



ANDAMAN Chronicle

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The Daily Diary of the Islands



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PORT BLAIR, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2021

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Jarawa Facts

The Jarawa move around the forest in groups of 40 or 50 people. They build small temporary huts whilst on the move, and also build large huts where several families live together. They collect honey, roots and berries, hunt pigs and monitor lizards, and catch fish with spears.

Your Nature Guide

Plankton: This is a term used to describe the smelters, free floating plants and animals, which just drift along with the winds and currents. Some plankton have a limited swimming ability and can migrate daily in a vertical direction. Plankton are an important source of food for many sea animals.

There are two types of plankton. Phytoplankton, which are microscopic plant plankton, and Zooplankton, which are larger animals plankton. Phytoplankton are amongst the most productive food manufactures of the seas.

Bigger Plants: Amongst the other plants are the Algae that are of different colours-green, red and brown. Some algae are edible (for humans) and a good source of protein. Most make very good fertilizer if spread in the garden or farm. Bigger algae are called seaweeds.

The oceans also have grasses growing in them. Eelgrass is a very common one found in our seas. It is grazed on by dugongs and green sea turtles.

Treasured Islands - By Sunita Rao. Courtesy: Kalpavriksh, ANET (M CBT)

People's Voice

Maza ka baat ye hai ki LG Sahab ka News chapta hai jisme Information hote hue bhi kuch nahi hota ... Sahi hai ...

- A Citizen



The House is adjourned sine die... we are still under suspended animation!

PM Calls for 'High Alert' on Omicron

New Delhi, Dec. 23: Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a review meeting on Thursday, directed top officials coordinating India's COVID-19 response, to maintain a "high level of vigil and alertness at all levels".

He directed the Centre to closely coordinate with States to support their efforts of public health measures of containment and management. Union Health Secretary, Rajesh Bhushan, had in a letter on Wednesday, directed States to impose stringent restrictions on people's movement if test positivity and bed occupancy in their districts crossed certain thresholds.

Officials briefed the Prime Minister about the emerging global scenario driven by the new variant, Omicron with an overview of surge in cases in countries having high vaccination coverage and presence of the variant. India has so far reported 236 instances of the Omicron variant since December 4.

According to a statement from the Press Information Bureau, The Prime Minister said the "fight against the pandemic is not over", adding that "the need for continued adherence to COVID safe behaviour is of paramount importance even today". A portion of a video clip shared by the government of the meeting



in progress shows all attendees masked, except for Mr. Modi. Earlier in the day Mr. Modi had addressed well-attended public meetings in Varanasi.

The Prime Minister directed officials to ensure

that the health systems in the States, from the district level upward, were strengthened to meet any challenge posed by the new variant. It was important for States to ensure that the oxygen supply equipments were

Continued on P2

Member of Parliament Demands Ship for Car Nicobar Island via Hut Bay

Port Blair, Dec. 23: The Member of Parliament, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma has requested the Chief Secretary to direct the Shipping Department to schedule Ship for Car Nicobar via Hut Bay at least once or twice a month.

In a letter addressed to the Chief Secretary the Member of Parliament mentioned that due to the non-availability of ships for Car Nicobar via Hut Bay, a lot of people from Nicobari Community are unable to visit Car Nicobar to meet with their family members.

He added that there are thousands of Nicobari brother and sisters at Little Andaman Island, who have a strong link with Car Nicobar but presently due to unavailability of connecting ships, they are forced to come to Port Blair and wait for several weeks to get a ship for Car Nicobar. They also have to undergo similar hardship in their return journey. For this journey from Little Andaman to Car Nicobar and vice versa via Port Blair they have to incur heavy expenditure and go through tremendous mental agony.

Continued on P4

Humane Touch in Association with Forest Range Office and Health Wellness Centre Manglutan Conduct Awareness Programme on Alcoholism and Drugs

Port Blair, Dec. 23: Humane Touch in association with Forest Range Office, Manglutan organized an Alcoholism Awareness Program for the staffs of Manglutan division at the Premises of Manglutan Range Office on 23rd December 2021 at 09:30am.

Deputy Ranger Shri S Haggim welcomed the dignitaries from the Humane Touch NGO and highlighted the need for

Continued on P4



ANTCC Team Led by Halder Make Surprise Visit to PHC Hutbay



Port Blair, Dec. 23: The authorities of PHC R.K Pur, Little Andaman were taken aback when a team of Andaman & Nicobar Territorial Congress Committee led by its President Shri. Rangalal Halder paid a surprise visit to the PHC on Wednesday to study the condition of treatment facilities.

Shri. Rangalal Halder was accompanied by DCC President South Andaman Shri. V.K Abdul Aziz and several other Congress leaders of Little Andaman. They personally visited each and every ward to see the arrangements made there for patients. Later, they convened a meeting with senior official of the PHC and raised the issue of shortage of healthcare staffs and medical equipments.

Andaman Chronicle to Remain Closed from 24th Dec. – 28th Dec.

On the occasion of Christmas week and for annual maintenance of Offset Unit, the editorial room and offset unit of Andaman Chronicle will remain closed from 24th Dec. 2021 – 28th Dec. 2021. Meanwhile, any important news updates will be made online for the convenience of the readers. This is for the information of our esteemed readers and concerned authorities.

Denis Giles
Editor

ANDAMAN Chronicle

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*Life has no Remote Control. Get up
and Change it Yourself.*

Warning bells

India has reported over 200 cases of the highly infectious Omicron variant and given that there were no cases when the month began, this has put the Centre in a high state of alert. An unmistakable foreboding was writ large in a letter by the Union Health Secretary to the Chief Secretaries of States and Union Territories on Tuesday that has asked them to be prepared for the worst. It said that Omicron was at least "three times more transmissible" than the Delta variant, and therefore "greater foresight, data analysis, dynamic decision-making, strict and prompt containment action" were required at the local and district levels. It also underlined two specific parameters which States have to be vigilant about: a test positivity of 10% or more in the last week and bed occupancy crossing 40% or more on oxygen-supported or intensive care units. There were echoes in the letter of the days when India was under a complete lockdown — it exhorted district officials, when required, to impose night curfew, strictly regulate large gatherings, curtail numbers in marriages and funerals, and restrict numbers in offices, industries and public transport. It also directed pre-emptive action.

Maharashtra and Delhi have reported the highest number of cases of Omicron, followed by Telangana, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Kerala and Gujarat. India's daily case count has ebbed and has remained well below 10,000 for most of the month — a first since May 2020; close to 90% of the adult population has been vaccinated with at least one dose. From the numbers alone, India is in a much better position than from last year or even as recently as this summer when the devastating second wave struck a body blow. However, the consternation in the Centre appears to derive from the experience of the last two years when waves in Europe and the United States were harbingers of havoc in India. While last year it appeared that vaccines would be the world's passport out of the pandemic, it now seems that even a third dose is inadequate. India is overwhelmingly dependent on a single vaccine in spite of two being produced here; none of the mRNA vaccines is available. Drug regulators are yet to clear vaccines for children and booster doses partly out of concerns that this may trigger a shortfall. A good 40% of adults — and they are still the most vulnerable to severe disease — are yet to be fully vaccinated. Crowds and public mingling are at pre-pandemic levels and the coming months will see huge crowds as part of election campaigning. The true impact of Omicron will be known over the next few weeks but the Centre must continue to strike the gong of caution while facilitating greater availability of essential medicines, hospital beds and vaccines.

BOB'S BANTER

BY ROBERT CLEMENTS



Not Just A Lil' Baby..!

"Ah Lord it's your birthday again!"
 "Yes it is!" said the Lord as he looked at me, "It is indeed."
 "Aren't you happy? I would be if I was you; I love birthdays as they come each year; so many presents, so many good wishes from friends and relatives, and Lord.."
 "Yes Bob?"
 "Your birthday is oh so magnificent! The whole world celebrates it!"
 "Bob?"
 "Yes my Lord?"
 "How old are you?"
 "Come on my Lord you know how old I am!"
 "Do your friends and relatives still come and give you little baby presents, like squeaky shoes and stuffed toys, or maybe a doll for you to play with?"
 "Come on Lord, what are you talking about?"
 "Do your friends still treat you like a baby?"
 I heard the sound of silence and wondered why the Lord had not spoken till I heard Him again a few days later as I sang with the choir round a make believe manger:

*Away in a manger no crib for a bed
The little Lord Jesus lay down his sweet head!*



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"I'm not there Bob!"
 "Not where my Lord?"
 "In that manger you're looking at! That's not me in there! That doll in the crib!"
 "I know that Lord!" I said.

*The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes
But little Lord Jesus no crying he makes!*

I looked at the make believe cow and the sheep, I stared at the sheep and the cow as they looked dumbly at the plastic doll and at sweet Mary looking shyly at Joseph for her cue.

"No Lord," I said, "That's not you!"

I left the manger, the shepherds and the wisemen, the choir, the sheepish cow, and the dozing camel and walked out and into the open, I heard His voice again:

"I came down to earth as a baby my son and grew up as the years went by. And as I grew I preached, I cast out demons, I healed and finally I died on the cross! I died to grow in the hearts of men! But to you and many millions I remain that little lovable infant! How nice to think of me as a child! Helpless, weak, dependent! How nice to let me remain a baby in your lives, a little babe incapable of doing little else than resting in his mother's arms! Let me grow Bob!"

"Yes Lord!" I said.

"Let me grow in the lives of you people, that instead of fighting one another, you will bring peace on earth, that instead of just growing rich yourselves, you will look after your poor brethren. I'm not a lil' baby! Let me grow in your hearts..!"

And suddenly around me I heard the singing of a thousand angels singing
 "Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna..!"

bobsbanter@gmail.com

PM Calls for 'High Alert' on Omicron

Continued from Page 1
 installed and fully functional, he instructed the officials.

Those who participated in the meeting included Rajiv Gauba, Cabinet Secretary, Dr. V.K. Paul, Member (Health), NITI Aayog, Home

Secretary A.K. Bhalla, Secretary (MoHFW) Rajesh Bhushan, Secretary (Pharmaceuticals); Secretary (Biotechnology) Dr. Rajesh Gokhale, DG ICMR Dr. Balram Bhargava; Secretary (AYUSH) Rajesh Kotecha;

Shri Durga Shankar Mishra, Secretary (Urban Development); Sh. R.S. Sharma CEO NHA; Prof. K. Vijay Raghavan (Principal Scientific Advisor to Govt. of India)

Andaman Chronicle invites articles, feature and opinions from our esteemed readers. Your write-ups can be mailed to the Editor through the ID denisgiles@yahoo.com

ENTERTAINMENT

'Writing with Fire' documentary shortlisted as India's official entry to Oscars 2022

New Delhi: Indian documentary 'Writing with Fire' has been selected in the Best Documentary Feature category in the Oscars 2022.

As the Oscars 2022 ceremony is scheduled for March 27, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences on Wednesday revealed its shortlists in 10 categories.

These categories include documentary, international features, documentary short subject, makeup and hairstyling, original score, original song, animated short, live-action short, visual effects, and sound.

While India's official entry, 'Koozhangal' (Pebbles), is out of the race, Delhi-based filmmaker duo Rintu Thomas and Sushmit Ghosh-directed documentary 'Writing with Fire' has been shortlisted among 15 films, selected from a pool of 138 films, in the Documentary Feature category of the 94th Academy Awards.

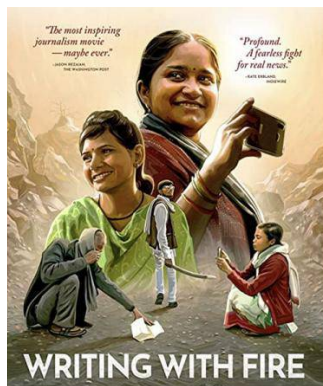
Other films in the category also include 'Ascension', 'Attica', 'Billie Eilish: The World's a Little Blurry', 'Faya Dayi', 'The First Wave', 'Flee', 'In the Same Breath', 'Julia', 'President', 'Procession', 'The Rescue', 'Simple as Water',

'Summer of Soul (...Or, When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised)', 'The Velvet Underground'.

'Writing with Fire' is Rintu Thomas and Sushmit Ghosh's debut feature documentary about a newspaper 'Khabar Lahariya' started as a social experiment by an NGO. It is India's only rural newspaper run by Dalit women since 2002, started by Delhi-based NGO Nirantar from Chitrakoot in the Bundelkhand region.

It is published across Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in rural dialects of Hindi, including Bundeli and Awadhi. Khabar Lahariya is India's only women-run brand of ethical and independent rural news. Today, it reaches 5 million people every month through multiple digital platforms.

The feature documentary captures 'Khabar Lahariya's switch from print to digital in recent years. It follows how the newspaper's Chief reporter Meera and her journalists break traditions, redefining what it means to be powerful by reporting India's biggest issues and within the confines of their own homes, questioning notions of patriarchy and



redefining power, investigating local police-force incompetence, listening in and standing by victims of caste and gender violence.

'Writing with Fire' has also won 28 international awards including Sundance Film Festival in January, where it won two awards: Special Jury (Impact for Change) and Audience awards at the World Cinema Documentary competition.

The nominations voting for the Oscars 2022 will run from January 27 to February 1, and nominations will be announced on February 8.

The 94th Academy Awards are slated to be held on March 27 at the Dolby Theatre.

'With the crown comes a great responsibility'

How does it feel to win the crown that India last bagged over two decades ago?

It is a great thing that the crown is back in India after 21 years. But it was not through just my effort. The efforts of so many people went into this long overdue win.

I think I am very fortunate, because, before leaving for the contest, I had said, 'Main Harnaaz hun, Desh ka naaz hun, and I will bring the crown back to the country.' I am now waiting to celebrate it properly with the rest of India. I also want to talk about a lot of issues and I am quite determined to do that.

Winning the title does not mean that I am the most beautiful girl in the Universe. If you watched the video, you would have noticed that I touched the crown to my head respectfully before putting it on. It was a natural reaction for me. That was my way of paying respect to the crown that I had won. With the crown comes a great responsibility and I have to go and do all of that.

At what point did you want to be a beauty queen?

As a child, I didn't know what it meant to be a beauty queen.



As I grew up, I saw people like Sushmita Sen, Priyanka Chopra and Lara Dutta and realised that they had won because their intentions to win the crown on the international stage were very clear and pure. I also realized that I wanted to model and act, and the process began.

I first got the urge to be a beauty queen when I was 17 and I have never looked back since then. I want to tell young women around the

world that if you wish to achieve something, no one can ever stop you. People will try and pull you down, but as long as you exercise control over yourself, no one can stop you.

Is the next step Bollywood, like Aishwarya, Sushmita, Priyanka and Lara?

To be honest, it is too soon to decide how my future will look. I am looking forward to being an actor because a lot of people are inspired by actors. Acting has always been my passion.

Favourite actor?

Shah Rukh Khan

Favourite actress?

Deepika Padukone. It is the Om Shanti Om duo. It is not just about their onscreen personality but offscreen as well. Both of them are so down-to-earth and they have an aura about them.

Favourite filmmaker?

I love the films that Sanjay Leela Bhansali makes. He pays a lot of attention to detail and his films look like art. He takes time to make a film, but it is worth it. I have watched every film that he has made and they are all my favourites.

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Health, Science /Tech

U.S. opens investigation into 5,80,000 Tesla vehicles over game feature

U.S auto safety regulators said Wednesday they have opened a formal safety investigation into 5,80,000 Tesla vehicles sold since 2017 over the automaker's decision to allow games to be played on the front centre touchscreen.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) said its preliminary evaluation covers various 2017-2022 Tesla Model 3, S, X, and Y vehicles. This functionality, referred to as "Passenger Play," "may distract the driver and increase the risk of a crash," the agency said.

NHTSA said it has "confirmed that this capability has been available since December 2020 in Tesla 'Passenger Play'-equipped vehicles." Before then, the game feature "was enabled only when the vehicle was in Park."

Tesla did not immediately comment.

NHTSA said it would "evaluate aspects of the feature, including the frequency and use scenarios of Tesla 'Passenger Play'."

Earlier this month, the New York Times highlighted the game feature, prompting NHTSA to say it was in discussions with Tesla regarding it.

The agency noted earlier in December that distracted driving accounts for a significant number of U.S. road deaths - 3,142 in 2019 alone. Safety advocates have said official figures underestimate the problem because not all drivers involved in crashes later admit they were distracted.

The Times said the Tesla update added three games - Solitaire, a jet fighter and conquest strategy scenario - and said that vehicles have warnings reading: "Playing while the car is in motion is only for passengers."

The paper said the game feature asks for confirmation that the player is a passenger, though a driver could still play simply by pressing a button.

In 2013, NHTSA issued guidelines to encourage automakers "to factor safety and driver distraction-prevention into their designs and adoption of infotainment devices in vehicles."

The guidelines "recommend that in-vehicle devices be designed so that they cannot be used by the driver to perform inherently distracting secondary tasks while driving," the agency said.

The agency in August opened a safety investigation into 765,000 Tesla vehicles over its driver-assistance system Autopilot after a series of crashes involving the system and parked emergency vehicles.

A preliminary evaluation is a first step before NHTSA decides whether to upgrade a probe to an engineering analysis, which must happen before the agency can demand a recall.

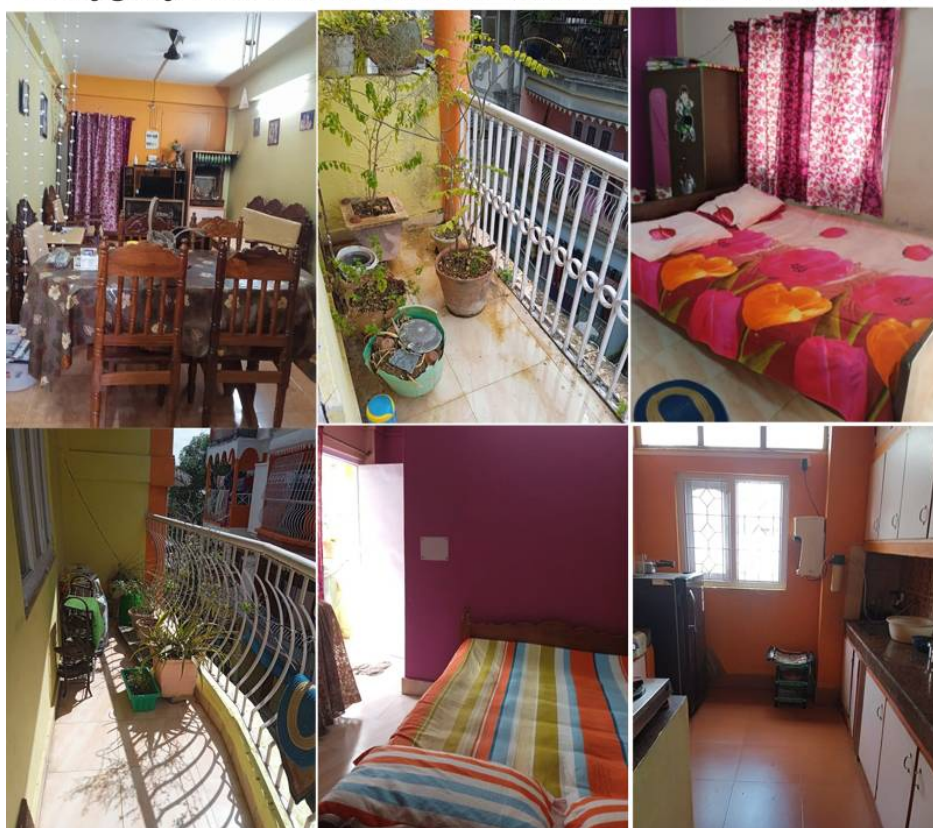
NHTSA said it received a complaint in November about the game feature from a Tesla Model 3 driver in Oregon, who said: "Creating a dangerous distraction for the driver is recklessly negligent."

On Nov. 29, Daimler's Mercedes-Benz recalled 227 U.S. vehicles - 2021 model year S580, 2022 EQS450, EQS580, and S500 -- because the vehicle infotainment systems "might allow activation of the television and internet display while driving, causing a distraction for the driver."

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Member of Parliament Demands Ship for Car Nicobar Island via Hut Bay

Continued from Page 1

The Member of Parliament pointed out that there are hundreds of Nicobari brothers and sisters in Little Andaman who have been waiting to visit Car Nicobar since more than the last one year.

He mentioned that occasional ships to Car Nicobar via Hut Bay are also required to supply fresh vegetable, fish and meat from Little Andaman to Car Nicobar Island, where a large number of tribal population and government servants and their families reside.

The Member of Parliament said that such connecting ships will also open up business opportunities for poor farmers and other small business owners of Little Andaman, who have already suffered heavy financial loss during this pandemic time.

Humane Touch in Association Conducts Awareness Programme on Alcoholism and Drugs

Continued from Page 1
awareness on Alcoholism at the grassroots level.

P Yousuf, Health Educator, GBPant hospital was the main speaker in this program. In his keynote address, he emphasized the effects of alcohol in medical terms. He had an active interaction session with the audience. Yousuf also gave tips on how to cope with the alcoholics and problems raised due to alcohol in the society.

P Mujib Rehman, President, Humane Touch briefed about

the activities done by Humane Touch in the field of Alcoholism. He also spoke about the problems faced by the families due to alcoholism. He also presented the sample survey conducted by Humane Touch in Brindaban Panchayat and raised the concern about effects of alcohol in villages and how this poison is slowly affecting the entire Rural Andaman.

Later Dr. Shivani Lall, Medical Officer from Health and Wellness Center also

addressed the employees of Manglutan Range and shed light on the drunken driving cases and usage of psychiatric drugs by the drunken drivers. She also shed light on the escalating drug cases among the students and minors.

Altogether 40 forest officials participated in the program. The program concluded with the vote of thanks by Deputy Ranger S Haggim, Manglutan Range Office.

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Strategic Significance of the ‘Bay Of Bengal’ and Bangladesh’s ‘Act of Balancing Capability’

- Pathik Hasan

The name ‘Bay of Bengal’ is a book of pride for Bengalis! Large cities like Madras (Chennai), Hyderabad, Bhubaneswar in all areas or states, are located on the shores of the Bay of Bengal, but the sea is not named after them. Again, it was not named after a region like the Arabian Sea, but after Bengal or Bengal. That is why the world has to remember the name of Bengal from time to time. In the middle of Myanmar, Andaman Islands, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the vast territory of South India, the reservoir of 21 lakh 62 thousand square kilometers is named after Bengal. It is known in the world as the Bay of Bengal.

The Bay of Bengal has now become the center of international politics due to its economic and strategic importance but in fact it extends to the bottom of Sri Lanka. It is the busiest international shipping route in the world. About 40,000 ships ply this route each year. Half of the world’s goods and fuel vessels use this route.

Looking at the picture of the Bay of Bengal, it is clear that its all-northern boundary has formed a parallel belt. It is as if a country has a water map in its taxpayer and has extended its exterior. The two sides on the outside have gradually increased and ended in Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. On the other side, the Andaman Islands merge with Sumatra from Myanmar and turn right to join Sri Lanka. Cox’s Bazar, the largest beach in the world, the Sundarbans, the largest uninterrupted mangrove forest, and one of the world’s most delicious fish species, the habitat of hilsa is linked and associated with Bay of Bengal.

The ports on the shores of the Bay of Bengal bear the imprint of political, religious and economic tensions over the centuries. From ancient times to the Middle Ages, Arab traders and missionaries flocked to the port on the shores of the Bay of Bengal via the Arabian Sea. After the discovery of the Bay of Bengal by Vasco-da-Gama, Portuguese, French, Danish, Dutch and English companies started coming from Europe. They built their

company’s offices and forts on the shores of the Bay of Bengal. From this time the conflict between the European merchants and the Indian kings began. Towards the end of this conflict, the British East India Company built their two and a half hundred-year empire in India.

Now, Bay of Bengal gets attention from world powers. US, UK, China, India, Japan has focused their attention to ‘Bay of Bengal’. That is the strategy. US has shifted its policy from ‘Asia Pacific’ towards ‘Indo Pacific’ to counter the China’s ‘BRI’. Both parties want Bangladesh into their respective blocks. In this regard, Bangladesh is handling this issue tactically. It avoids its involvement with the blocs directly. Having request from US for years, Bangladesh didn’t show any interest to sign ACSA (Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement) and GSOMIA (General Security of Military Information Agreement) agreement with US. On the other hands, When Chinese Envoy to Bangladesh commented that Bangladesh shouldn’t join IPS this year, Bangladesh strongly protested against the remarks uttered by Chinese envoy saying Bangladesh is capable to form its own national policy. This is the capability of Bangladesh. Basically, Bangladesh doesn’t like any controversy with anyone. Its aim is very simple and clear which is friendship to all, malice to none. Bangladesh wants and likes to go ahead with all regional and global actors.

Bangladesh policy is not towards bi-partisan international politics. Bangladesh was an active member of ‘Non-Aligned Movement’. Bangladesh has no intention and interest to join any block. But Bangladesh has intention to be benefitted from the blocks. Bangladesh wants and believes peaceful coexistence in the region. It always avoids any kind of clash with any actor. Despite having the

provocation from Myanmar during the Rohingya refugee crisis in 2017, it was abstained from using any kind of force. Bangladesh knows the Strategy. Bangladesh is balancing successfully with ‘BRI’ and ‘IPS’. Bangladesh has been exploiting ‘the strategic significance of Bay of Bengal’.

Whether Bangladesh is involved in the US-led Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS) or the Chinese-led Belt and Road (BRI), it must maintain peace and the rule of law in the maritime region to reap the maximum economic benefits from the Bay of Bengal. Bangladesh needs to acquire natural resources as well as the ability to catch fish from the deep sea. If it is possible, it will open the way for Bangladesh to earn huge amount of foreign exchange just like fish and mineral garments.

The port plays an important role for connectivity. Bangladesh has three seaports. But due to depth constraints, large vessels (mother vessels) are still unable to accommodate. The establishment of a deep seaport at Matarbari in Cox’s bazar in collaboration with Japan will solve this problem as well as reduce the cost of transporting goods. According to the reports of Bangladeshi media outlets, Bangladesh trades about 9 thousand crore dollars a year by sea. Four and a half thousand foreign ships transport these imported and exported goods to Bangladesh. And Bangladesh has to pay about 900 crore dollars every year

for the charter of these ships. Bangladesh has only 60 ships to transport goods at sea. In this case, Bangladesh has a serious shortage of capacity. Bangladesh needs to increase its capability.

The sea border of Bangladesh is 1 lakh 18 thousand square kilometers. On the other hand, if all the rivers and haors (some kind of pond originated from and connected with rivers) of Bangladesh are added, it stands at 15,000 kilometers. Bangladesh needs training, education and infrastructure to increase its ability to extract resources from this vast ocean. At present Bangladesh has Maritime University, Oceanographic Department and Oceanographic Research Center. These institutions should also come forward to expand education in this sector.

Drug smuggling, piracy in the Malacca Strait, pollution from ships or land are destroying the marine environment. Effective steps can be taken to address these crises jointly through BIMSTEC, SAARC and ASEAN. Bangladesh has made changes in the Maritime Act of 1974. Marine Economy Cell has been formed. Besides, maritime economy action plan has been adopted. Bangladesh wants to join ‘Colombo Security Conclave’ now. Its aim is to tackle the maritime threat.

Japan attaches great importance to a free and

open Indo-Pacific region. Bangladesh is one of the partners of Japan’s Big-B initiative around the Bay of Bengal. Under this, Matarbari in Maheshkhali will be turned into a hub for import and export of electricity and energy, industry and sea. The Rohingya crisis could lead to instability in the region. So, Japan can play a significant role in case of the repatriation of Rohingya, which is a sustainable solution to this crisis.

The Bay of Bengal was historically important. Due to geopolitics, its importance has increased since the last 80’s. Bangladesh is an important player in these geopolitics. The present government was pursuing a policy of maintaining good relations with all Indo-Pacific countries, avoiding conflict. And because of the balance, Bangladesh is an active partner of the US IPS as well as China’s BRI. Basically, Bangladesh shows the rest of the countries in the region how to balance with big powers simultaneously. Its balancing capability is really praiseworthy and exemplary for many countries.

The US-Japan-Australia-India formed ‘QUAD’ to counter China’s ‘BRI’. Despite competition over geopolitics, the United States and China are each other’s biggest trading partners. Bangladesh knows and understands this issue. Bangladesh should and must balance with these. Bangladesh needs America and China both for ensuring its business interest. Strategic significance of Bay of Bengal will make Bangladesh more prosperous in the region.

COVID-19 Status in A&N Islands

Port Blair, Dec. 23: During the RT-PCR test conducted on 473 passengers who arrived here yesterday, four positive cases have been detected. Today, 12 flights with 2102 passengers arrived, out of which, 1629 were vaccinated with both doses while RT-PCR test was conducted on 473 passengers (includes 59 international travellers) and the reports are awaited.

During RAT conducted on 190 passengers bound for North & Middle Andaman at Ferrargunj no positive case has been detected. At Mohanpura Bus Terminus, test was conducted on 112 passengers and all were found negative. At Phoenix Bay Jetty, 106 passengers were tested with

RAT and all were found negative. Today, till 3 pm 221 eligible beneficiaries were vaccinated, out of which 198 were of 18 plus age group.

Condolence

Shri. Nand Kishore Singh, Secretary, CCWS Ltd., has condoled the sudden and untimely demise of Shri. Aith Lal Bishukarma, Age 40 years, R/o Nayagaon, employee of the CCWS Ltd, who expired on 23.12.2021 at GB Pant Hospital. We prayed for eternal peace for the departed soul and for enough strength for the members of the bereaved family to bear the irreparable loss.

Vaccination Drive Continuing smoothly in A&N Islands

Port Blair, Dec. 23: The vaccination drive is continuing smoothly in A&N Islands. As per data available, a total of 5,89,087 beneficiaries have been vaccinated so far in A&N Islands. A total of 461 people were vaccinated in South Andaman District today.

421 beneficiaries were vaccinated in South Andaman District, out of which 45 beneficiaries were in the age group of 18-44 years. Similarly, 33 beneficiaries were vaccinated in North & Middle Andaman District out of which 4 beneficiaries were in the age group of 18-44. 7 beneficiaries were vaccinated in Nicobar District.



SPORTS

India in South Africa | Indian Batting Line-up Good Enough to Tackle Proteas Pacers: Pujara

Centurion, Dec. 23: Middle-order batter Cheteshwar Pujara says the current India batting line-up is experienced enough to tackle lateral movement on pace-friendly tracks in South Africa and he has no doubt that the team led by Virat Kohli will deliver in the Rainbow nation.

Pujara said the recent overseas success has made India a confident unit and that will reflect in the three-Test series, beginning Sunday.

"When you are a visiting team, you know that there is pace and bounce and there is lateral movement and to face the fast bowlers is always a big challenge when you go out of India," Pujara said in a video posted by BCCI on its twitter handle.

"This team has learnt that and this is a much more balanced batting line-up and I think we will be able to tackle that and with our preparation I am very confident we will put up a good show." Pujara also felt that the experience of having played in South Africa will also stand them in good stead.

"...most of the (Indian) players have played in South Africa in the past, it is an experienced side and in terms of preparation, we know what is expected from us.

"Most of the teams play well in their home conditions and it's the same with the South African team. They have one of the best bowling line-ups and facing one of the best fast bowlers has always been challenging," said the 33-year-old from Rajkot.

India had retained the Border-Gavaskar trophy after beating Australia 2-1 in the four-match series early in the year.

Virat Kohli's men also claimed a 2-1 victory in the five-Test rubber in England before the fifth Test was cancelled due to COVID-19.

"Having done well in England and Australia will make a big difference in this squad's confidence and self belief that we can win overseas, we can win in any conditions," Pujara said.



"And with our bowling and batting line-up, I am very confident that we have the capacity to win a series in South Africa." Pujara has lacked consistency since 2020 with his last century coming in January 2019 in Australia. In the last 10 innings, he has scored two fifties but couldn't convert them to big scores.

The Indian batting mainstay said he has better clarity now about how to go about things, having played in these conditions here before.

"When I came here in 2011, Dale Steyn and Morne Morkel were at their peak, I visited again in 2013 and 2017, so I understood what to expect.

"With experience you learn so many things, I feel you start believe in your preparation and don't need to change too many things. Because of my tours of South Africa and Australia, I know the conditions little better.

"With that experience I know how to prepare, what kind of shots to play and what kind of shots one needs to avoid, so you are little bit clear with your preparation and mindset." The Indian team is staying in a resort here with lot of open spaces inside the bio-bubble.

"This is the best bubble I have been a part of, you can move around, get fresh air, there is lot of places to move around, that helps when it comes to mental preparation, so you are much more relaxed, being close to the nature."

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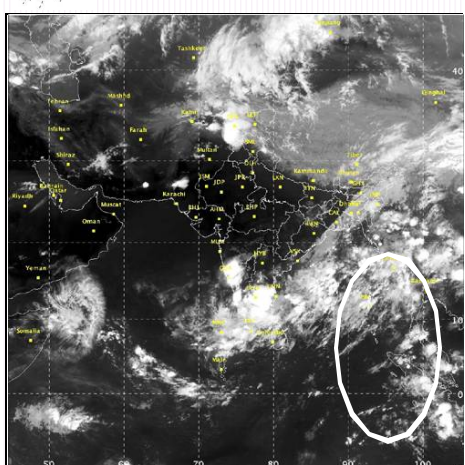
Police Control Room:	100
Fire Service:	101
Ambulance:	102
DC Control Room:	1070
Shipping:	245555
Postal :	232346, 232890
Children:	1098
Women:	244701
Coast Guard for	1554
Search & Rescue (SAR)	
Coast Guard RHQ:	232681
Coastal Security	1093
State Control Room:	1077, 238880
PBMC Control Room:	245798
Kisan Call Centre:	1551
Wildlife Control Room: :	245229, 200661, 200754

Emergency Operation Centres (EOCs)

State Control Room:	03192- 238880 (Tele-Fax), 1070(Helpline).
District Control Room:	03192-238881
EOC (Campbell Bay):	03193-264020
EOC (Kamorta):	03193-263222
EOC (N&M):	03192-262960
EOC (Hut Bay):	03192-284014



Weather



Max. Temp: 30.0 °C	Min.: 22.2 °C
Relative Humidity: 0830 Hrs: 62%	1730 Hrs: 78%
Sunrise: 0536 Hrs.	Sunset: 1702 Hrs.
Rainfall upto 0830 Hrs (Last 24 Hrs.):	003.4 mm
Rainfall upto 1730 Hrs (Last 24 Hrs.):	000.0 mm
Total Rainfall: (From Jan 1, 2020 till date):	3456.6 mm

Forecast

Dry weather very likely over Port Blair.
Maximum and Minimum temperature will be
around 30°C and 23°C respectively on Friday
24/12/2021

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