa but prolonged inconsistency has given rise to questions on whether it is becoming unfair on the likes of Shreyas Iyer and Hanuma Vihari, who are forced to sit out despite decent performances. With Iyer scoring a hundred and fifty on debut in the home series against New Zealand and Vihari hitting an unbeaten 40 in his comeback Test in Johannesburg, Kohli was asked whether conversations have started on how to handle the transition phase and the skipper nipped it in the bud.

# On cusp of 50th Test, Rabada says 'he's nowhere near done'



Cape Town, Jan 10 (PTI):

When Kagiso Rabada takes the field against India on Tuesday, he will complete a significant milestone of playing 50 Test matches, but the pacer says "he is nowhere near done" and hopes to serve South African team for a long time.

Rabada, 26, already has 226 Test wickets in his kitty and is spearheading the Proteas pace attack. He is also the fastest South African bowler and fourth fastest overall in terms of age to get to 200 wickets.

"As much as it is about taking wickets, it's about being the best I can be and

there's no limit to that. I feel like I'm nowhere near done," Rabada was quoted as saying by the Cricket South Africa website.

"It's just about coming back and playing the next game. You can never take international cricket for granted. "For me it's about the longevity and not doing it for just a short amount of time. It's about doing it for a long time and that's what keeps driving me," he added. Rabada, who was unaware of reaching the landmark until the end of the previous match, said it's a milestone which is close to his heart. "It's quite special. I didn't even know how many games I was on and only found out after the last Test match that this would be my 50th.

"It kind of really goes by without noticing. But it's something special for me, I've always wanted to represent my country, so this is definitely a personal milestone and one that I'll hold dear to my heart."

It has not been an easy path for the pacer since he made his Test debut in India in 2015.

# Prajesh moves to second round of Australian Open Qualifiers



Melbourne, Jan 10 (PTI):

India's Prajesh Gunneswaran knocked out third seed Colombian Daniel Elahi Galan from the Australian Open Qualifiers with a straight set victory, here on Monday. Ranked 221, the left-handed Prajesh beat

119th ranked Galan 6-4 6-4 in one hour and 13 minutes in the first round at court number six of the Melbourne Park.

"It was pretty good match. It's a good start here. I returned really well, better than the last few months and I am looking forward to continuing

the momentum," Prajesh told PTI. "Overall, it was a high quality match. He also played quite well. Last couple of games were crucial. Somehow I got out of breakpoints and finished it off," added the 32-year-old. He will next take on Germany's Maximilian Marterer, who beat Croatia's Nino Serdariusic 3-6 6-1 6-4 in his opening round. Prajesh hit a crushing backhand winner from the middle of the court to open up a break opportunity in the third game of the opening set and converted the second chance with a deep return that Galan sent on the net with his forehand.

# BCCI postpones Cooch Behar Trophy knockout games after massive COVID-19 outbreak

Mumbai, Jan 10 (PTI):

The BCCI on Monday postponed the knockout games of U-19 Cooch Behar Trophy following a massive COVID-19 outbreak among the participating teams.

As as many as 38 cases (32 players, 6 support staff) across eight teams were detected ahead of the knockout stage beginning in Pune on Tuesday, PTI has learnt.

"The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) on Monday announced the postponement of the knockout stage matches of the Cooch Behar Trophy following some positive

COVID-19 cases within the team environment.

"Keeping everyone's health and safety in mind, the knockout matches to be held in Pune have been put on hold until further notice. The BCCI had conducted 93 matches across 20 venues in the league stage.

"The Board will continue to monitor the situation and identify a new window once the situation improves," said the BCCI in a statement.

Last week, the BCCI was forced to postpone all domestic events including the premier Ranji Trophy due to a surge in COVID-19 cases across the country.

# Barty pulls out Sydney event, heads straight to Melbourne

Adelaide, Jan 10 (API):

After winning both the singles and doubles titles at the Adelaide International, top-ranked Ash Barty has decided she doesn't need any more tournament action before the Australian Open.

Barty announced Monday that she'd travel directly from Adelaide to Melbourne Park and skip the Sydney Tennis Classic.

Geographically, that makes sense — it's much easier to get directly from Adelaide to Melbourne. But from a career standpoint, having a week off to fine-tune ahead of the first Grand Slam tournament of the year is more important.



tant. It's been an extraordinary week. We've been able to play lots of matches in singles and doubles, Barty said Monday. We've had plenty of court time, which is

great." Later Monday, Nick Kyrgios also pulled out of the Sydney tournament after contracting the coronavirus, placing him in doubt for the Australian Open which begins next Monday.

# Sindhu aims to fill cabinet with missing CWG, Asiad crowns in 2022

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):

Picking the right events will be crucial in a busy season, reckons top Indian shuttler P V Sindhu, who is targeting peak form during the Commonwealth and Asian Games this year to ensure that she clinches the two titles missing from her cabinet.

While the CWG is set to be held in Birmingham in July-August, the Asian Games is scheduled in Hangzhou, China in September.

"This year, I would like to win the Commonwealth Games gold, Asian Games title and the All England



title, besides the world championships," Sindhu told PTI ahead of the season-opening India Open Super 500 tournament, beginning here on Tuesday.

It is going to be another hectic season as besides the big-ticket events, there will also be the regular BWF World Tour events, including the Super 1000s,

Super 750s and Super 500s, to keep the ranking up.

"It will be important to pick and choose the events as there are lot of tournaments," said Sindhu.

"We have to plan carefully, ranking is also important and it would be important to find my best form at the Asian Games, and the Commonwealth Games."

Stressing on the importance of fitness in a busy season, Sindhu said, "It is important to be mentally and physically fit for each tournament, we need to give 100 per cent effort all the time, so fitness has to be at good levels both off and on the court.

# Latham, Boult star as NZ dominates 2nd test v Bangladesh

Christchurch, Jan 10 (API):

Tom Latham scored 252, Devon Conway banked another century and Ross Taylor likely played his last test innings as New Zealand declared at 521-6 on Monday before bowling out Bangladesh for 126 on the second day of the second cricket test.

Trent Boult took 5-43, including his 300th test wicket to join Richard Hadlee, Daniel Vettori and his new ball partner Tim Southee among New Zealanders who have taken 300 wickets in tests.

The milestone came in Boult's 75th test at an average of 27.35, along with



Trent Boult of New Zealand celebrates his 300th wicket during play on day two of the second cricket test between Bangladesh and New Zealand at Hagley Oval in Christchurch Monday.

wicket hauls in tests. It definitely means a lot, Boult said.

I suppose as a team we're not about the milestones but it definitely

means a lot to join an exclusive club, tough to get a membership.

Latham declared New Zealand's first innings halfway through the

middle session on day two at Christchurch, and Boult and Southee raced through the Bangladesh top order to leave the tourists' 11-4 in the seventh over challenging their test low score of 43.

Yasir Ali showed fortitude to post a maiden test half century and was out for 55 just before stumps. Latham took two catches at second slip among those four early wickets to keep up his outsized influence on the match which represented a massive shift in fortunes of the series after Bangladesh shocked World Test Champion New Zealand by winning the series-opener by eight wickets.

# Legends League: Vettori, Pietersen and Lee in 'World Giants' squad

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):

Former greats Brett Lee, Kevin Pietersen and Daniel Vettori are the top draws in the World Giants squad for the upcoming Howzat Legends League, starting on January 20 in Muscat.

The World Giants consists of Lee, Pietersen, Vettori, Daren Sammy, Jonty Rhodes, Imran Tahir, Owais Shah, Herschelle Gibbs, Albie Morkel, Morne Morkel, Corey Anderson, Monty Panesar, Brad Haddin, Kevin O'Brien and Brendan Taylor. Ravi Shastri, Commissioner of Howzat Legends League Cricket said "Truly living

up to their names, World Giants will be the team to beat in the championship. It can't get better than this.

"When you see top names from the World of Cricket coming together to take on the battle against Asia and India, it would be a treat for the Cricket fans." The India Maharajas comprises Virender Sehwag, Yuvraj Singh, Harbhajan Singh, Irfan Pathan, Yusuf Pathan, Badrinath, RP Singh, Pragnan Ojha, Naman Ojha, Manpreet Gony, Hemang Badani, Venugopal Rao, Munaf Patel, Sanjay Bangar, Nayan Mongia, Mohammad Kaif and Stuart Binny

Yaounde (Cameroon), Jan 10 (AP): Cameroon

captain Vincent Aboubakar scored two penalties in quick succession as the host country came from behind to beat Burkina Faso 2-1 in the African Cup of Nations' opening game, lifting the mood of a tournament burdened throughout the buildup by the coronavirus pandemic.

Aboubakar slotted the first penalty to the right side of the goal in the 40th minute and the second to the left side in the third minute of first-half injury time. It left a large crowd at Olembe Stadium in



Cameroon's captain Vincent Aboubakar celebrates his second goal of the match, during the African Cup of Nations 2022 group A soccer match between Cameroon and Burkina Faso at the Olembe stadium in Yaounde.



Yaounde sighing with relief after they'd waited out two delays lasting three years before the African Cup finally came to their Central African country. Cameroon's long-serving 88-year-old President Paul Biya smiled broadly at the

end. Cameroon was stripped of the 2019 tournament because of problems with its preparations and saw its 2021 hosting delayed a year because of the virus. It seemed the wait wouldn't be worth it when Gustavo Sangar

# New Zealand spinner Ajaz Patel wins ICC Player of the Month Award

Dubai, Jan 10 (PTI):

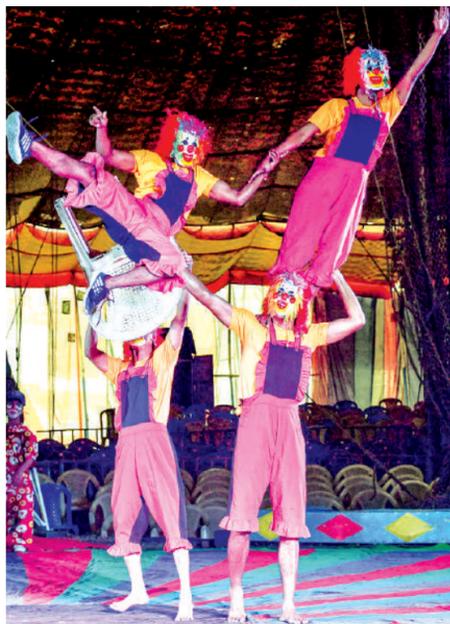
India-born New Zealand cricketer Ajaz Patel on Monday won the ICC Player of the Month award for December following his stupendous 10-wicket haul against Virat Kohli and Co. in the second Test in Mumbai. The left-arm spinner was nominated for the award alongside India opener Mayank Agarwal and Australian pacer Mitchell Starc but beat them to it on the back of his incredibly rare feat.

Ajaz picked up 14 wickets in the Mumbai Test match in early December against India, including all 10 in the first innings, to become only the third player in Test history, after Jim Laker and Anil



Kumble, to achieve the remarkable milestone. The Mumbai-born Ajaz made a fairy tale comeback to his city of birth in his first-ever tour of India with the Test team. Ajaz ended the first day of the Test with all four Indian wickets to fall under his name and made an impact on the first session the following day with wickets off back-to-back deliveries.

## HEROIC STUNT



Artists perform stunts at a circus, to near empty audience stands during the third wave of COVID-19 in Kolkata, Monday.

# UP polls: Not just BJP-SP race, others matter too

Lucknow, Jan 10 (PTI):

With their high-decibel campaigns so far, the BJP and the Samajwadi Party may appear to be locked in a direct fight in Uttar Pradesh. But others threaten to open up the field a bit.

Mayawati has said it would be a mistake to say that her Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) is out of the race in the assembly elections. And led by Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, the Congress hopes to upset the balance with its women-centric agenda.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and other BJP leaders have been targeting Akhilesh Yadav, furthering the impression that they regard his SP as



Samajwadi Party workers outside party office ahead of UP elections 2022, in Lucknow, Monday.

the main challenger.

Banking on the Hindutva plus development plank, the Bharatiya Janata Party has itself crafted an alliance with some Other Backward Class parties for a comeback bid in a state where

no party has won two consecutive elections over the past 35 years.

The BJP has allied with the Apna Dal (Sonelal) and the Nishad party, a combination of backward castes. Akhilesh Yadav is trying to upset the BJP with

the help of a rainbow coalition, which includes Om Prakash Rajbhar's Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party -- a former ally of the BJP in UP -- the Rashtriya Lok Dal and uncle Shivpal Yadav's Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party (Lohia).

It is yet to be seen if Priyanka Gandhi's women card -- she has even promised that 40 per cent of party tickets will go to women -- would outplay the caste and communal calculations of the main players.

After Rahul Gandhi lost the 2019 Lok Sabha polls from the family bastion of Amethi, the party faces a big challenge of winning from the five assembly segments in Rae Bareilly -- party president Sonia Gandhi's parliamentary constituency.

## HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS

# Soldiers waded through snow to shift patient from mountain village to hospital

Jammu, Jan 10 (PTI):

Responding to a distress call from a mountain village, a group of soldiers on Monday braved chilly winds and waded through knee-deep snow to bring down a seriously ill woman and get her admitted to a health facility in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district.

The woman's health was deteriorating fast, and her father sought the help of the Army's Rashtriya Rifles (RR) based at Gandoh, officials said. Sensing the gravity of the situation, the unit's commanding officer immediately launched a rescue mission to bring 25-year-old Manju Devi from the high-altitude snow-bound Chilli Bala village, they said.

Soldiers accompanied by battlefield nursing assistant and carrying medical comforts waded through the knee-deep snow for about two kilometers and reached the family within the shortest possible time, the officials said. The troopers carried the patient on a cot before taking her in an Army vehicle to the Gandoh Public Health Centre (PHC), they said.

She was subsequently shifted to the Government Medical College (GMC) Hospital in Doda where she was immediately attended by the doctors, the officials said. Staff at the GMC had made preparations to receive Devi as the Army had already coordinated with the civil administration before shifting the patient, they said.

# KVIC to sell paper slippers for devotees, workers

Of Kashi Vishwanath Temple

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):

The MSME ministry on Monday said Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) will start selling Khadi hand-made paper slippers from January 14 for the devotees and workers of the Kashi Vishwanath Temple in Varanasi. These slippers will be sold from the Khadi sales outlet located at the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor, it added.

"The devotees visiting the Kashi Vishwanath Temple in Varanasi and hundreds of temple workers will no longer need to enter the temple premises

## PM Modi sends 100 pairs of jute footwear

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has sent 100 pairs of jute footwear for those working at Kashi Vishwanath Dham after coming to know that most of them perform their duties bare-footed as it is forbidden to wear leather or rubber footwear in temple premises, government sources said on Monday. These include priests, people performing seva, security guards, sanitation workers and others, they added. Modi got the jute footwear procured and sent over to the dham so that those performing their duties don't have to stay bare-footed in the chilling cold. A source said, "PM Modi has been deeply involved with Kashi Vishwanath Dham & keeps a tab on all issues & developments in Varanasi. This is yet another example of his attention to minute details and his concern for the poor." Modi had last month inaugurated the first phase of the dham, which has massively expanded the Kashi Vishwanath Temple premises and beautified the complex.

Starting January 14, KVIC is beginning the sale of Khadi hand-made paper use and 'throw' slippers," the ministry noted. It added that the development comes in wake of the jute slippers sent by Prime Minister

Narendra Modi for the workers of Kashi Vishwanath Temple after he learnt that most of the people working at the temple performed their duty barefoot. These slippers, the ministry said, are eco-friendly and cost-effective.

# 'Disastrous to not grant divorce in marriage broken down irretrievably'

Chandigarh, Jan 10 (PTI):

HC DECISION

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has said it will be disastrous not to grant decree of divorce if a marriage has broken down irretrievably and there is no chance of the couple coming together or living together again.

The court made the statement while allowing a petition filed by a man against a Gurugram family court's decision to turn down his plea for dissolution of the marriage on the grounds of alleged cruelty and desertion.

"In the present case, the

marriage between the parties had broken down irretrievably and there is no chance of their coming together, or living together again. Further, not to grant decree of divorce would be disastrous for the parties," the bench of Justice Ritu Bahri and Justice Archana Puri said while passing the order on December 20, 2021.

It was argued that the respondent (wife) was not staying with the (appellant) husband since 2003 and was allegedly not willing to settle the dispute amicably. The man who wanted a divorce was ready to pay one-time alimony so that he could move ahead in life, but the wife was not accept-

ing that.

Referring to a Supreme Court verdict in a case, the HC Bench observed, "...however, marriage which is dead for all purposes, cannot be revived by Court's verdict, if parties are not willing since marriage involves human sentiments and emotions and if they have dried up, there is hardly any chance of their springing back to life on account of artificial reunion created by court decree."

After the family court in Gurugram rejected the plea, the man filed an appeal before the high court here seeking setting aside of the judgment.

"...Keeping in view the

extraordinary facts and circumstances of the case, the appeal is allowed and judgment dated 04.05.2015 passed by District Judge Family Court, Gurgaon is set aside and the decree of divorce is granted to the parties," the HC bench ordered, while directing the appellant to make a fixed deposit of Rs 10 lakh in the name of the respondent.

In the present case, firstly efforts were made to resolve the matrimonial dispute through the process of mediation, which is one of the effective mode of alternative mechanism in resolving the personal dispute but the mediation failed between the parties,

said the HC bench.

"It is not the case of the respondent-wife that she is not financially secure as she is working as permanent lecturer. The parties are staying separately for the last about 18 years and this Court made several attempts to settle the dispute amicably but in vain," the bench said.

It further observed that "living together is not a compulsory exercise. But marriage is a tie between two parties". "The marriage never took off from the first day. All mediation efforts have failed. Now, the marriage cannot be revived after 18 years of separation.

# Grenade blast outside Army cantonment in Pathankot solved

Police bust ISYF-backed terror module

Chandigarh, Jan 10 (PTI):

Punjab Police on Monday said it has solved a case involving a recent grenade blast outside the gate of the Army cantonment in Pathankot by busting a major terror module backed by the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) group with the arrest of six of its operatives.

The Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar police has also seized six hand grenades, one 9 mm pistol and one .30 bore rifle, along with live bullets and magazines, from the arrested men, Director General of Police (DGP) V K Bhawra said here. No casualty was reported in the blast that took place in November last year in front of the Triveni gate of the cantonment in

Pathankot. The ISYF is supported by Pakistan's intelligence agency ISI. The six men were arrested from different villages in Gurdaspur district. They were identified as Amandeep alias Mantri of Lakhnawal village, Gurwinder Singh alias Gindi of Kharal village, Parminder Kumar alias Rohit alias Rohta of Kharal village, Rajinder Singh alias Malhi alias Nikku of Gunnur village, Harpreet Singh alias Dholki of Gotporka village and Raman Kumar of Ghazikot village, according to a statement issued by the DGP's office.

"In two instances, some unidentified persons had hurled hand grenades at Pathankot -- one grenade was hurled outside

Triveni Dwar, outside the gate of Army cantonment at Pathankot, on November 21, 2021 at about 9 pm, while another one was hurled near Chakki Pull on November 11, 2021 at about 9:30 pm," the statement said.

Separate FIRs in connection with the incidents were registered at the Pathankot Division 2 and Division 1 police stations respectively, it added. The DGP said "during the preliminary interrogation, accused persons revealed that they were directly in touch with self-proclaimed chief of ISYF (Rode) Lakhbir Singh Rode and his close aides, identified as Sukhmeetpal Singh alias Sukh Bhikhariwal and Sukhpreet alias Sukh, for planning terrorist attacks".

## HEAVY SNOWFALL



A girl walks on a snow-covered road after recent snowfall at a village at Tangmarg, in Baramulla district, Monday.

# Cong's Mekedatu padayatra continues for second day

## FIR against nearly 30 leaders for COVID rules violation

Bengaluru, Jan 10 (PTI):

Karnataka Congress' 'padayatra' (march), demanding implementation of the Mekedatu project across the Cauvery river continued on the second day on Monday, even as FIRs have been registered against nearly 30 of its leaders and others for taking part in it, defying COVID-19 curbs.

According to official sources, FIRs have been registered against Congress' state president D K Shivakumar, Leader of Opposition in the State Assembly Siddaramaiah, Bengaluru Rural MP D K Suresh and several other

prominent party leaders and personalities at Sathanur police station for defying restrictions on Sunday. They said, cases have been registered for violation of COVID rules and prohibitory orders, under the Disaster Management act and sections of IPC.

However, Congress leaders and workers are continuing their march for the second day today, and are scheduled to cover a distance of about 15 km from Shivakumar's native Doddalahalli to Kanakapura.

The government has imposed curfew on weekends and restricted public gatherings to fight the surge in COVID-19 cases, till January 19. It has also prohibited all rallies, dharnas

and protests, among others, as part of containment measures. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, hitting out at Congress leaders for continuing their march said, the law will take its course against the organisers and important people who have violated the rules.

Speaking to reporters here, he said, anybody who violates the law will face action. "Further action will automatically follow with the case registered. Whatever action should be taken under particular sections, will be taken, it will definitely happen and there will be no differentiation in it. How much ever big a leader or a common man, the person involved is, action will be taken in accordance with law," he



Huge cut-outs of Congress MP Rahul Gandhi, KPCC President D K Shivakumar and other Congress leaders at the venue, during the 2nd day of the 10-day padayatra from Mekedatu to Bengaluru to demand the implementation of Mekedatu project, in Dodda Alahalli near Bengaluru, Monday.

added. The 10 days padayatra with the theme 'Namma Neeru Namma Hakku' (Our water, Our right) that began at

Sangama, the confluence of Cauvery and Arkavathi rivers at Kanakapura in Ramanagara district on Sunday under the leader-

ship of Shivakumar and Siddaramaiah, will be spanning a distance of nearly 139 km. However Siddaramaiah, who returned to city from the padayatra last evening due to fever, is not taking part today too, and is taking rest on doctor's advice. According to his office, he is likely to participate in the march from Tuesday.

Stating that according to his information FIRs have been registered on Sunday against about 30 leaders who participated in the padayatra and violated rules, Home Minister Araga Jnanendra said, today also there are violations and more cases may be registered. "Everything is left to the Ramanagara district administration, if there is any violation, whether by

Congress people or anyone else action will be taken," he said. Asked whether the police and government who take action on common people are feeling helpless in acting against politicians, the Minister said, definitely the government is not helpless.

"FIR has been registered against 30 people yesterday, they have also mentioned others in FIR for violation, and action will be taken against all those responsible...legal action will be taken," he said.

To a question why didn't the government act to stop the march, despite knowing about the large gathering of people much in advance, Jnanendra said, "we felt that as a responsible political party the Congress, may take a deci-

sion in the interest of the people at the last moment, but they did not, and are adamant on going ahead with the march."

Noting that stopping padayatra is not a big thing with the police force available, he said, to avoid any untoward incident there, the government decided to act smoothly in the interest of the people, and accused the Congress of playing politics during the coronavirus pandemic.

Replying to a question as to whether the march would be stopped from entering Bengaluru city that has been witnessing a spike in COVID cases, the Home Minister not giving any direct response said, the government will do everything possible to protect the city.



### BRIEF



A beneficiary shows the message received in her mobile phone after receiving a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine, at a health centre in Kolkata, Monday.

### Fire

Mumbai: A pushback tractor caught fire while readying to tow out an aircraft at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport here on Monday, police said. The vehicle was getting engaged with the aircraft before pushing it back when the incident took place, an official said. The airport fire services were rushed to the spot to douse the fire, he said.

### Gas leak

Mumbai: One person died and two others were hospitalised apparently after inhaling a gas which leaked in Ghatkopar area of Mumbai on Monday morning, a civic official said. The incident took place at Kurla Industrial Estate in Narayan Nagar at around 8.15 am when methanol and cyanuric chloride leaked there, he said. Three people were rushed to the nearby Rajawadi Hospital where doctors declared one of them as brought dead, the official said.

### NIA charge sheet

Kolkata: The NIA has filed a charge sheet against four Bangladeshi and an Indian operative of the proscribed Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh for their alleged involvement in radicalising Muslim youth and their recruitment by JMB/AQIS (al-Qaeda in Indian Subcontinent), an official said on Monday. Najjur Rahman Pavel, Mikail Khan, Rabiul Islam and Mohammad Abdul Mannan Bachu, all Bangladeshi nationals, have been named in the charge sheet along with Lalu Sen, a resident of West Bengal's North 24 Parganas, the official said.

### Shot dead

Imphal: Two men, including an India Reserve Battalion (IRB) personnel, were shot dead in Manipur's Imphal West district, leading to tension in the area, police said on Monday. The incident happened around 9 pm on Sunday in Samuro in the Wangoi police station area, they said.

### Interim bail

Chandigarh: The Punjab and Haryana High Court granted interim bail to SAD leader Bikram Singh Majithia on Monday in connection with a NDPS case registered against him. Majithia's counsel D S Sobti said the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader will join the investigation on Wednesday. He said the court has granted Majithia interim bail in the matter.

**Weather**  
High 24 Low 15

**MARKET**  
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SENSEX 18,003.30

**BULLION**  
GOLD 47406  
SILVER 60498

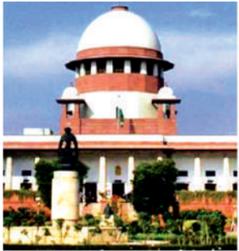
## SC set up panel headed by ex-SC judge

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):

The Supreme Court Monday said it would set up a panel headed by its former judge to probe the security breach during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Punjab and stayed the parallel inquiries by committees of the Centre and the state government into the lapses.

Stressing that the apex court was not undermining the importance of the security of the Prime Minister and dealing it with all seriousness, a bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) N V Ramana said that the separate inquiries by panels set by the Centre and the state government will be stayed.

The bench, also comprising Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli, took note of the submissions of Solicitor General Tushar



### Stays inquiries by Centre, Punjab

Mehta about the time frame within which the court-appointed panel should give the report and said it will keep this aspect in mind.

The top court was hearing the plea of an organisation, Lawyers Voice, seeking a thorough investigation into the breach in Modi's security in Punjab to ensure there is no such incident in the future.

On January 5, the Prime Minister's convoy was stranded on a flyover due to a blockade by protesters in Ferozepur after which

he returned from poll-bound Punjab without attending any event, including a rally.

We are thinking on these lines... One retired Supreme Court judge will head the committee and the members would be DGP (Director General of Police) of Chandigarh, the Inspector General of the NIA (National Investigation Agency), the Registrar General of the Punjab and Haryana High Court and one more person from Punjab...and he can be Additional DGP

### 'Threat calls over PM security lapse case'

Several Supreme Court lawyers on Monday wrote to the apex court alleging that they have received calls threatening judges over the case involving the security breach that left Prime Minister Narendra Modi stuck for 20 minutes on a flyover in Punjab last week. The letter, written by Supreme Court Advocate-On-Record Association (SCAORA), claimed that the calls were made allegedly by a pro-Khalistan organisation Sikhs for Justice (SJF).

(Security), the CJI observed, hinting at the broad parameters of the proposed order which will be passed later.

The top court also took note of the concerns of the Punjab government that

its officials are being condemned by the central government panel without any proceedings and ordered. All inquiries should stop.

At the outset, Advocate General and senior advocate D S Patwalia, appearing for the Punjab government, said: I don't think that I will get a fair hearing because there is some politics behind it also. My fear has come true as seven show cause notices have been sent to the state officials ranging from the chief secretary to the SSP by the central government's committee saying you are guilty...

Please hang me and my officers if we are guilty but please do not condemn us unheard, the state's law officer said, adding that an independent committee be set up as he apprehended that the state officials will not get fair hearing before the Centre's panel.

## Naxal carrying Rs 3 lakh reward surrenders



Bijapur/Konta, Jan 10: A Naxal carrying a reward of Rs 3 lakh on his head surrendered in Bijapur district on Monday, police said. Pandu Ram Savlam was the self-styled deputy commander of the Vajedu local operation squad (LOS), which functions under the Naxals' Telangana state committee, and was involved in the Tekulagudem encounter last year, an official said. Police data showed that in 2021, as many as 553 Naxals surrendered statewide, while 499 ultras were arrested and 46 gunned down.

Maoist rewarded with three lakhs surrendered in front of the police. Pandu Ram has surrendered after being fed up with the hollow ideology, lifestyle, discriminatory behavior and torture of the Maoists. Maoist Pandu was involved in many big incidents, due to which a reward of three lakhs was kept on him. On surrendering, Maoist Pandu was given 10000 cash as incentive. Under the guidance of Senior Superintendent of Police Bijapur Kamlochan Kashyap, a joint Maoist eradication campaign is being run in the district with the border state Telangana, influenced by the increasing pressure of the police and the dedication policy of the Chhattisgarh government, Telangana State Committee, Jaishankar-Bhupalpalli, Mulgu, Warangal, Peddapalli Division (JMWP) Maoist - Pandu Ram Sawalam (Wajedu LOS Deputy Commander) surrendered before the police.

## 'Low Covid hospitalisation rate may change quickly'

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI): Five to 10 per cent of the active Covid cases this time so far needed hospitalisation but the situation is dynamic and may change rapidly, the Centre said on Monday and asked states to keep a watch on cases under home isolation and in hospitals.

During the second surge of Covid infections in the country, the percentage of active cases that needed hospital care were in the range of 20-23 per cent, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said in a letter to states and Union territories.

The rise in COVID-19 cases in various parts of

### 'No time limit set for functioning of Covid vaccination centres'

New Delhi: The Centre on Monday made it clear to states and UTs that no time limit has been set for the operationalisation of Covid vaccination centres, and that they can operate till 10 pm daily based on availability of human resources and infrastructure. In a letter to states and UTs, additional secretary in the Union Health Ministry, Manohar Agnani, said there is an impression that Covid Vaccination Centres (CVCs) can operate only from 8 am to 8 pm daily. "In this regard, it is to reiterate that no time limit has been set for the operationalisation of the CVCs. The session timings are subject to the demand and the requirement at a particular CVC.

the country appears to be driven by the Omicron variant as well as by the continued presence of Delta, he said and stressed on augmenting human resources, particularly healthcare workers, for Covid management. "In the present surge, five to

10 per cent of active cases needed hospitalisation so far. The situation is dynamic and evolving. Therefore, the need for hospitalization may also change rapidly," Bhushan said. All states and Union Territories are advised to keep a daily watch on the

situation of the total number of active cases, cases under home isolation, the number of hospitalized cases, cases on oxygen beds, ICU beds and on ventilatory support, he wrote.

"Based on this monitoring, the requirement of healthcare workers and their availability health facility wise must also be reviewed daily as was done during the second surge," the health secretary said.

Appreciating that while various states and Union Territories initiated steps for the establishment of jumbo health facilities, field hospitals, temporary hospitals among others, Bhushan said both infrastructure and human resources have their limitations.

## India looking forward to constructive dialogue

New Delhi, Jan 10 :

India is looking forward to "constructive" dialogue with China to resolve issues in remaining friction points in eastern Ladakh, sources in the security establishment said on Monday ahead of the 14th round of military talks between the two sides on the 20-month row.

The talks will take place on January 12 at the Chushul-Moldo meeting point, on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh, the sources said.

The 'Senior Highest Military Commander Level (SHMCL)' talks will begin at 9:30 am, they said. "Indian side is looking

forward to constructive dialogue to resolve the balance friction areas," a source said.

It is learnt that major focus of the talks will be on disengagement in the Hot Springs area.

The Indian side is expected to press for disengagement as soon as possible in all the remaining friction points including resolution of issues in Depsang Bulge and Demchok. The 13th round of talks had taken place on October 10, 2021 and they ended in a stalemate.

Both sides failed to make any headway in the talks with the Indian Army saying after the dialogue that the "constructive suggestions" made by

it were neither agreeable to the Chinese side nor it could provide any "forward-looking" proposals.

In their virtual diplomatic talks on November 18, India and China agreed to hold the 14th round of military talks at an early date to achieve the objective of complete disengagement in remaining friction points in eastern Ladakh. The eastern Ladakh border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas.

Both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry.

## LOW FOOTFALL



Tourists walk in front of the historic Taj Mahal amid low footfall due to third wave of COVID-19, in Agra, Monday.

## I-T detects Rs 800-cr hidden cash transactions

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI): The Income Tax Department has detected unaccounted cash transactions of Rs 800 crore after it recently raided three real estate groups in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the CBDT said on Monday. The unidentified groups are engaged in the business of land development and construction and the taxman raided over two dozen premises linked to them on January 5 in Kurnool, Ananthapur, Kadapa, Nandyal, Bellary and some other locations, it said. Incriminating documents like handwritten books, agreements and digital data have been seized from a specialised software

application as well as from other electronic gadgets, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a statement. One group has been using a software which has been "systematically modified" to eliminate the unaccounted cash element of the consideration received and to record in the regular books of account the sale consideration that matches with registered sale price, the policy-making body for the Tax Department said. These groups have been found to be "accepting cash" over and above the registered value of the properties and such unaccounted cash is used for cash payments towards the purchase of lands and incurring other expenditure, it claimed.

## PRECAUTIONARY DOSE DRIVE

### Lakhs of 60-plus, healthcare workers get third Covid jab



A health worker administers a booster dose to a senior citizen at Civil Hospital in Lucknow, Monday.

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI): Lakhs of 60-plus citizens and frontline as well as health workers queued up for their third Covid jab on Monday as India began administering a precautionary dose against the infection, a critical step that

comes as cases spike alarmingly in the country. Braving snow, plummeting winter temperatures, rain in some places or unrelenting sun in others, many people could be seen waiting their turn outside vaccination centres across

## Chh'garh procures 67.65 lakh tonnes

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI): The Centre has procured 532.86 lakh tonnes of paddy so far in the ongoing 2021-22 marketing year season, with maximum quantities being purchased from Punjab, the Union food ministry said on Monday. "Till now, about 64.07 lakh farm-

### Govt's paddy procurement reaches 532.86 lakh tons

ers have been benefited with an MSP (minimum support price) value of Rs 1,04,441.45 crore," the ministry said in a statement. Out of the total procurement undertaken so far, maximum of 186.85 lakh tonnes of paddy has been

procured from Punjab, followed by 67.65 lakh tonnes from Chhattisgarh, 65.54 lakh tonnes from Telangana, 55.30 lakh tonnes from Haryana and 46.50 lakh tonnes from Uttar Pradesh till January 9 of the ongoing marketing season. The paddy marketing season normally begins from October and runs through September.

### Rajnath Singh tests positive for COVID-19

New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday said he has tested positive for COVID-19. In a tweet, he said he has "mild symptoms" and is under home quarantine. "I have tested positive for Corona today with mild symptoms. I am under home quarantine. I request everyone who have recently come in my contact to isolate themselves and get tested," Singh said.

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# 'Awareness, safety is the only protection against virus'

Administration reviews preparations with shopkeepers, traders for protection against virus

Central Chronicle News

**Pithora, Jan 10:** In view of increasing number of Corona cases in Nagar Panchayat Pithora, a general meeting of the traders and shopkeepers of city was held to generate safety measures and steps to be taken. In this Nagar Panchayat President Atma Ram Yadav along with CEO SDM Ritu Hemmani, SDO Minj and TI City Kosale and Chief Nagar Palika Officer Mahendra Gupta were present.

The administrative officer SDM OP Minj informed that it is compulsory to follow the corona guidelines as issued by the state government's health department and for better health of all the local administration be on the alert. There are better facilities in all the hospitals in city and



nearby areas and one should not take this corona's third wave in the form of pandemic seriously.

SDM said that no shopkeeper or trader should try to create artificial shortage of grocery or essential commodities. The administration apart from facilities to general public is also working for their safety and security.

At the same time the general public too should take special precautions and avoid going to crowded

place without any reasons and should not organise any social programme. He warned of taking strict action against hoarders.

On the other hand, Nagar Panchayat President also made an appeal to all the shopkeepers, traders and citizens to follow corona guidelines strict and said that they have already won over first two waves of corona and would definitely succeed for the third time as well.

So all the citizens, shop-



keepers and traders should wear mask properly, maintain social distancing and even the shopkeepers in 'Haat Bazar' should pay attention seriously and extend whole-hearted support. It is time to work for health and safety of all like a 'Sewadar' (watchman) and the shopkeepers have big responsibility and accountability towards their customers and citizens.

In this meeting, all shopkeepers put forth their views and the journalists

raised questions on the arrangements made by the local administration and all the questions were satisfactorily answered.

The meeting was attended by Bajrang Agrawal, Yashwant Chabda, Ritesh Mahanti, former corporator Ravinder Ajmani, Raju Ajmani, Akash Mahanti, Ashish Awasthi, Kuldeep Agrawal, Sumit Agrawal, Naresh Agrawal, Raju Ajmani, Gopal Sharma, Babu Mahanti, and others in large number.

# Follow the safety rules of Covid-19: Singhdeo

Central Chronicle News

**Koriya, Jan 10:** The world is once again battling the wave of Corona and the spread of corona infection is also increasing in the state and Korea district. In this situation, following the instructions of the government, it is very important to cooperate with the district administration and bring awareness to the safety rules among the people.

Parliamentary Secretary and Baikunthpur MLA Mr. Ambika Singhdeo, in a meeting held with political parties and business organizations in the District Collectorate meeting room here, appealed saying that the safety of all depends upon how careful one is to evade the infection.

She said that the number of people fixed by the government for marriages, funerals etc. should be followed. Meanwhile District Collector Shyam Dhawade appealed to all political parties and business organizations to cooperate in making people aware of following the COVID protocol in view of the security in the third wave of Corona in the meeting. Giving information about the preparations of the district administration to identify the corona infection at the initial stage itself so that the spread of infection can be stopped. For this, he talked about cooperation in random testing of shopkeepers, street vendors, carts, dump operators. The Collector appealed to the office bearers of the merchant organization to make them aware



through the traders about following the COVID protocol in rural areas as well. CMHO Dr Rameshwar Sharma said that high risk patients have been advised to stay at home. He told in the meeting that booster dose would be started in the district from next week. District Panchayat Vice President Vedanti Tiwari, Additional Collector Sukhnath Ahirwar, Joint Collector Anil Sidar, CMHO Dr. Rameshwar Sharma, District Education Officer Sanjay Gupta, office bearers of political parties and office bearers of business organizations were present in the meeting.

production. Similarly, Durga Self Help Group has earned a profit of Rs 39457 from vegetable production and Rs 36847 from vermi compost production. At the same time, fish seed has been supplied to Gayatri Self-Help Group by the schemes of the Fisheries Department. Along with poultry farming, fisheries are being done by the group under the system. After the next one year, the income of the group will be 25000 to 30000 thousand rupees, along with this, banana cultivation is being planned by the self-help group. Under which the group will get additional income.

# 19 beneficiaries provided gas connection, 'chullah'



Central Chronicle News

**Takathpur, Jan 10:** Providing benefit of the government's scheme to the beneficiary at the right

time and place is actually the true responsibility of the public representative. If the interest and obligation of the people who have voted then to power is not fulfilled then it would be gross injustice against the oath for which they have

been administered oath. The above are the words of Nagar Palika V-P Vandana Bala Singh while distributing LPG gas cylinders to 19 beneficiaries with gas connection and 'chullah' in ward No 2 under 'Ujjwala Gas Yojana'

here on Sunday. Extending greetings to all the beneficiaries, Nagar Palika V-P Vandana Bala Singh Thakur said that this scheme of the government has been introduced so that the housewives should feel comfortable and work with ease in the kitchen and get relief from smoke arising while cooking using fuel wood or cowdung cakes.

On this occasion Lalita Kshatriya, Manisha Dewangan, Nirmala, Aruna Thakur, Ghurva Sahu, Tijmati Sahu, Sadhana Singh, Sarojini Nirmalkar, Shakuntala Vishwakarma, Rani Bai, Murni Bai, Sarita Jaiswal, Chameli Bai, Savitri Thakur, Roshini Nirmalkar, Bhagwati Bai, Kumari Nirmalkar and others were present.

# Village Gauthans being developed as multi activity center

Central Chronicle News

**Sukma, June 10:** Household working women are adopting the means of self-employment by joining the schemes of the government, and one such multi activity centre is turning out to be the village Gauthans for these women and is earning extra income from these works.

Under the government's ambitious Suraji Gaon Yojana, 88 Gauthans have been constructed in Sukma district alone, where community gardening activities are being conducted through women self-help groups under multi-activity.

Women have shown



their self-reliance in the work of everyday life as well as in the village Gauthan and have made a good source of income with self-reliance by doing organic manure production, poultry (Kadakhnath) egg production, fish farming, vegetable production as well as mushroom production in Gauthans. Gidmanala Ramapuram

and Ramaram Gauthan have been established as ideal Gauthans of the district, and here new dimensions of self-reliance have been achieved through employment-oriented works by women's groups. Gayatri Self Help Group has earned Rs.68000 by producing eggs through Sabari layer farming and Rs.24,421 from mushroom

production. Similarly, Durga Self Help Group has earned a profit of Rs 39457 from vegetable production and Rs 36847 from vermi compost production. At the same time, fish seed has been supplied to Gayatri Self-Help Group by the schemes of the Fisheries Department. Along with poultry farming, fisheries are being done by the group under the system. After the next one year, the income of the group will be 25000 to 30000 thousand rupees, along with this, banana cultivation is being planned by the self-help group. Under which the group will get additional income.

# 8500 children vaccinated in 3 days



Central Chronicle News

**Takathpur, Jan 10:** There is great deal of enthusiasm among the school children and their parents for vaccination of their children in the age-group of 15-18.

Considering vaccine to be main weapon to deal with corona virus, the children are ensuring their full presence to get the vaccination done. On third day of vaccination in area under Takathpur block headquarters, around 8500 school children were vaccinated in different centres.

The parents are bringing their children to vaccination centre. On the other hand, many other

**3 found positive on Wednesday**

A 47 yr old woman near Gurudwara road was found to be positive and this created sensation in the region. It is just 100 mts vicinity of this case that members of four elite families have been found to be corona positive. This includes 40 yr youth from Ward No. 5 and a 48 yr old youth from Barela.

parents are still in doubt about the vaccination and are waiting for result of the vaccination, despite knowing the fact that with increasing number of corona positive cases, this vaccination cannot be avoided.

# 'Illicit sale of liquor worsening village's atmosphere'

Also putting future of children in dark by involving them

Central Chronicle News

**Bazar Ataria (Khairagarh), Jan 10:** Illicit sale of liquor is going on openly in Gram Udaipur of Chuikhadan block and it has worsened the peaceful atmosphere of the village. Sources informed that in the name of eggs and chicken shop, illicit liquor is being openly sold to customers daily.

When the press correspondent reached the village, at that time people in large number were found purchasing illicit liquor and were found standing in queue. In this illicit sell of liquor, not only men, but even aged persons and minors going to school were found standing in

the queue and all of them were found purchasing liquor without any fear from this 'Egg-Chicken' outlet.

With illicit liquor being sold without any restrictions, it is posing big threat on lives of school children and there is no action by the police and local administration against those selling illicit liquor openly.

Rather the police is acting as silent spectator in such cases and are unaware of the fact that the illicit liquor sellers are involving innocent children in such bad work and putting their future in dark and are openly exploiting them.

# Worsening atmosphere in village

It is worthwhile to mention here that with increase in illicit sale of liquor the villagers are made to face awkward situation, especially the women, who are made to encounter physical fighting and scolding among habitual drinkers. All the more with liquor being easily available, even the children and elders in the village are falling prey to intoxication and are ready to purchase liquor at higher prices, putting additional burden on their families. Due to sheer threat from the liquor lobby and illicit liquor sellers, the local denizens fear to lodge police complaint and no action is being taken by the Excise Department.

**What officer says**

"So far no complaint in this regard has been received and got information from this coverage and definitely strict action will be taken against those involved in illicit sale of liquor in villages."

**Rameshwar Deshmukh-TI Chuikhadan.**

# Malnutrition rate reduced by 14 %, Sukma secures second place in state

Central Chronicle News

**Konta, Jan 10:** Well-nourished women and well-nourished children are the first steps to a golden future. With the aim of improving the health and development of women and children, efforts are being made by the Department of Women and Child Development to improve and improve the nutritional level.

For the purpose of nurturing and nurturing malnourished children, supplementary nutrition diet program, Chief Minister Child Reference Scheme, Chief Minister Suposhan Mission Scheme, Mahtari Jatan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Matruvandan Yojana are being run by the Department of Women and Child Development.

As a result of systematic implementation of these schemes, there has been a reduction in malnutrition by 14 percent.

The level of malnutrition among children in the age group of zero to five years was 51.6 percent in Sukma district as per National Family Health Survey-4 year 2016.

According to the currently released National Family Health Survey-5 year 2021, there is 37.4 percent of Sukma district, that is, according to the latest released data, there has been a decrease of 14 percent in malnutrition in Sukma district. Sukma district ranks second in the state in terms of reduction in malnutrition rates.

Under the guidance of the district administration,



three Chief Minister Nutrition Centers (NRCs) are being operated in the district at Chhindgarh, Dornapal and Konta. Chief Minister Nutrition Center has been started from 28 January 2021.

Efforts are also being made to improve the

awareness about cleanliness and health, not only malnutrition but also the way of food and inclusion of locally available nutritious ingredients. This initiative of the government administration has also brought awareness among the vil-

lagers about cleanliness, nutrition and balanced diet. They themselves bring their children to the Anganwadi center regularly to get them checked up. Along with this, the Chief Minister also gets the children admitted in nutritional centers as per the requirement. In which earlier the villagers used to hesitate. So far, the weight of 334 children has been increased by providing proper health facilities by admitting 861 malnourished children in all the three nutritional centers.

At present, with the convergence of MNREGA, an Anganwadi building is being constructed with a pucca building of Rs 6.45 lakh. In case of non-availability of building facilities in unreached and sensitive areas, temporary

Anganwadi has been constructed by the Gram Panchayats and with the resources available at the district level, the Anganwadi building has been approved and constructed in the prefab also. At present 991 Anganwadi centers are operating against the approved 1040 Anganwadi centers in the district. Buildings have been approved for almost all Anganwadi centers in the district.

Out of the above approved buildings, 721 Anganwadi buildings are currently complete, in which 702 Anganwadi centers are operating in their own buildings. In this way, with the available allocation and convergence, efforts are being made to make proper operation of all the Anganwadis in their own buildings soon.

# KAA greets Chandrashekhar Yadav



**Khairagarh, Jan 10:** The newly elected corporator of ward No. 19 Naya Tikrapara Gokul Nagar (A d v o c a t e) Chandrashekhar Yadav as extended greetings and best wishes by the Khairagarh Advocates' Association (KAA) and he was welcomed as well.

It was on Jan 7, senior advocate Tirath Chandel, Sunil Kant Pandey, Kamalkant Pandey, Altaf

Ali, Vibhash Singh, Suresh Thakur, Suryadaman Singh, Suresh Bhatt, Dipesh Thakur, Ramkumar Jangde, Sandeep Das Vaishnav, Vikram Yadu, Chandrashekhar Verma, Rajendra Janghel, Shankar Yadav, Amar Yadav, Gyandas Banjare, Sabra Bano extended greetings to Chandrashekhar Yadav for the new responsibility.

# Off-Line classes in CU suspended till Jan 25

**Bilaspur, Jan 10:** Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya (Central University) Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh) in continuation of communication dated Jan 6 keeping in view the present circumstances of Covid-19, off-line classes/examinations and teaching-learning have been suspended from today till 25.01.2022. Classes/examinations, teaching-learning, and other academic activities will continue in online mode. Other instructions given in the order number 56/Estt./Adm./2022 dated June 6 issued earlier will remain the same.



## CENTRAL Chronicle

Since 1974 Volume 9 No. 281

### Case for booster vaccine

India has begun giving booster doses of the Covid-19 vaccine to priority groups amid a surge in infections. Health and frontline workers and people above 60 years with comorbidities are currently eligible to take the jab. The drive began as India battles a spike in Covid cases fuelled by the Omicron variant of the coronavirus. Early studies from other countries have suggested that a booster vaccine may provide more protection against Omicron. Before Omicron, immunologists thought that third doses would be sufficient. The immune-system players that remember previously encountered pathogens, memory B and T cells were holding up well over time, and it seemed that most people with two or three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine would maintain long-term protection against severe disease and death. Among Omicron's many mutations, few seem likely to compromise T cells' ability to recognize the virus and attack infected cells. Even if the body's immune forces stays strong and vaccinated individuals remain shielded from the worst ravages of COVID-19, public-health concerns could warrant extra boosters down the line, possibly on a fairly regular basis. Case for booster vaccines depends on mutation of COVID-19 causing virus. For example, if community-transmission rates remain high, then extra doses of vaccine could control viral spread by elevating the number of 'neutralizing antibodies' that directly stop the virus from entering cells. Levels of these antibodies fall over time after vaccination, limiting their ability to suppress waves of infection. Boosters could be especially useful: they tend to elicit a broad array of antibodies, at least some of which should maintain activity against the Omicron variant.

Judging by the Israeli experience, the strategy seems to be working. Before its mass booster campaign, the country rocked by the double whammy of the Delta variant and waning immunity had one of the highest daily infection rates in the world. Case counts are now well below their September peak. And although some triple-vaccinated individuals have tested positive for Omicron in recent days, their symptoms remain mild and there is no evidence of runaway viral spread. Even if the world has vaccines in abundance, trying to juggle booster campaigns in highly vaccinated regions with first-dose campaigns in unvaccinated ones is a daunting task. Inequitable vaccine roll-out starts with an absence of leadership. Omicron should be a wake-up call about the need for collective action in response to the pandemic. The new entrants in India's basket of COVID-19 vaccines, Covovax and Corbevax didn't qualify for country's precautionary dose programme. India's conclusion on the same vaccine as booster shot, according to the officials in health ministry, is derived from the World Health Organization's (WHO) updated playbook. The WHO issued interim recommendations for heterologous COVID-19 vaccines (different vaccines) on 16 December 2021. A common reason for considering heterologous COVID-19 vaccine schedules is lack of availability of the same vaccine product in settings with limited or unpredictable supply, the WHO said. Even though there is limited research available on performance of different vaccines as booster shots, India had limited choices.

### Need global tax agency

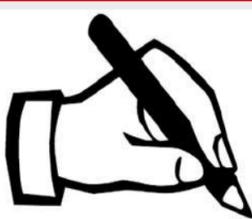
The last two years have thrown into sharp relief the structural injustices that underpin the global economy. As the COVID-19 pandemic drove an estimated 88-115 million people into extreme poverty, the world's billionaires saw their wealth increase by more than 25 percent. And while some developed and developing countries are now administering vaccine boosters, some poorer countries continue to struggle to secure even first doses for their populations. This appalling level of inequality is inextricably linked to rampant cross-border tax abuse, which is being perpetrated by both multinational corporations and wealthy individuals. By refusing to pay their fair share of taxes, the world's wealthiest actors rob poorer countries of the revenue they desperately need to confront the pandemic, such as by securing vaccine doses and supporting vulnerable citizens. USD 483 billion in public revenue is lost to cross-border tax abuse each year. Of the total losses, corporate-tax abuse by multinational companies accounts for USD 312 billion, with offshore tax evasion by wealthy individuals accounting for the rest. While wealthier countries technically bear a larger share of those losses, it is poorer countries that suffer the most. Only a global tax agency can resolve such cross border tax evasion. The double standards are astounding. After all, it was under the OECD's inclusive framework on tax base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS) that the much-touted G20 tax deal was designed. Some of the same countries that are enabling all this tax abuse most notably, the UK and Switzerland are also blocking a waiver on intellectual-property rights that would enable a massive vaccine rollout. This raises serious questions about whether the OECD is the right institution to coordinate global tax negotiations. True, the OECD opened the way for over 100 non-OECD members to have a voice in the negotiations. But several developing-country proposals were left out of the final agreement. Not surprisingly, poor countries were far from satisfied. As the G20 was meeting in Rome had endorsed the deal, the G77, representing 134 developing economies, reiterated its longstanding call to establish a global tax body at the United Nations, which would take responsibility for reforming global tax regulations and cracking down on offshore tax havens. The proposal under which the UN Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters would be transformed into an intergovernmental forum was first advanced in 2004 by then-UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The G77 echoed our call in 2015, at the UN Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa. A global UN tax body is also a key recommendation of the UN High Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency, and Integrity for Achieving the 2030 Agenda, and of the Independent Commission for Reform of International Corporate Taxation (ICRICT). ICRICT has demanded that negotiations to deliver a new global tax deal continue during the G20 presidencies of Indonesia in 2022 and India in 2023. But real progress will require changing the format of negotiations, to ensure that developing countries' voices are heard.

### WALKING 18TH CENTURY STYLE



A street actress wearing 18th century styled clothes, walks in snowfall in central St Petersburg, Russia.

## Congress has chosen path for wooing women

**DR DUGGARAJU SRINIVASA RAO**

Congress in its crisis time is forced to move away from its traditional way of campaigning in caste, religion angles. For its survival it is desperately trying to build a new vote bank and after careful consideration the party think tanks has chosen the path of wooing the women. This is apparently initiated by Priyanka Gandhi Vadra in UP and now became the main plank of campaign in other states that goes to polls in 2022. Priyanka Vadra who took charge of Uttar Pradesh affairs apparently got the feedback on the whispers the rural women folk are making regarding her similarity in appearance to that of her grandmother Indira Gandhi. Since then she started imitating Indira Gandhi in her style of walk, speech and her attire, sari, though little uncomfortable. More Sonia met the women more she felt her chance to woo them towards her party. Without even discussing the matter in the party forum and not consulting her family Priyanka in a spur of moment announced the 40 percent of Congress ticket to women in UP. This had desired effect as women started to throng to Priyanka's meeting and this lead to the promise of 40 percent jobs for women in government if Congress is voted to power.

Having raised the hope of place in politics for women Priyanka is aggressively reaching out to women through the party's Shakti

Samvaad. Her appeal to women not to vote on the basis of caste and religion and make the elected representatives accountable and criticizing the women centric welfare measures implemented by BJP government Priyanka Vadra is making all right noises. The attempt to neutralize the religion lead campaign of BJP and caste centric appeals of SP through the gender appeal is a good strategy for the Congress. Though it is Sonia which evolved this new strategy the Congress is not ready to give her the full credit but attribute this new appeal to the women as Rahul Gandhi's 'breaking conventional norms' philosophy. In other states, especially in Punjab where the Congress party is in self destructive mood, is also aiming at women to erase the impact of communal statements of some Congress seniors. As the party leaders claimed the only a Sikh could become a Chief Minister of Punjab it has played into the hands of BJP as conceded by Sunil Jhakar, the in-charge of party in Punjab. As the party top brass now fears the backlash of Hindu community. The attempt of Congress to project the appointment of Charanjit Singh Channi, a scheduled cast member as CM, as its pro-SC tilt is also back firing from the upper caste groups. The party which speaks of no cast no religion politics in UP campaign suddenly burdened with communal and caste political image. To over-

come that the Congress is now forced to take up the appealing to women route. The promise of Rs 2,000 per month to each woman and 8 free gas cylinders per year to run the house hold in smooth manner is big sop to women cutting across all barriers. In addition the Congress is promising Rs 5000 for the girls who passes class V and Rs 10,000 who crosses VIII class and 15,000 for those who clears the school final and finally 20,000 who goes to higher studies. Irrespective of the caste and economic status of the family the girls are promised a free tab and a scooty. These are all things which are offered by other parties in other states. The Punjab unit of Congress is promising to open 23 skill development centers for women to impart job oriented training and also interest free loan up to 2 lakhs to start any business of their choice. Formation of special women commando battalions for women safety is another promise and to make it attractive for all the village women the Congress announced its intention to train two women from each village in security issues. Ensuring Rs 300 per day for employable days under MGN-REGA to attract women voters is also on list.

To beat them and to make the welfare of women more attractive the Congress in Punjab is coming out with novel promise. As per the party chief Navjot Singh Sidhu 'only 1.8 percent of the properties in the state are in the name of women. So he comes out with a promise of 'no charge of fee in case the property is transferred in the name of women in the family'. This is all part of the freebies offered to the women voters and this is coming out after the highly critical statements of Punjab party chief Navjot Singh Sidhu slammed the AAP after that party offered free water, free electricity for Punjabis. No party, having the maximum number of women candi-

dates, has been victorious in the assembly elections held after 2000. The winning party's women have always performed better than the party fielding the highest number of women. They are a growing force in India's elections, with more women than men now showing up to vote in many places. Still women, like men, are not a homogeneous entity and do not form any single vote bank. They vote according to their perception of which party or candidate offers them the best choice, which has compelled political parties to offer a slew of women-centric schemes and sops during elections.

The pro-women promises are not the core Congress formula but are state specific as such pro women promises are not there in other poll bound states. In Uttarakhand, where it hopes to wrest the power from BJP, the specific promise for women is the establishment of women industrial park in 200 acre land. Himachal Pradesh, the one state where the Congress feels are already in power is not making any women specific promises but are appealing on over all development and focusing on BJP government's failures. Thus it is evident that Congress new found love for women is more electorally oriented to capture power rather than total commitment for the growth and empowerment of women. Many parties including Congress in the past have made similar promises only to forget after the electoral verdict. Mere promising moon to women is not going to help Congress in Uttar Pradesh as its organizational structure has collapsed and there was no serious attempt to rebuild it. So it is a big gamble to garner women votes and even party's leadership in Delhi is not sure of how it turns, but they all know that there is no other go but to stick to that Priyanka Vadra's projection.

(Dr Duggaraju Srinivasa Rao is political analyst and columnist based in Vijayawada.)

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Human rights violations

China is ruled by a dictator as the President of a communist regime at its head. The incumbent President Xi Jinping has legitimized to hold the top post for his whole life. Recently controversy has been raised on the violation of human rights in China by the global critics who are now mobilizing opinion against the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing. Criticizing the regime or speaking against a party functionary is not permitted in an authoritarian style of functioning in China. Speaking in general, human rights breaches are suppressed in the state-controlled domestic media. That is why a few cases relating to important personalities having international image and connection sneaked into outside China through social media. Meng Hongwei, the former Interpol president disappeared in 2018. It now revealed that he was later tried and imprisoned. His wife with their twin boys is presently a political refugee in France under round-the-clock police protection. In the second case, the whereabouts of two-times grand slam doubles winner Peng Shuai was not known after she accused a senior Government figure of sexual assault. The state-run media has since released a video showing her at a restaurant in Beijing. It is in such a situation and besides, a summit of Democracy is being organized by the USA on December 9-10 reportedly to unite democratic nations against the authoritarian regimes in the world. India should actively participate in the meet to mobilize international opinion against autocratic China. Because, China is increasingly engaged in continuous hostilities on Indian borders, India should take advantage of it and mightily manoeuvre to isolate China.

Pannalal, via email

#### Social media addiction

During the pandemic, in-person teaching-learning remained difficult. As a result, there had been an increasing move towards children's daily overuse of social media. When a significant amount of time is spent on social networks, parents and children experience less face-to-face interaction and consequently, they miss out on an important opportunity for connection. The growth of social media addiction does have a potentially damaging impact on the strong bond between a parent and a child. Such an addiction is likely to break down family communication. It, no doubt, dilutes family relationships. It hardly needs to be mentioned that when a parent is unable to engage with the child, ruptures in the relationship between them may occur. It's understandable that due to inadequacy of time and the piling workloads, parents often have recourse to gadgets to engage their children. Also, it is, undeniably, not ideal to take children completely off social networks. As such, parents need to identify first what their child is inclined towards and use them as alternatives to screen time. This, I feel, can help nullify the impact that screen time has on children and hence can surely help strengthen the family bond.

Dipendra, via email

**WHAT THEY TWEET!**



**Tushar@TusharG**  
When Congress exploited vote banks, they only utilised pre existing caste equations. Sanghis create divisions & prejudices in their greed for electoral success via vote banks. We will see it manifested more & more in the run up to elections.



**AnnieZaidi@anniezaidi**  
An education system that focuses on marks rather than teaching independent thinking, and a larger social system that privileges obedience, adherence to the norm, rather than focusing on human morality, must reconsider itself.



**Naveen Sodem@nisar\_naveen**  
The moment anyone starts such a company that makes the child leave conventional schooling, he will most probably be arrested for contributing to the violation of RTE act (even if such a provision doesn't exist in law). Homeschooling is a crime in India till someone says it's not.

**Shahid Choudhary@listenshahid**  
#Saffron: World's costliest spice, with recorded history of 2800 years





**Sheetal Sakpal@sheetalsakpal**  
Anyone who's paying any attention to bullying, harassment and roasting being normalized amongst school going boys will know how young men are growing up. Add communal hatred to it and you have disaster in the making. The peer pressure amongst boys is horrible.

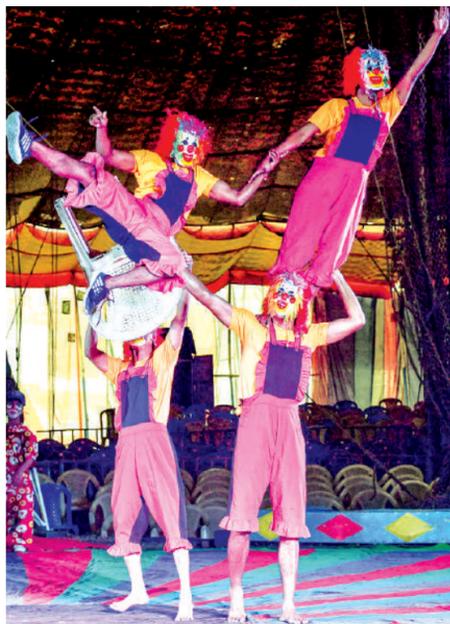


**Pragnya Gupta@GuptaPragnya**  
I look around & see so much fear, people getting more & comfortable with their hate, more united in their separation. NO. Not Me. I won't get lost in this fearful world. I won't play with bullies. I'll continue to be brave & kind. I'll speak for real unity, no matter what.



**Pratyasha Rath@pratyasharath**  
Months and years of using anonymity to abuse women on Twitter, will ultimately lead to this. A lot of us were told to ignore this because these guys are from 'our side'. By a lot of prominent people here. No one will come to help these louts now.

## HEROIC STUNT



Artists perform stunts at a circus, to near empty audience stands during the third wave of COVID-19 in Kolkata, Monday.

# UP polls: Not just BJP-SP race, others matter too

Lucknow, Jan 10 (PTI):

With their high-decibel campaigns so far, the BJP and the Samajwadi Party may appear to be locked in a direct fight in Uttar Pradesh. But others threaten to open up the field a bit.

Mayawati has said it would be a mistake to say that her Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) is out of the race in the assembly elections. And led by Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, the Congress hopes to upset the balance with its women-centric agenda.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and other BJP leaders have been targeting Akhilesh Yadav, furthering the impression that they regard his SP as



Samajwadi Party workers outside party office ahead of UP elections 2022, in Lucknow, Monday.

the main challenger.

Banking on the Hindutva plus development plank, the Bharatiya Janata Party has itself crafted an alliance with some Other Backward Class parties in a state where

no party has won two consecutive elections over the past 35 years.

The BJP has allied with the Apna Dal (Sonelal) and the Nishad party, a combination of backward castes. Akhilesh Yadav is trying to upset the BJP with

the help of a rainbow coalition, which includes Om Prakash Rajbhar's Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party -- a former ally of the BJP in UP -- the Rashtriya Lok Dal and uncle Shivpal Yadav's Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party (Lohia).

It is yet to be seen if Priyanka Gandhi's women card -- she has even promised that 40 per cent of party tickets will go to women -- would outplay the caste and communal calculations of the main players.

After Rahul Gandhi lost the 2019 Lok Sabha polls from the family bastion of Amethi, the party faces a big challenge of winning from the five assembly segments in Rae Bareilly -- party president Sonia Gandhi's parliamentary constituency.

## HUMANITARIAN EFFORTS

# Soldiers waded through snow to shift patient from mountain village to hospital

Jammu, Jan 10 (PTI):

Responding to a distress call from a mountain village, a group of soldiers on Monday braved chilly winds and waded through knee-deep snow to bring down a seriously ill woman and get her admitted to a health facility in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district.

The woman's health was deteriorating fast, and her father sought the help of the Army's Rashtriya Rifles (RR) based at Gandoh, officials said. Sensing the gravity of the situation, the unit's commanding officer immediately launched a rescue mission to bring 25-year-old Manju Devi from the high-altitude snow-bound Chilli Bala village, they said.

Soldiers accompanied by battlefield nursing assistant and carrying medical comforts waded through the knee-deep snow for about two kilometers and reached the family within the shortest possible time, the officials said. The troopers carried the patient on a cot before taking her in an Army vehicle to the Gandoh Public Health Centre (PHC), they said.

She was subsequently shifted to the Government Medical College (GMC) Hospital in Doda where she was immediately attended by the doctors, the officials said. Staff at the GMC had made preparations to receive Devi as the Army had already coordinated with the civil administration before shifting the patient, they said.

# KVIC to sell paper slippers for devotees, workers

Of Kashi Vishwanath Temple

New Delhi, Jan 10 (PTI):

## PM Modi sends 100 pairs of jute footwear

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has sent 100 pairs of jute footwear for those working at Kashi Vishwanath Dham after coming to know that most of them perform their duties bare-footed as it is forbidden to wear leather or rubber footwear in temple premises, government sources said on Monday. These include priests, people performing seva, security guards, sanitation workers and others, they added. Modi got the jute footwear procured and sent over to the dham so that those performing their duties don't have to stay bare-footed in the chilling cold. A source said, "PM Modi has been deeply involved with Kashi Vishwanath Dham & keeps a tab on all issues & developments in Varanasi. This is yet another example of his attention to minute details and his concern for the poor." Modi had last month inaugurated the first phase of the dham, which has massively expanded the Kashi Vishwanath Temple premises and beautified the complex.

Starting January 14, KVIC is beginning the sale of Khadi handmade paper use and 'throw' slippers," the ministry noted. It added that the development comes in wake of the jute slippers sent by Prime Minister

Narendra Modi for the workers of Kashi Vishwanath Temple after he learnt that most of the people working at the temple performed their duty barefoot. These slippers, the ministry said, are eco-friendly and cost-effective.

# 'Disastrous to not grant divorce in marriage broken down irretrievably'

Chandigarh, Jan 10 (PTI):

HC DECISION

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has said it will be disastrous not to grant decree of divorce if a marriage has broken down irretrievably and there is no chance of the couple coming together or living together again.

The court made the statement while allowing a petition filed by a man against a Gurugram family court's decision to turn down his plea for dissolution of the marriage on the grounds of alleged cruelty and desertion.

"In the present case, the

marriage between the parties had broken down irretrievably and there is no chance of their coming together, or living together again. Further, not to grant decree of divorce would be disastrous for the parties," the bench of Justice Ritu Bahri and Justice Archana Puri said while passing the order on December 20, 2021.

It was argued that the respondent (wife) was not staying with the (appellant) husband since 2003 and was allegedly not willing to settle the dispute amicably. The man who wanted a divorce was ready to pay one-time alimony so that he could move ahead in life, but the wife was not accept-

ing that.

Referring to a Supreme Court verdict in a case, the HC Bench observed, "...however, marriage which is dead for all purposes, cannot be revived by Court's verdict, if parties are not willing since marriage involves human sentiments and emotions and if they have dried up, there is hardly any chance of their springing back to life on account of artificial reunion created by court decree."

After the family court in Gurugram rejected the plea, the man filed an appeal before the high court here seeking setting aside of the judgment.

"...Keeping in view the

extraordinary facts and circumstances of the case, the appeal is allowed and judgment dated 04.05.2015 passed by District Judge Family Court, Gurgaon is set aside and the decree of divorce is granted to the parties," the HC bench ordered, while directing the appellant to make a fixed deposit of Rs 10 lakh in the name of the respondent.

In the present case, firstly efforts were made to resolve the matrimonial dispute through the process of mediation, which is one of the effective mode of alternative mechanism in resolving the personal dispute but the mediation failed between the parties,

said the HC bench.

"It is not the case of the respondent-wife that she is not financially secure as she is working as permanent lecturer. The parties are staying separately for the last about 18 years and this Court made several attempts to settle the dispute amicably but in vain," the bench said.

It further observed that "living together is not a compulsory exercise. But marriage is a tie between two parties". "The marriage never took off from the first day. All mediation efforts have failed. Now, the marriage cannot be revived after 18 years of separation.

# Grenade blast outside Army cantonment in Pathankot solved

Police bust ISYF-backed terror module

Chandigarh, Jan 10 (PTI):

Punjab Police on Monday said it has solved a case involving a recent grenade blast outside the gate of the Army cantonment in Pathankot by busting a major terror module backed by the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) group with the arrest of six of its operatives.

The Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar police has also seized six hand grenades, one 9 mm pistol and one .30 bore rifle, along with live bullets and magazines, from the arrested men, Director General of Police (DGP) V K Bhawra said here. No casualty was reported in the blast that took place in November last year in front of the Triveni gate of the cantonment in

Pathankot. The ISYF is supported by Pakistan's intelligence agency ISI. The six men were arrested from different villages in Gurdaspur district. They were identified as Amandeep alias Mantri of Lakhnawal village, Gurwinder Singh alias Gindi of Kharal village, Parminder Kumar alias Rohit alias Rohta of Kharal village, Rajinder Singh alias Malhi alias Nikku of Gunnapur village, Harpreet Singh alias Dholki of Gotporka village and Raman Kumar of Ghazikot village, according to a statement issued by the DGP's office.

"In two instances, some unidentified persons had hurled hand grenades at Pathankot -- one grenade was hurled outside

Triveni Dwar, outside the gate of Army cantonment at Pathankot, on November 21, 2021 at about 9 pm, while another one was hurled near Chakki Pull on November 11, 2021 at about 9:30 pm," the statement said.

Separate FIRs in connection with the incidents were registered at the Pathankot Division 2 and Division 1 police stations respectively, it added. The DGP said "during the preliminary interrogation, accused persons revealed that they were directly in touch with self-proclaimed chief of ISYF (Rode) Lakhbir Singh Rode and his close aides, identified as Sukhmeetpal Singh alias Sukh Bhikhariwal and Sukhpreet alias Sukh, for planning terrorist attacks".

## HEAVY SNOWFALL



A girl walks on a snow-covered road after recent snowfall at a village at Tangmarg, in Baramulla district, Monday.

# Cong's Mekedatu padayatra continues for second day

## FIR against nearly 30 leaders for COVID rules violation

Bengaluru, Jan 10 (PTI):

Karnataka Congress' 'padayatra' (march), demanding implementation of the Mekedatu project across the Cauvery river continued on the second day on Monday, even as FIRs have been registered against nearly 30 of its leaders and others for taking part in it, defying COVID-19 curbs.

According to official sources, FIRs have been registered against Congress' state president D K Shivakumar, Leader of Opposition in the State Assembly Siddaramaiah, Bengaluru Rural MP D K Suresh and several other

prominent party leaders and personalities at Sathanur police station for defying restrictions on Sunday. They said, cases have been registered for violation of COVID rules and prohibitory orders, under the Disaster Management act and sections of IPC.

However, Congress leaders and workers are continuing their march for the second day today, and are scheduled to cover a distance of about 15 km from Shivakumar's native Doddalahalli to Kanakapura.

The government has imposed curfew on weekends and restricted public gatherings to fight the surge in COVID-19 cases, till January 19. It has also prohibited all rallies, dharnas

and protests, among others, as part of containment measures. Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, hitting out at Congress leaders for continuing their march said, the law will take its course against the organisers and important people who have violated the rules.

Speaking to reporters here, he said, anybody who violates the law will face action. "Further action will automatically follow with the case registered. Whatever action should be taken under particular sections, will be taken, it will definitely happen and there will be no differentiation in it. How much ever big a leader or a common man, the person involved is, action will be taken in accordance with law," he



Huge cut-outs of Congress MP Rahul Gandhi, KPCC President D K Shivakumar and other Congress leaders at the venue, during the 2nd day of the 10-day padayatra from Mekedatu to Bengaluru to demand the implementation of Mekedatu project, in Dodda Alahalli near Bengaluru, Monday.

added. The 10 days padayatra with the theme 'Namma Neeru Namma Hakku' (Our water, Our right) that began at

Sangama, the confluence of Cauvery and Arkavathi rivers at Kanakapura in Ramanagara district on Sunday under the leader-

ship of Shivakumar and Siddaramaiah, will be spanning a distance of nearly 139 km. However Siddaramaiah, who returned to city from the padayatra last evening due to fever, is not taking part today too, and is taking rest on doctor's advice. According to his office, he is likely to participate in the march from Tuesday.

Stating that according to his information FIRs have been registered on Sunday against about 30 leaders who participated in the padayatra and violated rules, Home Minister Araga Jnanendra said, today also there are violations and more cases may be registered. "Everything is left to the Ramanagara district administration, if there is any violation, whether by

Congress people or anyone else action will be taken," he said. Asked whether the police and government who take action on common people are feeling helpless in acting against politicians, the Minister said, definitely the government is not helpless.

"FIR has been registered against 30 people yesterday, they have also mentioned others in FIR for violation, and action will be taken against all those responsible...legal action will be taken," he said.

To a question why didn't the government act to stop the march, despite knowing about the large gathering of people much in advance, Jnanendra said, "we felt that as a responsible political party the Congress, may take a deci-

sion in the interest of the people at the last moment, but they did not, and are adamant on going ahead with the march."

Noting that stopping padayatra is not a big thing with the police force available, he said, to avoid any untoward incident there, the government decided to act smoothly in the interest of the people, and accused the Congress of playing politics during the coronavirus pandemic.

Replying to a question as to whether the march would be stopped from entering Bengaluru city that has been witnessing a spike in COVID cases, the Home Minister not giving any direct response said, the government will do everything possible to protect the city.