

NHIDCL speeding-up efforts to make NH-4 roads in motorable condition within next few months

KARTIK

PORT BLAIR, NOV 2/- The National Highway Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL) has been entrusted with the project to carry out repair and up-gradation of Andaman Trunk Road (ATR) or new NH-04 in the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The NHIDCL is committed to rectify the poor road conditions for the stretches of NH-04 that falls in North & Middle Andaman. Strategic efforts are in place to carry out phase wise rectification of poorly maintained sections of NH-4 by the primary EPC Contractor. For the road sections between Baratang to Mayabunder, in Phase-I, the strategy has been adopted to make the road traffic worthy on emergent basis and in Phase-II, the comprehensive urgent repairs have been planned to be carried out by the competent agencies finalised through limited tender, at the risk and cost of the Primary/Existing EPC Contractors. As per present status, the eight awarded emergent repair works are at the verge of completion and the urgent repair works are expected to be awarded and commenced by the end of November 2022.

NHIDCL has initiated necessary actions, by means of issuing summons and notices to the existing EPC Contractors, for the balanced sections of NH-4 from Chidiya Tapu to Lamiya Bay, wherever the EPC Contractors have neglected the road repair of damaged patches in their respective stretches. In the event of

further negligence or delay by the Contractor, the repairs would be executed by a third competent agency at the risk and cost of the EPC Contractor.

As intimated by certain Engineers who are in the supervisory role, on behalf of NHIDCL, primarily these presently poorly damaged/ poorly maintained sections had been awarded to M/s Vasishta-Mantena Group of Companies in 2019, to execute the works of NH-04 on EPC mode of construction and since the work had been awarded they have miserably failed to complete these projects neither on scheduled time nor on extended time of completion. In addition, they have miserably failed to maintain the road sections to traffic worthiness condition. Further, there have been reported instances that the Contractor had abandoned the sites at eleventh hour in response to public agitation. The actions of M/s Vasishta-Mantena Group of Companies are default under the provisions of EPC Agreement. As per EPC mode of project execution, the EPC Contractor is responsible for engineering, procurement and construction of any project to give a final product as per the broad Standards laid out by the department. EPC contractor is also solely responsible for maintenance of the entire stretch in traffic worthy condition during execution. Necessary actions have been initiated by the department against the contractors for their defaults, apart from urgent repair works being carried out at the risk and cost of the EPC contract. Although due to the default of agencies like

Mantena-Vasishta, tasks ahead of NHIDCL are humongous in nature, but since the induction of new Executive Director in NHIDCL in September 2022, the repair work on affected locations are in place on war footing. The benign measures are in place to ensure safe trafficability, timely completion and healthy commutation during upcoming tourist seasons. All efforts being put in by NHIDCL is to ensure that the affected sections of NH-04 are in better shape and safer for the public to commute, in coming months. On the contrary, the EPC Contractor has denied the allegations made by the representatives of NHIDCL and said that even after multiple requests, the EPC Contractor has not been handed over the required width of land in most of the project sections as per the provisions of the EPC agreement as on date and the EPC Contractor is forced to work in the available width without any drain and protection works which take care of the constructed road and safety of the road users which led to the damage of the constructed road. The EPC Contractor also said that the road is constructed by adopting new technology as approved by NHIDCL and CRRI (Central Road Research Institute). The rectification of the damages should only be addressed under the guidance of CRRI whose visit is scheduled from 06.09.2022 to 14.09.2022. The maintenance of the road by engaging other Contractors of NHIDCL is going to further deteriorate the condition of the road in future as these contractors are not specialised in the new technology by which the road is constructed.



Andaman Lost The 'Black' Tag; Why Get It Back With Sex-for-Jobs & Jail Scandals?

BHOPINDER SINGH

Vedic Sanskrit text attributed the crossing of the seas as Samudrolangha that can cause the loss of Varna (social class). This proscription was based on the assumptions of contacting with sin or with the characterless, engaging with the mlecha (foreign or barbarous invaders) and with the inability to carry out the prescribed rituals of Hinduism.

Those travelling across the seas would be presumed to have broken ties with their familial, societal, and religious moorings (even deprived of water from the holy Ganga!) – they were assumed to have joined the immoral reprobates, naastiks (non-believers) and left for the proverbial Kala Pani (Black Water).

During the British Raj, the penal settlement on the distant Andaman and Nicobar Islands (1200 kms away from the Indian mainland), earned the new-age infamy of the veritable Kala Pani, with the irreparable shame of getting 'Kala Panikisazza' (banishment to Kala Pani) as the ultimate form of punishment, pain and diminishment afforded on an ostensible convict. The brutality of existence for the prisoners incarcerated in the Cellular Jail at Port Blair would have justified its notoriety as Kala Pani, however the fact that many of them were freedom fighters ought to make the same land sacred and holy in the national imagination, post-independence. Unfortunately, the assumed hyphenation or equivalence of the term Kala Pani and Andaman and Nicobar Islands has survived time and circumstances, that be – it is a despicable slur and curse onto the proud inhabitants of this 'shining outpost' of India that has contributed immeasurably to the

Indian freedom struggle. It was to this fount of incorrect nomenclature that I had the honour to serve in these Emerald Islands for over six years. It was here and then, that I realised the enormity of the emotive 'distance' between the 'Islanders' and the so-called 'Mainlanders'. Unbeknownst to many, these distant Islands are the finest personification of the inclusive, accommodative, and large-hearted 'Idea of India' as sought by the noble and lofty Constitution of India and its founding fathers. A quaint dialect of Hindustani binds an unmatched diversity of Punjabi, Malayali, Maharashtrian, Tamil, Bengali, Jharkhandi or even a Purvanchali happily sinking their regional/ethnic/religious differences and uniting compositely and simplistically as 'Islanders'. However, the underlying equation with the so-called 'Mainlanders' remained uneasily distrustful, complicated, and sometimes even spiteful. A 'us-versus-them' relationship dominated the narrative, with the premise of 'Mainlanders' ruling and defining the destiny of the vulnerable 'Islanders'. Many efforts to assuage the sensibilities and bridge the disconnect were made. The essential face of the 'Mainlanders', barring the sprinkling of tourists (a welcome infusion given the relevance of tourism in the economic health of the Islands) was the bulk of senior administrative staff who oversaw the administration of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

Like all arms of governance that are given to varied experiences, the 'Administration' too had many who were recognised for their sincerity, honesty and dedication towards the

Islands, and many more, who clearly weren't.

As a former combatant who had served in the most far-flung parts of the country, one understood the subtle nuances and reasons for the societal 'distance' from the proverbial Delhi – but it was a sensitive and recurring task of mend and heal for the 'Administration' to win over its wary citizenry. Over the years, many in the administrative staff did win the necessary trust of the locals with aplomb, and many failed in their duty of earnestness, leading to a perpetual concern amongst the 'Islanders'. An extreme personification of this equation is the recent accusation in the sex-for-jobs/rape case attributed onto a senior and now-suspended official of the Andaman and Nicobar Administration. The Calcutta High Court has directed the said official to appear before the Special Investigation Team (SIT) and the matter is sub judice.

It is important to let the law take its course with the necessary rigour and diligence, as also to refrain from commenting or opining specifically on the individuals concerned, without contributing anything new that is already there in the complaint sheets and public space.

To put it mildly, it is unprecedented in its significance for both the 'Islanders' and the accused officials (not the entirety of the 'Administration') for its implied wounds and future ramifications.

As the author had never worked with the accused officials (even though he is believed to have had an earlier stint in the Islands in the early 90's), one would rather focus on conditions that often leads and

breeds hubris, disinterest and even misuse of officialdom, in these distant Islands. It is an undeniable fact that postings to places like Andaman and Nicobar are frequently considered 'punishment postings' within the AGMUT (Union Territory/Mizoram/Goa/Delhi) cadre, from which the senior staff of the local 'Administration' is empaneled. This can sometimes lead to disgruntled, 'parked' or even vengeful attitude by some. In my personal experience the odd case of official seeking repatriation to 'Mainland', resorting to 'time serving' tactics or simply 'not reporting to duty' was not unheard of. It had to be dealt with individually. Conversely, the physical distance from the metaphorical 'Delhi' could lend itself to a false sense of entitlement and power, for the unhinged – thankfully not many were like that.

However, given the disproportionate reliance on the officialdom for the day-to-day sustenance of the Islanders onto the local 'administration' (owing to the limited private opportunities/investments, protected forest areas and overarching reliance on government services), made the local 'Administration' even more intrusive and powerful as compared to their peers in the rest of the country. Often the local voice of discontent wouldn't reach the intended quarters and the local politicos further reaped the simmering animus towards even more polarisation, divides and distrust. The twin between the 'Mainlanders' and 'Islanders' remained fundamentally unmet. The curse of Kala Pani for both sides of the created 'divide', literally survived.

(The writer is the former Lt Governor of A&N Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed in the article is his personal)

Seafood festival on Nov 20 & 21

PORT BLAIR, NOV 2/- The Department of Fisheries in association with Department of IP&T, A&N Administration proposes to organize 'Seafood Festival' on November 20 & 21, 2022 in connection with celebration of 'World Fisheries Day-2022' in A&N Islands. The festival will mainly focus on popularizing seafood culture of the Islands among the local population as well as tourists.

During the festival, stalls will be allotted to interested Fishers/Fish Farmers/Fish traders/Entrepreneurs/Fisher Co-operatives/Fishery Institutes/Sport Fish Fisheries Institutes/Aquarium shops/Sports Fishing Vessel Owners/Hotels & Restaurants / Women SHGs/NGOs etc. to showcase various fisheries related activities/products/services including live,

fresh, chilled, frozen fish products and other value added products, seafood cuisines, aquariums, fish feed, essential fisheries

requisites, sport fishing services etc. The venue and other details regarding allotment of stall to the interested beneficiaries will

be intimated after selection. Interested individuals/firms may submit their application in prescribed format by 10th November,

2022 to the Directorate of Fisheries, Mohanpura, Port Blair. For details, one may contact mobile no. 9594801891/9474214820.



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SANDEEP SINGH @ RINKU S/O SHRI NISHAN SINGH

AGE- 38 YEARS

Sandeep Singh @ Rinku is absconding in case vide FIR No.165/22 dated 01/10/2022 U/s 376 D/228A/506/120 B IPC registered at Police Station Aberdeen, Port Blair, Andaman & Nicobar Islands being investigated by SIT, Police Lines, Port Blair. His description is as below:

Height	:	5 ft. 8" (approx)
Body Built	:	Well built
Hair Colour	:	Black
Complexion	:	Fair
Eye colour	:	Black

Any person who provides information leading to his arrest will be given a cash reward of Rs. 1,00,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Only). Information may be given on the numbers given below and identity of the informant will be kept secret.


Mobile No.: Inspector Jyoti Chattwal +91-9474246869
Sub-Inspector Abhishekh Menon +91-9531892057

E-mail Id: sp-apsap@and.nic.in

Address: Special investigation Team, Police Lines, Port Blair-744103, South Andaman

ANDAMAN & NICOBAR POLICE
SPECIAL INVESTIGATION TEAM, POLICE LINES, PORT BLAIR, SOUTH ANDAMAN

(Reward Rs. 1,00,000/-)
ABSCONDING ACCUSED



RISHISHWARLAL RISHI S/O LATE BASANT LALL

AGE- 46 YEARS

Rishishwarlal Rishi @ RL Rishi is absconding in case vide FIR No.165/22 dated 01/10/2022 U/s 376 D/228A/506/120 B IPC registered at Police Station Aberdeen, Port Blair, Andaman & Nicobar Islands being investigated by SIT, Police Lines, Port Blair. His description is as below:

Height	:	5 ft. 7" (approx)
Body Built	:	Medium
Hair Colour	:	Black
Complexion	:	Fair
Eye colour	:	Black

Any person who provides information leading to his arrest will be given a cash reward of Rs. 1,00,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Only). Information may be given on the numbers given below and identity of the informant will be kept secret.

Mobile No.: Inspector Jyoti Chattwal +91-9474246869
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E-mail Id: sp-apsap@and.nic.in

Address: Special investigation Team, Police Lines, Port Blair-744103, South Andaman

PM inaugurates 3,024 newly constructed flats for EWS in Delhi, says Centre working to make capital a grand city

NEW DELHI, NOV 2 /--/ Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday inaugurated 3,024 newly constructed flats for the Economically Weaker Sections in Delhi as part of an in-situ slum rehabilitation project. Modi did the honours at a ceremony here which was also attended by the beneficiaries. He handed over the keys of the flats to many of them. This will give the slum dwellers a sense of ownership and security, a statement from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) had earlier said. The in-situ slum rehabilitation in 376 Jhuggi-Jhopri clusters is being undertaken by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) in line with the prime minister's vision to provide housing for all, it said. Delhi LG Vinai Kumar Saxena and Union housing

and urban affairs minister Hardeep Singh Puri were among those who attended the event.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi handing over to a beneficiary, the key of their flat at the programme where he inaugurated 3024 such newly constructed flats for EWS

The Prime Minister cited his government's measures to boost the capital's development and took a veiled swipe at the AAP dispensation here, wondering how much money should have been spent on advertising these measures of the Centre. Modi said poverty was long considered an issue for the poor to deal with but they are now at the centre of his government's policies as his is a "garibon ki sarkar" (poor people's government). He cited the boost to the Metro service, the length of which has increased to nearly 400 km from 190 km in the national capital region since his government came to power. He also mentioned the work on highways around the capital city and other infrastructure measures besides pro-poor decisions. The Centre is working to make Delhi a

grand city fitted with all the facilities expected of the country's capital, Modi said. Addressing the beneficiaries of the new flats, Modi asked, "You tell me how much money should have been spent on advertisement for all the things I have listed before you. How many newspaper pages should have been filled (with ads), with my pictures?" Though the Prime Minister did not refer to the Aam Aadmi Party, which runs the city government, the BJP has often slammed it for its allegedly massive expenditure on publicity while doing little on the ground. The Centre has also helped the lower and the middle classes to realise their dreams of having a house by giving subsidy on their housing loan interests. Over Rs 700 crore has been spent on it, he added. (PTI)

Morbi bridge collapse: Staff at crematoriums, graveyards say they didn't see such huge influx of bodies in short span of time

MORBI, NOV 2 /--/ Caretakers of crematoriums and graveyards in Morbi town of Gujarat said they never saw a huge influx of bodies in a short span of time in decades, which they witnessed in the aftermath of the bridge collapse tragedy that claimed 135 lives. The British-era suspension bridge on the Machchhu river in the town caved in on Sunday evening, plunging people into the water below. Sajid Piludia of Morbi's biggest graveyard for Sunni Muslims said nearly 40 members of the Muslim community lost their lives in the incident. "Of them, 25 were buried here and another one at a nearby graveyard on Monday. This was the biggest tragedy after the 1979 Machchhu dam breach incident," he said. It all happened due to the negligence of the administration, a visibly upset Piludia said. Yusuf Samada and Yunus Shaikh, working as grave diggers at that graveyard, said they dug 14 out of the 25 graves from Sunday night till Monday evening to meet the sudden influx of bodies.

"This was very unusual for us because we usually dig nearly 20 graves a month," he said. Bhima Thakor, caretaker of a gas-run crematorium in Morbi town said he performed the last rites of 11 persons on two days - on Monday and Tuesday. "Nine bodies were brought on Monday and two on Tuesday. Usually, only two to three last rites are performed in this crematorium every week. I have never seen such a high death toll in a short span in decades," Thakor said. Dr Pradip Dudhreja, Superintendent of Morbi Civil Hospital said since the cause of the death of the Morbi tragedy victims was known (drowning), post-mortem was not conducted on the deceased. "A team of experts ascertained that the cause of death of all the 135 people was drowning and some died due to drowning and associated injuries," he said. "Since the cause of deaths was known and there was nothing more to find out, post-mortem was not conducted on the victims as recommended by a team of designated medical

experts," Dudhreja added. The caretakers of crematoriums and relatives of the deceased said the tragedy reminded them of the Machchhu dam breach incident of 1979 when thousands of Morbi residents were washed away in flood waters. Ramesh Patel, who lives near the hanging bridge, lost his niece and her three neighbours. "Out of the seven people who came to my house to enjoy the holiday, four have died, including my niece. After learning about the bridge collapse, all of us rushed to the spot and saved nearly 60 persons. It reminded me of the dam breach incident. This was the biggest tragedy in Morbi after the dam breach," said Patel, who cremated her niece on Monday, a day after the incident. Meanwhile, the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and other agencies continue to look for bodies at the site. VVN Prasanna Kumar, the Commandant of the NDRF, said apart from drowning, people also died of injuries because "floor of the river was full of rocks". (PTI)

Bharat Jodo Yatra: Actor-filmmaker Pooja Bhatt walks with Rahul

HYDERABAD, NOV 2 /--/ Actor-filmmaker Pooja Bhatt joined the Bharat Jodo Yatra here on Wednesday and walked with Rahul Gandhi.

Bhatt, the first noted Bollywood celebrity to have joined the Yatra, was seen walking with Rahul while having a discussion with him. People cheered as she walked for some distance at a brisk pace with the former Congress president. The actor-director-producer has been vocal about various issues on social media. She made her debut as an actor with the 1989 film "Daddy".

Daughter of veteran filmmaker Mahesh Bhatt, the actor delivered critically-acclaimed performances in movies such as "Dil Hai Ki Manta Nahin", "Sadak", "Phir Teri Kahani Yaad Aayee", "Sir" and "Zakhm", before venturing into production and direction with "Tammana", "Sur", "Paap" and "Holiday".

The Yatra resumed from MGB Bajaj showroom, Balanagar Main Road, Hyderabad City, with Rahul Gandhi along with other Bharat Yatris continuing their walk on the 56th day of the Yatra. The Bharat Jodo Yatra commenced on September 7 from Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu.

Rahul has completed the marathon walk in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, before beginning the Telangana leg of the yatra last week. The Telangana state Congress has formed 10 special committees to coordinate the yatra. (PTI)

PM 'praised' Gehlot, says Sachin; asks party not to take this lightly

Rajasthan CM urges party leaders to maintain discipline

JAIPUR, NOV 2 /--/ Former Rajasthan deputy chief minister Sachin Pilot on Wednesday raised eyebrows over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "praise" for CM Ashok Gehlot and also nudged his party to end the "state of indecision" over the chief minister's post.

Pilot also pushed for action by the party against Rajasthan leaders who led a show of strength for Gehlot in September, boycotting a Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting. His remarks on the "interesting development" that he said should not be taken lightly signal the resumption of the tussle within the party's state unit -- briefly on hold while the Congress presidential election was on. Pilot, who led a rebellion in 2020 against Gehlot, targeted the veteran leader by referring to Tuesday's event at Mangarh Dham in Banswara district, where Gehlot shared the dais with Modi. The leaders there paid tribute to the tribal people killed in an uprising against the British in 1913. "The PM praised the chief minister and this is an interesting development because the Prime Minister had praised Ghulam Nabi Azad in the same manner in the House in Parliament. And we all have seen what circumstances were created after that," he told reporters at his home.

The reference was to Azad quitting the Congress and later forming his own party. "So it is an interesting development that the PM

has praised the CM, and it should not be taken lightly," he said. Indirectly, the former Rajasthan Congress chief also called for action by the All India Congress Committee (AICC) against the Rajasthan Congress leaders involved in holding a show of strength for Gehlot in September. Gehlot's supporters wanted him or a loyalist to continue as chief minister, amid the possibility that he would be



Ashok Gehlot

Union minister recalled that AICC general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal had said then that a decision will be taken soon on Rajasthan, a reference to the chief minister's post. "The time has come to end the state of indecision in Rajasthan and action will take place soon," Pilot said. Recalling the crisis that erupted in September, Pilot said the CM had himself apologised



Sachin Pilot

elevated to the post of the party's national president and Pilot could take his place in Rajasthan. The CM's supporters boycotted the CLP meeting, where the MLAs were expected to pass a one-line resolution giving the party high command the right to pick the next CM.

Pilot said only 13 months were left now for the assembly elections and the AICC would soon take any decision it needs to take, like calling another CLP. He also suggested the party will soon act against those who were given notices by the AICC for the indiscipline in September. The former

to then party president Sonia Gandhi when the CLP meeting could not take place. "Ajay Maken and Mallikarjun Kharge who came as observers also took it seriously," he added. "The AICC considered it a matter of indiscipline and issued notices to three people," he reminded. He said the three state leaders have now replied to the notices.

"I believe that the Congress is an old and disciplined party and rules and the party discipline is applicable to all, no matter how big an individual may be," he said. Pilot said it cannot happen that the party considers a

development as indiscipline, issues notices and seeks replies but no decision is taken. "I believe the decision will be taken soon." Instead of attending the CLP meeting, MLAs loyal to Gehlot had held a parallel meeting at the home of Rajasthan Parliamentary Affairs Minister Shanti Dhariwal and then reportedly handed over their resignations to Assembly Speaker C P Joshi. The AICC had issued notices to Dhariwal, Congress chief whip Mahesh Joshi and Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation chairman Dharmendra Rathore.

When asked about the possibility of any changes in the state, the Congress leader said that it is for the party to give anyone any position or responsibility. In his speech during the Mangarh event on Tuesday, PM Modi had called Gehlot the senior-most chief minister in the fraternity of CMs when he was himself the Gujarat CM. Modi said he was one of the senior-most chief ministers even today. Shortly after Pilot raised eyebrows over Prime Minister's "praise" for him, Gehlot urged his party leaders to "maintain discipline" and refrain from making political statements. Earlier in the day, Pilot cautioned that Modi's remarks for Gehlot should not be taken lightly and also nudged his party to end the "state of indecision" over the chief minister's post. (PTI)

SC dismisses plea against Justice Chandrachud, terms it 'misconceived'

NEW DELHI, NOV 2 /--/ The Supreme Court on Wednesday dismissed a plea seeking to restrain its senior-most judge, Justice D Y Chandrachud, from taking oath as the Chief Justice of India on November 9 by terming it "completely misconceived". "Having heard the learned counsel for the petitioner, we see no reason to entertain the petition. In our considered view, the entire petition is completely misconceived and the petition is therefore dismissed," a three-judge

bench comprising Chief Justice Uday Umesh Lalit and justices S Ravindra Bhat and Bela M Trivedi said in the order. Earlier in the forenoon, the bench agreed to hear the plea at 12.45 itself, instead of Thursday as urged by the counsel for petitioner Mursalin Asijith Shaikh. "Get the paper books for my brother and sister (justices S Ravindra Bhat and Bela M Trivedi). We will list the matter at 12.45 pm today itself," the CJI said. During the brief hearing, the lawyer referred to alleged instances pertaining to the

hearing related to Covid-19 case and alleged that a plea, argued by a senior lawyer, was allowed to be tagged. While the similar relief was declined to a junior counsel, the lawyer said. "Sorry sir, we do not see any substance in this," the bench said. When the lawyer sought to argue in the afternoon, the bench declined the request saying, "Whatever you wish to argue, argue right now." The bench stopped the lawyer from making allegations pertaining to a judicial order and later dismissed the petition. (PTI)

Kerala CM accuses Guv of trying to supersede powers of legislature

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, NOV 2 /--/ Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Wednesday lashed out at Governor Arif Mohammed Khan by alleging that the latter's moves against university Vice Chancellors, not signing bills enacted by the legislature and seeking removal of the state Finance Minister were attempts to implement the RSS-Sangh Parivar agenda here. The chief minister also accused the Governor of acting as if he was above the judiciary and trying to supersede the powers of the legislature. Speaking at a convention organised by an Education Protection Committee here, Vijayan claimed that the recent move of Khan to remove 15 senate members of Kerala University as well as seeking immediate resignation of the Vice Chancellors of several varsities in the state was beyond the powers he has as Chancellor. The Chief Ministersaid the Chancellor's

position was created by the legislature under the Universities Laws, which also lays down the powers of that post. However, the recent moves of the Chancellor indicated the "uneasiness" of certain centres or groups like the RSS and Sangh Parivar who are unhappy with the improvements by the southern state in the field of higher education, Vijayan said. "It is all part of the agenda of the RSS and Sangh Parivar for saffronisation of the universities in the state," he further said. Vijayan also lashed out at the Governor for not signing various bills passed by the state legislature and holding on to them indefinitely, saying such actions were unconstitutional. The chief minister said that even the courts have held that the Governor cannot hold on to bills for an indefinite period of time, but here Khan was behaving as if he was above the judiciary and was also trying to supersede the powers of the legislature.

Khan's recent move seeking removal of state Finance Minister K N Balagopal from the cabinet was also criticised by Vijayan who said that the Governor should devote some time to think about the powers he has under the Constitution. Vijayan said that the Governor appoints or removes ministers from the cabinet on the aid and advice of the chief minister and not on his own and Khan should keep that in mind. The chief minister said that the Governor's recent moves were part of attempts by some forces to create a constitutional crisis in the state. Senior Left leaders, including LDF convener E P Jayarajan, CPI state secretary Kanam Rajendran and CPM state secretary MV Govindan, also criticised the Governor along similar lines. They alleged that Khan's actions against the universities were part of an agenda to turn varsities into RSS centres. (PTI)

Shah takes 'many CM faces' jibe at Cong in Himachal, calls it party of 'raja-ranis'

NADAUN, NOV 2 /--/ Union home minister Amit Shah on Wednesday took a swipe at the Congress saying it is a party of 'rajas and ranis' and even though many chief ministerial aspirants might be in the fray in Himachal Pradesh no one will get a chance in reality.

Addressing a poll rally here, he launched an all-out attack on the Congress for practicing nepotism and for not doing anything in the name of development. The home minister also highlighted surgical air strikes against Pakistan, construction of Ram temple at Ayodhya, implementation of 'one rank, one pension' and abrogation of Article 370 in Kashmir to woo the electorate in this segment of the state which goes to polls on November 12. Shah urged voters to break the tradition by electing the BJP once again to ensure that it becomes the number one state in the country. He

also assured to make the state drugs-free in the next five years. He was campaigning in support of BJP candidate Vijay Agnihotri in Nadaun. "The Congress has nothing to say in the name of development and to win some seats in Himachal it has named chief ministerial candidates in eight to 10 seats. There is a chief ministerial aspirant here too. But he does not know that he will not become the CM in the Congress, as one has to be someone's son or daughter to become a chief minister and your chance will never come," the home minister said while referring to the Congress candidate from Nadaun. "This is a party of rajas and ranis and no one will get a chance. Is there a place for rajas-ranis in a democracy and only those find a place who work for the welfare of people and we have given one here who despite not being an MLA continues to serve you,"

Shah stated. The Union minister also paid his respects to the brave mothers who have sent their sons in the armed forces to help ensure the country's security. "The Congress leaders from across the country have come to Himachal Pradesh as if for tourism. I want to ask them, the youth of Himachal have served the country and protected its boundaries and have given their supreme sacrifices. The first Paramvir Chakra was awarded to a Himachali Somnath Sharma. "For 40 years they have been demanding 'one rank, one pension' but a deaf Congress never heard their voice. Modi ji came to power in 2014 and in 2015 he implemented the 'one rank, one pension' which cost Rs 40,000 crore," Shah said. He asked people to seek a reply from the Congress on why they could not give 'one rank, one pension' to them even after ruling for 60 years.

Talking about Article 370, Shah said the Congress ruled for 60 years and 'kept caressing Jawaharlal Nehru's gift' like a child for years and our Kashmir failed to make its bond with India". He referred to Congress leaders' warning to him in Parliament when the bill to abrogate Article 370 was brought and said they warned me that rivers of blood would flow if it is passed. "Rahul baba, forget rivers of blood, no one has the courage to even throw a small pebble and our Kashmir is flourishing as India's crown." Attacking the Congress for inaction on Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, he said, "For 10 years during Sonia-Manmohan government, 'alia, malia, jamalias' entered India and killed our jawans and the Congress did not have the courage to say anything. But, when Modi government came such attempts by Pakistan were

given a befitting reply in the form of surgical air strikes inside Pakistan by our brave soldiers." He claimed that a new message has gone to the world that no one can tinker with India's army and borders, otherwise one would have to pay. Shah also attacked the Congress for giving various poll promises, saying: "The party which ruled the country for 60 years is now issuing guarantees to the people of Himachal Pradesh." He also claimed that the Congress party failed to make the Ram temple at Ayodhya due to their policy of appeasement. Not just Ram temple, but many other temples and religious places have been rebuilt and accorded importance during Modi's rule. "I want to tell the people of Himachal Pradesh that we will make it drug-free in the next five years and will root out the drug business from the entire country," he also claimed. (PTI)

Financial assistance under PMFME



PORT BLAIR, NOV 2/- /The Department of Industries has been implementing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Prime Minister's Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme (PMFME)" of Ministry of Food Processing Industries under Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan with the objective to formulize and strengthen Micro Food Processing Enterprises by utilizing the local resources. Under the scheme, financial assistance in the form of Credit Linked Subsidy @ 35% of the project cost will be extended to the individual and group enterprises.

The Department has been organizing outreach sensitization programme from 25/10/2022. The programme is aimed at reaching out to stakeholders and target groups including tiny food based industries working in the rural and urban areas of A&N Islands. In the first phase, 08 programme was conducted in all 03 Districts on 27/10/2022

In the second phase, 15 programs were organized from 28/10/2022 to 01/

11/2022 covering areas falling under Municipal Ward No. 6, 7 19 & 24 , Gram Panchayat, Stewart gunj, Gram Panchayat, Hut Bay, Gram Panchayat, Ram Krishna Pur, Gram Panchayat, Vivekananda Pur, Gram Panchayat, Rabindra Nagar, Gram Panchayat , Netaji Nagar in South Andaman District; Gram Panchayat, Madhupur, Gram Panchayat, Keralapuram in N & M Andaman District; Kinmai, Kinyuka&Mus in Car Nicobar , Nicobar District. The programme was witnessed and actively participated by more than 500 people from different parts of the Islands.

In the concluding programme held on 01/11/2022 at Municipal Ward No. 24, it was inaugurated by Smti. Kavitha Uday Kumar, Chairperson, Municipal Council in the presence of officials of Industries Dept& other ward members. In her inaugural address, the Chairperson, Municipal Council appreciated the efforts of the Industries Dept. which is proactively disseminating the scheme at the door step of every

Ward/Gram Panchayat. She deliberated the participants about the current scenario of Govt. employment and motivated them to become an entrepreneur and employer than an employee by availing the opportunities provided through Govt. Schemes or programmes of Govt. of India as well as UT Administration. Shri Sindhupathi Raja, Nodal Officer (PMFME) gave a detailed presentation highlighting the Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Prime Minister's Formalization of Micro Food Enterprises" that was launched after the COVID outbreak under Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan. He shared about the key details and procedure to avail the scheme for developing existing as well as new Micro level food processing industries.

The programme ended with the proposal of vote of thanks proposed by Shri. R.JanakRao, District Nodal Officer (PMFME) to the Chairperson, Municipal Council and others participants of the programme.

DYFI Committee formed in Diglipur

PORT BLAIR, NOV 2/- / A meeting of youth of Diglipur was held on 30th October, 2022 afternoon at Diglipur. Addressing the meeting, Mr. D. Ayyappan, Vice President, CITU, A & N State Committee explained in detail the problems being faced by the youth in the country as a whole and the youth of these islands in particular. He said that the promises made by the BJP during the 2014 election campaign that 2 crores of

jobs will be created every year has turned to be a hollow and the reality is that millions of workers have lost their jobs during the last 8 years of Modi government. The central government's policies are leading to unemployment, job loss, poverty and inequality in the country. He said that no step is being taken by the BJP government at the centre to set up any industry in the islands to provide job to the local youths.

Thousands of posts are lying vacant in various departments under the Administration and the BJP government and its Administration in the islands have failed to take any action to fill up these posts. The meeting formed the Diglipur Area Committee of the Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI). The meeting decided to strengthen the DYFI in North Andaman in order to take up

various issues of youths of Diglipur area. The meeting adopted resolutions on various issues concerning the people of Diglipur area particularly of youth.

Mr. Ramjeeban Sarkar, Ex-Pradhan, Kalighat Gram Panchayat and leader of All India Kisan Sabha called upon the youth of North Andaman to come together to fight against the wrong policies of the government. Mr. Narayan Bairagi presided over the meeting.

Community service by Bharat Scouts & Guides



PORT BLAIR, NOV 2/- / The Bharat Scouts & Guides wing of Diglipur Educational Zone has conducted an Community Service (Swachhata) on 2nd

November 2022 at Kalighat Bazaar and cleaned the entire market area of Kalighat market from 10 am to 11 am. The Dry and Wet garbage were disposed of separately.

Mr. Thirupathi Scout Master welcomed the gathering. The programme was inaugurated by Smti. Jharna Malo, Teacher In-charge, GSSS Kalighat. About 25 Scouts, 25

Guides and 10 Scout Masters and Guide Captains participated. The programme concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by Mr. K Bhaskar Rao, Scout Master.

Release arrested villagers, quash FIR: AAP on NTPC Dadri protest

NOIDA, NOV 2/- /The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Wednesday demanded that the protesters arrested by the police in Greater Noida during a demonstration at the NTPC Dadri be released. The Gautam Buddh Nagar unit of the AAP also urged the Uttar Pradesh government to consider the demand of increased compensation of the protesting villagers whose land was acquired in the past.

Clashes had erupted between the protesters and the police personnel on Tuesday after a protest at the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) plant in Dadri. Later the police and

the CISF unit deployed at the NTPC had resorted to lathi-charge and opened water canon on the crowd to control it, according to officials.

The Bharatiya Kisan Parishad, which was leading the protest, claimed around a dozen protesters, including women, had suffered injuries in the clash while Deputy Commissioner of Police (Greater Noida) Abhishek Verma said three police personnel got severely hurt in the episode.

Later Tuesday night, the DCP said an FIR was lodged in the case, while a local police official said around a

dozen protesters had been taken into custody. AAP's Gautam Buddh Nagar unit office-bearers on Wednesday met with the protesting villagers in Greater Noida.

"The Yogi Adityanath government should refrain from suppressing the legitimate demand for equal compensation of farmers with the use of police force," AAP's district unit president Bhupendra Jadaun said.

He alleged that the government was working against the interest of farmers, youth and women in the state and assured his party's support to the communities. (PTI)

Subsidy for purchase of motorboat engine/fishing gear

PORT BLAIR, NOV 2/- / The Department of Fisheries, A&N Administration is implementing a component 'Motorization of Traditional Craft' under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme - 'Blue Revolution' wherein subsidy is provided for purchase of outboard/inboard marine engine /fishing gear & propeller. The pattern of subsidy and eligibility criteria for the programme of the scheme are as under:-

Pattern of Subsidy for General Category	Pattern of Subsidy for ST/SC, Women Category
40% of the unit cost with a ceiling of Rs.48,000/- per inboard / outboard engine, fishing gear and propeller for unit cost of Rs.1.20 Lakh.	60% of the unit cost with a ceiling of Rs.72,000/- per inboard outboard engine, fishing gear and propeller for unit cost of Rs.1.20 Lakh.

For availing the benefit under the scheme, applicant should be a bonafide fisherman of A & N Islands possessing registered non-motorized or motorized fishing craft, holding valid fishing license continuously for 02 years including the current year. The pandemic COVID relaxation is applicable. The engine to be purchased should not be of more than 30 Horse Power (HP). The eligible subsidy for procurement of engine shall be upto 10 HP. The fishermen possessing motorized fishing crafts, whose engines are of more than 05 years old and are unserviceable, are also eligible to replace the engines. The fishermen seeking replacement of 05 years old and unserviceable engine should produce a certificate issued by an Authorised Marine Engineer stating that the engine is beyond economical repair. The type / size of gear allowed to purchase are Gill net not below 25 mm mesh (knot to knot diagonally), hook & line. Shore seine/drag net of mesh size not below 25 mm, fish traps. The applicant should not have availed the assistance for purchase of engine, fishing gear and propeller from the Department of Fisheries or any other Government Department during the last 5 years.

Applications have been invited from eligible beneficiaries interested in the procurement of outboard/inboard marine engine /fishing gear & propeller to extend subsidy by the Department during 2022-23. Application form and detailed terms & conditions of the scheme can be obtained from the Directorate of Fisheries / Fisheries Zonal Offices / Fisheries Sub Stations / Zilla Parishads / Panchayat Samities. The applications completed in all respect should reach the nearest Fisheries Zonal Office/Sub-Stations by 31st December, 2022.

CITU State Conference Logo released



PORT BLAIR, NOV 2/- / The logo for the 9th Andaman & Nicobar State Conference of CITU was released on 1st November, 2022 at a simple function held at Crusade House, Phoenix Bay, Port Blair by Mr. R. Surendran Pillai, President, CITU A & N State Committee. The State Conference of the CITU is scheduled to be held at Port Blair on 26 - 27 November, 2022. A video presentation

about the logo was also made on the occasion. Shri P. Sathyapal, Chairman, Reception Committee presided over the function. Mr. B. Chandrachoodan, General Secretary, D. Ayyappan, Vice President and BC Bhattacharjee, Vice President of CITU State Committee were also present on the occasion. Mr. SP Kalairajan, Secretary, Reception Committee proposed vote of thanks.

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This is the devilish thing about foreign affairs: they are foreign and will not always conform to our whim

James Reston

NRI businessman’s murder in Uganda not a case in isolation

The recent murder of an NRI businessman in Uganda should not be seen in isolation. It brings back to limelight the violent attacks, at times fatal, that the Indian diaspora has to face quite frequently in the United States, Canada and Australia. When 24-year-old Indian businessman from Gujarat Kuntaj Patel was shot dead in Kisoro town of Uganda by a police constable, the news sent shockwaves in his native village, Thasra, in Kheda district from where he had migrated to Uganda four years ago in search of greener pastures. The constable, who was off-duty, had stormed the hardware shop where Patel was working and opened fire at him when he was attending to a customer. The victim was rushed to hospital where he subsequently succumbed to gunshot wounds.

The incident came close on the heels of two Indians going missing in July in Kenya, prompting India’s Ministry of External Affairs to take up the matter very seriously. A rough estimate puts the number of Indians living in Uganda at 35,000, with most of them living in Kampala and Jinja. The High Commission of India in Kampala says that people of Indian origin and NRIs have pumped in over USD one billion in Uganda in the last two decades. Reports of gruesome killings in the US, Canada and Australia, besides racial taunts, assaults and hate-crime often hog the headlines. The Indian diaspora in the US, Canada and Australia have been at the receiving end of such crimes in the recent past, putting a question mark on their security in a foreign land. India’s Ministry of External Affairs had in September 2022 issued an advisory warning for the students in Canada regarding the increasing violence. Citing a significant increase in hate crimes, sectarian violence and anti-India activities, the advisory asked the Indians in Canada to remain vigilant. Not only in Canada, racial violence against Indians have been reported in Australia as well.

The recent killing of a Sikh family in the US state of California sent shockwaves across the globe where all four members of the family including the 8-month-old baby, her parents and uncle, were found dead in an orchard. The family, originally from HarsiPind in Hoshiarpur, Punjab, was kidnapped at a business in Merced County, California. A vehicle owned by one of the family members was found on fire, which led law enforcement to determine that the four had been kidnapped. Back in August this year, a video made rounds on the social media where four Indian-American women were seen getting racially abused and humiliated by a woman of Mexican-American descent in the U.S. State of Texas. The assaulter Esmeralda Upton hurled racist taunts at them and accused them of "ruining" America and said that they should "go back to India".

Back in June, a 31-year-old Indian-origin man Satnam Singh was shot dead in Queens while he sat in a borrowed SUV parked down the street from his home. This incident occurred within a few days after another Indian national, SaiCharanNakka, 25, was killed after sustaining an apparent gunshot wound to his head in the US state of Maryland. In March, an Indian-origin doctor, Rakesh Patel, was killed by persons who allegedly stole his Mercedes Benz and hit him with the car in Washington. The victim was outside his car when the attackers hit him while fleeing in the vehicle. After the US, Canada recently also has made several headlines for killing a number of Indians.

Nepal general elections on Nov 20 may not lead to a stable govt

REFLEX ACTION

Arun Kumar Shrivastav

Nepal is going to polls on November 20 this year for the second time in its latest tryst with democracy. The first round of general elections took place in 2017 after the country got a brand new constitution in 2015. What makes the Nepal elections an interesting political development in the land-locked country a little shy of 30 million people and \$33 billion worth of GDP is the aspirations of the people from the new political system after living under a monarchy for the greater part of its modern history.

Unlike in many countries, elections in Nepal are a hotly debated and fiercely contested exercise. The new constitution gave rise to seven new provinces in Nepal. Earlier, it was divided into 70-odd districts and had a central rule. Now the elections on November 20 will elect 165 members for the House of Representatives of the national parliament and 330 lawmakers for the provincial legislature.

The November 20 general election in Nepal has mostly the same old faces in the fray as in the 2017 elections. There are reports that Nepal’s election commission will be keeping a close watch on candidates’ electoral expenditure, with inputs that some are openly flouting the norms. Also, the cadre and comrade-based political movements, so far, are giving in to the pressures from their financiers to concede them some party tickets.

Gradually and through these elections, domestic politics which has so far been dominated by ordinary party workers and their leaders is letting ideology-free and profit-seeking businessmen become the new voice of their politics. The current Prime Minister, Sher Bahadur Deuba, belongs to the Nepal Congress, while his immediate predecessor KP Sharma Oli was from CPN (UML). Besides these, there are at least five major political parties that are recognized at the national level and have varying degrees of influence in the country. Among them are CPN (Maoist-Centre) and CPN (Unified Socialist) with Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Madhav Kumar Nepal as the top functionaries respectively. Both have served as the prime minister of Nepal in the past.

While these parties have a pan-national presence, some political parties champion the cause of the Terai regions (Himalayan foothills). These parties are the People’s Socialist Party-Nepal, Loktantrik Samajwadi Party, and People’s Progressive Party (Nepal) with Upendra Yadav, Mahanta Thakur, and Hridayesh Tripathi. The latter three are considered closer to India while the remaining four political parties try to balance their approach between India and China.

Given the many political parties in the fray and their respective vote banks, the last election did not produce any clear majority for any of the parties. As a result, there emerged two coalitions that kept making and breaking through the five years, and power changed from one coalition to another. The same is likely to be the case in this round of elections as well. And, the coalition politics seems to continue for at least the next five years, if not more. For the people, elections provide a great talking point and that’s quite a relief given the 10-year-long civil war that saw the ultra-left forces waging a war against the state and finally making way to the country’s political mainstream. Civil war crimes have still not been investigated and responsibilities fixed. Over 12,000

people were killed in the conflict that lasted from 1996 to 2006. For a lot of people in the otherwise peaceful Himalayan climes of Nepal, these deaths are unsettling memories. Elections bring a change in the social and political milieu. But the average Nepali’s aspirations of prosperity are far from being delivered by the political dispensations so far.

The country’s economy is over 30 percent dependent on agriculture. There is a large presence of local and foreign NGOs given the ecological importance and sensitivities of the region. In the intellectual circles of Kathmandu which constitute NGO workers, staff of foreign diplomatic missions, university teachers, and journalists, the foreign donation is a big topic of discussion. But for the common Nepalis, it’s a job visa for a foreign location that does the trick. Manpower companies in Kathmandu sometimes have queues stretching up to 100 meters.

Often there are news reports in the local press about Nepali workers dying due to harsh climates or working conditions in the Middle East and elsewhere. For a lot of foreigners who have made Nepal their home, it’s ironic to watch the men and women from this beautiful country with bountiful natural resources migrate to the Middle East and such places to work for as low as \$300 a month. But a strong political sensitivity against foreign interference doesn’t let Nepal benefit from the presence of economic powerhouses in its neighbourhood – India, and China.

Will the new elections throw up leadership that pulls the country out of its predicament is anybody’s guess. But the fact that Nepal, with all its colors and festivals, is now witnessing the festival of democracy gives one some sobering thoughts. (IPA)



Household items being sold at a vendor’s kiosk in North Kolkata--Arijit Ganguly

World Bank estimate on reduction of poverty level in country is faulty

The Global Hunger Index becomes useful here. If reduced food intake was indeed a symptom of an improvement in the condition of life, then we should be expecting many more countries whose growth-rates appear impressive to join India at the bottom of the GHI table. But the countries in India’s neighbourhood on the GHI table, where our rank is 107, are Rwanda (rank 102), Nigeria (103), Ethiopia (104), Republic of Congo (105), Sudan (106), Zambia (108), Afghanistan (109) and Timor-Leste (110). All these are countries that are generally regarded as poor countries, so that their being at the bottom of the table is no surprise. By contrast, countries with which we would like our economic performance to be compared, such as China, are at the top of the table. China appears within the top 17 countries which are collectively, rather than individually, ranked. Its GHI score of less than 5 is way better than India’s 29.1.

The fact that not a single one of the so-called high-growth economies figures alongside India underscores the complete vacuity of the arguments that emphasize a change in tastes (greater keenness for children’s education) or a reduction in “drudgery” (through mechanisation) as being

responsible for a (voluntary) reduction in foodgrain consumption. The reduction in “drudgery” owing to mechanisation, or the desire for children’s education, are not characteristics specific to the Indian people; they are universal phenomena. Then why should India alone among the high-growth economies figure near the bottom of the GHI table?

It may be argued that while the desire for children’s education and proper healthcare may be common to people everywhere, in India these are expensive services while in China they may be cheaper. Because of this, parents in India enrolling their children in the more expensive schools may have to cut back on their food consumption, while in China schooling being less expensive, there is no need to cut back on food intake for educating children.

But that is precisely our point, and it has nothing to do with any “change of taste”. Everywhere, parents are keen on their children’s education, but if in a particular country putting them to

school requires having to forego food, then this foregoing is symptomatic of an increase in poverty. It indicates an increase in the price of one of the goods in the basket consumed by the people, and hence an increase in the cost of living which is not accompanied by a corresponding increase in money incomes, and leads to a cut in foodgrain consumption. This cut in foodgrain consumption, which means an increase in hunger, is therefore a reflection of a rise in cost of living and hence of a reduced real income; and that exactly is what one means by an increase in poverty.

Put differently, any increase in real income must mean some increase in the consumption of every good in a basket of goods on which this income is spent (or some substitute good for one of these goods). An increase in real income, as cross-section data within India and across countries show, invariably means a rise in foodgrains consumption, not direct consumption alone but direct and indirect

consumption taken together. But if there is a decline in the total direct and indirect foodgrain intake, as has been the case in India, then that must mean a decline in real incomes of the majority of the people, and hence a rise in poverty. The link between growing hunger and growing poverty therefore remains valid.

The reason why poverty according to official and World Bank estimates appears to have declined in India, on the basis of which it is claimed that the link between poverty and hunger no longer holds, is because they use a “poverty line”, a particular level of per capita money expenditure below which people are considered poor; which is updated by using a cost-of-living index. But the index as constructed in India does not reckon with the rise in cost of living owing to the privatisation of services like education and health. Therefore the true rise in cost of living is not taken into account, and the poverty line that is updated by using it, keeps falling below what it should have been. This underestimates the magnitude of poverty and the elite laps up this estimated, supposedly declining, poverty ratio. The Global Hunger Index exposes the falsity of such poverty estimates. (IPA/Concluded)

Conventional Crossword

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23			24	

ACROSS
1 Essential
4 Distress call
6 In a frenzy
8 Bury
9 Find pleasing
11 Article
12 View
15 Assists
18 Soft powder
20 Water pitcher
21 Prized fur
22 Exploit
23 Make lace
24 Brilliance of success

DOWN
1 Blood vessels
2 Tenth part
3 Big
4 Slight parody
5 Slender support
7 Oily fruit
10 Large brown seaweed
13 Sharp curved nail
14 Mother-of-pearl
15 Inconsiderate speed
16 Written defamation
17 Kind of wheat
18 Biblical quotation
19 Remaining

SUDOKU: 3684

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Yesterday’s Solution 3683

4	9	3	1	7	8	5	2	6
2	8	7	9	6	5	4	3	1
6	1	5	4	2	3	9	8	7
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Yesterday’s Cross Word Solution 1692

H	E	R	O	T	A	M	E	S
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Release arrested villagers, quash FIR: AAP on NTPC Dadri protest

NOIDA, NOV 2/--/The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Wednesday demanded that the protesters arrested by the police in Greater Noida during a demonstration at the NTPC Dadri be released.

The Gautam Buddha Nagar unit of the AAP also urged the Uttar Pradesh government to consider the demand of increased compensation of the protesting villagers whose land was acquired in the past.

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the protest, claimed around a dozen protesters, including women, had suffered injuries in the clash while Deputy Commissioner of Police (Greater Noida) Abhishek Verma said three police personnel got severely hurt in the episode.

Later Tuesday night, the DCP said an FIR was lodged in the case, while a local police official said around a dozen protesters had been taken into custody.

AAP's Gautam Buddha Nagar unit office-bearers on Wednesday met with the protesting villagers in Greater Noida.

"The Yogi Adityanath government should refrain from suppressing the legitimate demand for equal compensation of farmers with the use of police force," AAP's district unit president Bhupendra Jadaun said.

He alleged that the gov-

ernment was working against the interest of farmers, youth and women in the state and assured his party's support to the communities.

"All the villagers who have been arrested should be released and the FIR lodged against them should be withdrawn. Also action should be taken against officials who opened lathi charge on the villagers," Jadaun said.

He said the villagers' demand for equal compensation is fair and alleged that the governments currently running the country and the state are "working to suppress the voice of farmers, youth and women with the use of the police".

Meanwhile, the AAP has planned a 'Gandagi mitaao, Jhaadu chalaao' programme in Dadri on Thursday in the presence of the party's senior leader and UP in-charge Sanjay Singh. (PTI)

Non-reporting of sexual assault against minor despite knowledge a serious crime: SC

NEW DELHI, NOV 2/--/The non-reporting of sexual assault against a minor despite knowledge is a "serious crime" and an attempt to shield the offenders, the Supreme Court said on Wednesday.

The apex court said prompt and proper reporting of commission of offence under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act is of utmost importance and the failure to do so would defeat the very purpose and object of the law.

The top court set aside the Bombay High Court's judgement of April last year quashing an FIR and the chargesheet regarding a medical practitioner who allegedly did not inform the authority about sexual assault against several minor girls at a hostel despite having knowledge about it.

A bench of Justices Ajay Rastogi and C T Ravikumar observed it is true that the FIR and the chargesheet still remain in respect of other accused in the case.

"But then, non-reporting of sexual assault against a minor child despite knowledge is a serious crime and more often than not, it is an attempt to shield the offenders of the crime of sexual assault," the bench said in its 28-page judgement. The apex court delivered its verdict on an appeal filed by the state of Maharashtra, through the police, against the high court judgement. The bench, while referring to a previous verdict delivered by the top court, noted it was observed in the judgement that "this is an unfortunate case where the provisions of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 are rendered simply a pious hope of the Parliament and a teasing illusion for the appellant." "Even while, borrowing those words, we may say, we are not peeved, but certainly pained, as a legitimate prosecution under another Act viz, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, has been throttled at the threshold by the exercise of power under section 482 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (CrPC), without permitting the materials in support to it to see the light of the day in respect of misprision of sexual assault against minor tribal girls in a girls' hostel," the bench said. Section 482 of the CrPC deals with inherent powers of the

high court. The apex court observed that FIR in the matter came to be registered on the accusation of commission of sexual offences against minor tribal girls, who were students of a school in Rajura and were residing in its girls' hostel.

It noted that the medical practitioner, on whose plea the high court had delivered the verdict, was arraigned as the sixth accused in the case essentially for the alleged failure to report the commission of offence under the POCSO Act in compliance with the legal obligation under the provision of the law.

The bench also noted that during the investigation, it was found that 17 minor girls were allegedly abused and the medical practitioner was appointed for treatment of girls admitted to the hostel. It said the case of the police is that some among the 17 victims have given statements that the medical practitioner was informed of the sexual assault on them. The top court observed that exercise of power under section 482 of the CrPC is an exception and not the rule and it is to be exercised to do real and substantial justice for the administration of which alone courts exist.

The bench said provisions of the POCSO Act would reveal that it also aims to ensure that such offenders are not spared and should be properly booked. "To achieve the avowed purpose, a legal obligation for reporting of offence under the POCSO Act is cast upon on a person to inform the relevant authorities specified thereunder when he/she has knowledge that an offence under the Act had been committed," it said. The bench said medical examination of the victim as also the accused would give many important clues in a case that falls under the POCSO Act.

"There can be two views that in relation to sexual offences medical evidence has much corroborative value," it said. It said if the FIR and the materials collected during the probe discloses the commission of a prima facie case under provisions of the POCSO Act, the truthfulness, sufficiency or admissibility of the evidence are not matters falling within the purview of exercise of power under section 482 of the CrPC and undoubtedly they are matters to be done by the trial court at the time of trial. (PTI)

SC asks Centre why reasons for security clearance denial can't be disclosed to Malayalam news channel

NEW DELHI, NOV 2/--/The Supreme Court on Wednesday asked the Centre what the reasons were for denial of security clearance to Malayalam news channel 'Media One' and why those reasons cannot be disclosed to them.

The top court said the essence of court proceedings was that anything relied upon by one party should be disclosed to the opposite party. A bench of justices DY Chandrachud and Hima Kohli told Additional Solicitor General K M Nataraj, appearing for the Centre, that even in cases of detention under the National Security Act, the authority has to give grounds of detention but in this case, it was only said that the Ministry of Home Affairs has denied security clearance.

"The authority granting the broadcast licence is different from the authority revoking the licence on the ground of security. It is a third party.

Then what is the remedy for the citizen, who is denied the permission... you are not saying they are the offenders but are revoking their licence," the bench said. The top court was hearing the plea of the news channel against the Kerala High

Court's order which had upheld the Centre's decision to ban its telecast on security grounds. The bench added that in a criminal case, a charge sheet is filed against the accused, and no matter how sensitive the charges are, they are disclosed to the accused, and in the present case, it is not even at that threshold. "We understand there are sources which cannot be disclosed but then you can provide a redacted copy of the materials. You can't straight away deny the other party information on which you are arriving at a conclusion," the bench said.

It added that guidelines say national security and public order will be grounds for denial of permission to renew broadcast licence but the other party needs to know what their breach was.

"Renewal of licence is important for a media house because there is investment involved, market reputation at risk, people have been employed. In this case, they have been running for the past 10 years, so goodwill in the market is also there," the bench said. In a nearly four-hour hearing, the bench asked Nataraj to seek instructions on these queries and come prepared on Thursday. At the outset, senior ad-

vocate Dushyant Dave, appearing for the channel, claimed that it has never violated the programme code but the only crime is that the channel is owned by people of a minority community.

He said the lack of security clearance by the Ministry of Home Affairs cannot be grounds to not renew the licence if the channel is fulfilling the conditions under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995. "The fundamental right to freedom of speech and expression, which includes the press freedom, can be restricted only on the grounds enumerated under Article 19 (2)," he said.

Senior advocate Huzefa Ahmadi, appearing for the chief editor of the channel, said the government has said before the high court that the channel is a threat to national security and public order.

"When you (Centre) pass the final order you don't tell me that I have violated national security or public order. You merely say that I have violated security clearance," he said.

The bench said if there is revoking of clearance on national security and public order, there should be tangible material to show that channel is impinging upon

Man beaten to death on suspicion molesting woman in UP's Saharanpur

SAHARANPUR, NOV 2/--/A 19-year-old man died after allegedly being thrashed on suspicion of entering a woman's house and molesting her here, an official said on Wednesday.

Upon receiving the news of his death, the 18-year-old woman allegedly hanged herself, the police added.

An additional police force and personnel of the Provincial Armed Constabulary have been deployed in the village in Rampur Maniharan police station limits to prevent any untoward situation as the deceased hailed from two different communities. Senior officers of the police and administration were also present on the spot, they added.

The police have sent both the bodies for post mortem.

Superintendent of Police (Dehat) Suraj Rai told PTI that the 19-year-old en-

tered the house of a family living in the village around midnight on Tuesday. The family members accused him of molesting their daughter and beat him up. He was then handed over to the police in an unconscious state.

The police first took him to his home from where he was taken to the district hospital before being shifted to another hospital in Dehradun as his condition deteriorated. He died on Wednesday morning, Rai said.

As soon as news of his death reached the village, the woman whose family accused the man of molesting her allegedly hung herself, Rai said. Senior Superintendent of Police Vipin Tada reached the village and met both the families, Rai said.

The two teenagers used to study together, the police said. (PTI)

Close schools for physical classes owing to severe air pollution in Delhi: BJP

NEW DELHI, NOV 2/--/The Delhi BJP on Wednesday demanded closing of schools for physical classes and conducting online teaching to protect children in view of high level of air pollution in the national capital.

In a letter to Delhi Lt Governor VK Saxena, Delhi BJP chief Adesh Gupta raised the demand and claimed that every seventh adult and every second child in Delhi is troubled by the pollution.

Gupta also said that Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal should talk to his counterpart in the AAP ruled Punjab to curb burning of paddy straw to control smoke released by it and polluting air in Delhi.

"We are all concerned about the heavy pollution in Delhi which is increasing continuously in Delhi and the people are getting sick in large number," Gupta said in his letter. Delhi's pollution is reaching the very severe category and the city is turning into a "gas chamber" due to stubble burning in Punjab, Gupta claimed.

Children are being affected the most with pollution reaching very severe levels. Sending children in open fields or outside the house in such severe pollution is making them sick, he said. "I request you that children should be allowed to take online classes from home for the time being. This arrangement should continue till the pollution sub-

sides, so that the children could be saved from falling ill."

SAFAR, a forecasting agency under the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences, said the share of stubble burning in Delhi's PM2.5 pollution increased to 32 per cent due to favourable transport-level wind speed.

Delhi's air quality improved marginally on Wednesday owing to relatively better meteorological conditions, with the Commission for Air Quality Management saying there is no immediate need to implement curbs, such as a ban on the entry of trucks and a closure of educational institutions, under the fourth stage of the Graded Response Action Plan.

The 24-hour Air Quality Index (AQI) of the city stood at 376, improving from 424 on Tuesday, which was the worst since December 26 last year when it was 459.

With pollution levels worsening, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) had on Saturday directed authorities to impose a ban on construction and demolition activities in Delhi-NCR, except in essential projects, and other curbs under stage three of the Graded Response Action plan (GRAP).

GRAP first implemented in 2017, is a set of anti-air pollution measures followed in the national capital and its vicinity according to the severity of the situation. (PTI)

it to defend itself. The Kerala High Court had upheld the Centre's decision to bar telecast of the Malayalam news channel and dismissed the plea of Madhyamam Broadcasting Ltd - which operates MediaOne - challenging the central government's January 31 decision. (PTI)

MoS Jitendra Singh announces nationwide campaign for submission of digital life certificates



NEW DELHI, NOV 2/--/Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Wednesday announced a nationwide campaign for pensioners for submission of digital life certificates and use of face authentication application.

"In Amrit Kaal, a digitally empowered pensioner would enable creation of a digitally empowered nation," he said.

Singh, the Minister of State for Personnel, said submission of life certificates is an important activity to be carried out by pensioners every year in November to ensure continuity of their pension. There is a special provision for pensioners aged 80 years and above to submit their life certificates in October. In the traditional mode, pensioners had to visit the pension disbursing authority to physically submit their life certificate, and this was inconvenient, particularly for the old and ailing, he said.

Further, there was no mechanism through which pensioners could get a status on update of their life certificates in officials records, the minister said. He said to enhance the "ease of living" of central government pensioners, the government has been promoting the use of digital life certificate (DLC) Jeevan Pramaan, extensively.

Initially, the government launched a system to submit DLCs using biometrics. It then developed a face-recognition

technology system based on Aadhaar database, which makes it possible to give a DLC from any android-based smartphone, the minister said. This reduced the dependence of pensioners on external biometric devices and made the process more accessible and affordable, he added. Singh launched the nationwide campaign for November and urged all pensioners to avail the facility of face authentication technology.

He said the pension disbursing authorities have been issued directions for promoting the use of DLC/face authentication technology. Detailed guidelines in this regard have been issued to various ministries and departments as well as banks to reach out to maximum number of pensioners to avail the service, a Personnel Ministry statement said.

All Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) wellness centres, dispensaries and hospitals have also been requested to set up camps in their premises for this purpose, it said. In addition, pensioners' associations have been sensitised to hold camps for DLC submission, the statement said.

Singh announced two new initiatives for the welfare of pensioners, which includes efforts to universalise the integrated pensioners' portal as 'Bhavishya 9.0'.

This will be done by incorporating various standalone portals of the pensions department and portals of 17 pension disbursing banks so as to provide multiple services from a single window and a single login. On completion of all phases of this integration, the retirees can choose a bank and branch for opening an online pension account, check their monthly pension slips, Form 16, status of life certificate as well as change their pension disbursing bank through Bhavishya, it said.

State Bank of India is the first pension disbursing bank to integrate its pension seva portal with Bhavishya on October 18.

The process of integration with all the remaining 16 pension disbursing banks has commenced and will be completed soon, the statement said. The Department of Pensions and Pensioners' Welfare will launch a monthly national 'Anubhav' awardees webinar series.

Each episode will feature two Anubhav awardees as speakers who will share their experiences, besides motivating and raising awareness among retiring employees on filling up their own experiences on the Anubhav portal.

Anubhav is a means for retiring employees to showcase through write-ups significant achievements they made and their contribution in enhancing the effectiveness of various government policies during their service period. Selected write-ups are awarded with a medal, a certificate and a cash prize of Rs 10,000.

"It is envisaged that this culture of documenting administrative history of the nation through office-leaving notes by retirees on Anubhav portal will become the foundation stone of good governance and administrative reforms in future," the statement added. (PTI)

Delhi HC quashes FIR after compromise between parties, asks accused to plant 25 trees

NEW DELHI, NOV 2/--/Taking note of a settlement between the parties, the Delhi High Court has quashed an FIR registered against a man for the alleged offences of sexual harassment and house trespass and asked him to plant 25 trees in the vicinity of his residence and look after them for ten years. Justice Jasmeet Singh, while dealing with the accused's plea for quashing the FIR, noted that the complainant has decided to put a quietus to the matter and thus, quashing of the proceedings would bring peace and secure ends of justice. He, however, added that since considerable time of the police and judiciary was "wasted" on the FIR, which was registered in 2015, the petitioner "must do some social good".

The petitioner, who was in an inebriated state, had tried to enter the house of

the complainant's sister and also misbehaved with the complainant, according to the FIR. "The police machinery has been put in motion on account of the acts of commission and omission on behalf of the parties and useful time of the police which could have been utilised for important matters has been misdirected towards this case. Hence, the petitioner must do some social good," said the court in its order dated October 31.

"FIR No. 312/2015 dated 10.06.2015, under Sections 354 (assault of criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty)/354-A (sexual harassment)/451 (house-trespass in order to commit offence punishable with imprisonment)/506 (punishment for criminal intimidation) IPC (Indian Penal Code), registered at police station-

Harsh Vihar is hereby quashed subject to the following conditions and its compliance: The petitioner will plant 25 trees in the vicinity of his residence..." it ordered. The plantation will be carried out within four weeks, the court ordered. The court asked the petitioner to get in touch with the horticulture department of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and inform the additional public prosecutor about "each and every step" taken by him. The court also asked the investigating officer of the case to be in touch with the petitioner and ensure he does the needful.

After the initial planting of trees, the investigating officer will file a compliance report, and the petitioner a status report every six months to give the status of trees planted along with photographs, it added. (PTI)

Press Note

A walk in interview (demo theory and practical) is scheduled on 05th& 07th Nov.2022 for recruitment of Guest AP, Guest Lecturers and Part Time Instructors in various departments in the establishment of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Institute of Technology, Port Blair for the academic session 2022 23 (Odd sem). The details of qualifications, schedule for interview and demo topics can be downloaded from the institute website <https://dbrait.andaman.gov.in> . For any queries candidates may contact Academic Cell of the institute on all working days from 09:00 AM to 03:00 PM or can contact over phone no. 03192-259818.

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Women empowerment will lead to uplift of society: Prez in Kohima



President Droupadi Murmu with participants of a cultural programme, organised in her honour at Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio's official residence

KOHIMA, NOV 2 /--/ President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday said that women empowerment will lead to uplift of the society. She virtually launched 75 projects at a public reception programme organised by the Nagaland government to mark her maiden two-day visit. Addressing a mammoth gathering, she said: "I am told that the literacy rate among women in Nagaland is the highest in the country and the state is the safest place in the country for women. This demonstrates the high respect accorded to women in the Naga society." Congratulating Phangnon Konyak on becoming the first woman Rajya Sabha MP from Nagaland, she urged women of the state to come forward and get more involved in public life.

"If women are empowered, there is more development in the society. Women lead with empathy and care, and they would give a new dimension to the development journey of Nagaland," Murmu said. Most of the 75 projects launched virtually are schools, while some are hostels, roads and bridges, and also a new treasury building. She also launched smart classrooms in 190 government schools across the state. "I am confident that these projects will improve literacy, ease of living, boost tourism and

economy of the state," she said. She congratulated Governor Jagdish Mukhi, Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio and his government for the successful completion of these projects. Observing that Nagaland will be celebrating 60 years of statehood in a few weeks' time, the President said: "I am happy to note that Nagaland has made significant progress on various development parameters." Murmu urged the people of the state to rededicate themselves towards making a more prosperous and developed Nagaland. "There is a tremendous potential of tourism in Nagaland," she said, adding Naga tribes are known for their vibrant culture and rich heritage that exemplifies the country's motto 'Unity in Diversity'. The President said Hornbill Festival has become a popular platform for showcasing the colourful and beautiful culture of the state. Noting that infrastructural development is a key parameter for the state's growth, she said the 'Act East Policy' of the Centre focuses on the overall development of North-East. "The dynamic youth of Nagaland are immensely talented and creative. Providing the youth with holistic education remains the key to help them

achieve their true potential," she said. Observing that it was great privilege to visit the beautiful state, the President said: "I am deeply touched by the warm reception accorded to me by the government and people of Nagaland." Earlier, upon landing at Dimapur airport, she was received by Governor Jagdish Mukhi, while Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio, his deputy Y Patton and other senior ministers and bureaucrats welcomed her at an Assam Rifles helipad in Kohima. "An honour to welcome Smt. Droupadi Murmu, the Honourable President of India. We are delighted to welcome you to Nagaland, the #LandOfFestivals. I wish you a pleasant stay and a memorable experience," Rio tweeted after receiving the President.

Murmu met state ministers at Raj Bhavan and attended a cultural programme and state banquet at the chief minister's official residence. On Thursday, she will pay homage at the historic World War II cemetery in Kohima and visit Kigwema, one of the oldest villages of the Angami tribe, and interact with the village council leaders and members of self-help groups. Murmu will leave for Mizoram on Thursday afternoon. (PTI)

Bandhan Bank opens currency chest in Guwahati

KOLKATA, NOV 2 /--/ Bandhan Bank opened its currency chest in Guwahati which will cater to the North-Eastern region including Assam, an "important market" for the private lender. This is the second currency chest of the bank after Patna. A statement by the bank said that the currency chest will help cash management for MSME and traders in the North East. "Assam has been an important market for Bandhan Bank for many years now. The opening of this currency chest is a testament to our commitment to the development of Assam and the North Eastern states of India," said C S Ghosh, MD & CEO of Bandhan Bank. In Assam, Bandhan Bank currently has a customer base of around 26 lakh and a network of more than 472 banking outlets. The bank will open more than 550 new branches across India in the current financial year, out of which 20 will be in Assam. "We have received the trust and love of more than 26 lakh customers in the state. Our significant distribution in Assam and the rest of the North-East made Guwahati a default location for our currency chest," Ghosh said. (PTI)

Two women missing as boat capsizes in Assam

KOKRAJHAR, NOV 2 /--/ Two women are missing and three others injured on Wednesday when a country boat carrying them capsized in the Sonkosh river in Kokrajhar district, officials said. The incident occurred near No 1 Gorumara "Char", a tract of land surfacing out of a river bed, when five women went to collect wood floating in the water. The place is located near the Assam-West Bengal border. "Most of the rivers on the northern side of Brahmaputra in lower Assam originate from Bhutan and they carry wooden logs if there is rainfall upstream. The women went in a small country boat to collect wood, mainly used for cooking," he added. During the collection of the logs, the boat capsized and two of the women went missing along with the boat, the official said. (PTI)

Union Cabinet approves naming new airport at Arunachal as 'Donyi Polo Airport'

NEW DELHI, NOV 2 /--/ The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the proposal to name the new airport in Arunachal Pradesh as 'Donyi Polo Airport, Itanagar'. The greenfield airport at Hollongi in Itanagar is being developed by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) with the help of the Centre and the state government at a cost of Rs 646 crore. An official release said the Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the naming of the greenfield airport as 'Donyi Polo Airport, Itanagar'. The resolution was passed by the Arunachal Pradesh government to name the airport as 'Donyi Polo Airport, Itanagar'. It "reflects the people's reverence of the Sun (Donyi) and the Moon (Polo) to symbolise the traditions and rich cultural heritage of the state," it said. The Centre gave its 'in-principle' approval for development of the airport in January 2019. Currently, there are 131 operational airports in the country, according to data available on the civil aviation ministry website. (PTI)

India, UK discuss migration, security issues as Indian envoy calls on home secy Braverman

LONDON, NOV 2 /--/ Cooperation on migration and security issues was on the agenda at a meeting between UK home secretary Suella Braverman and Indian High Commissioner Vikram Doraiswami here.

The envoy called on the Indian-origin Cabinet minister on Tuesday to discuss the India-UK security partnership and to "make progress" under the India-UK Migration and Mobility Partnership (MMP). The meeting follows Braverman's controversial remarks last month that referenced the MMP as not working very well in tackling illegal immigration and visa overstayers from India. "High Commissioner Vikram Doraiswami called on HE Home Secretary Suella Braverman today to discuss India-UK security cooperation, and to make progress under the India-UK Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement," the Indian High Commission in London tweeted after the meeting.

Braverman in turn referenced the "strong partnership" shared between India and the UK. "I look forward to working with our friends on mutually shared interests including security and migration," she tweeted after the meeting. It is seen as a conciliatory move after the Indian mission had countered the Home Secretary's allegations that the agreement with the Indian government to encourage and facilitate better cooperation on illegal migration "has not necessarily worked very well". "As per data shared with the Home Office, as on date, action has been initiated on all of the cases referred to the High Commission. Further, the UK has also

undertaken to fulfill certain commitments as part of the Migration and Mobility Protocol, on which we await demonstrable progress," the High Commission of India said in a statement last month. It is a widely held view that Braverman, then home secretary in the former Prime Minister Liz Truss led Cabinet, had derailed the ongoing India-UK free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations from its Diwali timeline by expressing "concerns" over what she feared would be an "open borders" policy for Indians. "Look at migration in this country. The largest group of people who overstay are Indian migrants," she said at the time. Meanwhile on Wednesday, the recently launched India (Trade and Investment) All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) held its inaugural meeting in the Houses of Parliament complex where UK Trade Minister Greg Hands reiterated that the FTA negotiations remain ongoing.

"India is projected to be the world's third largest economy by 2050 offering major opportunities for UK firms," Hands tweeted after the meeting. The new cross-party UK parliamentary panel was created in July to promote trade, investment and people-to-people ties with India, backed up by British Indian think tank 1928 Institute. The Co-Chairs of the APPG, Labour MP Navendu Mishra and Lord Karan Bilimoria, as well as APPG President Baroness Sandy Verma were among those present at the meeting, also attended by the Indian High Commissioner to the UK who spoke about the scope of bilateral cooperation in sunrise sectors such green economy and FinTech. (PTI)

Maiden flight-test of Phase-II ballistic missile defence interceptor carried out successfully

NEW DELHI, NOV 2 /--/ In a significant move, India on Wednesday successfully conducted the maiden flight-test of phase-II ballistic missile defence interceptor AD-1 that is capable of engaging different types of targets. The defence ministry said the flight test was conducted from APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha and it was carried out with participation of all ballistic missile defence (BMD) weapon system elements located at different geographical locations. Defence minister Rajnath Singh described the missile as a "unique type" of interceptor having advanced technologies that are available with a very few nations in the world. "Defence Research & Development Organisation conducted a successful maiden flight-test of Phase-II Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) interceptor AD-1 missile with large kill altitude bracket from APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha on November 2," the ministry said. It said the AD-1 is a long-range interceptor missile designed for both "low exo-atmospheric" and "endo-atmospheric" interception of long-range ballistic missiles as well as aircraft. It is propelled by a two-stage solid motor and equipped with indigenously-developed advanced control system, navigation and guidance algorithm to



precisely guide the vehicle to the target, the ministry said. The exo-atmospheric missiles are capable of completing missions in the upper-most region of the earth's atmosphere. The endo-atmospheric missiles are the ones that operate within the earth's atmosphere that covers an altitude below 100 km, according to experts. "During the flight-test, all the sub-systems performed as per expectations and were validated by the data captured by a number of range sensors including radar, telemetry and electro optical tracking stations deployed to capture the flight data," the ministry said in a statement. Defence minister Singh congratulated the DRDO and other teams associated with the successful flight trial of AD-1. He described it as a "unique type" of interceptor with advanced technologies available with a very few nations in the world. Singh exuded confidence that it will further strengthen the country's BMD capability to the next level, according to the ministry. DRDO chairman Samir V Kamat congratulated his team on the successful trial, stating that this interceptor will provide great operational flexibility to the users and have capability to engage many different types of targets. (PTI)

Child rights body asks Delhi govt to shut schools till pollution reduces

Air quality improves marginally but still 'very poor'

NEW DELHI, NOV 2 /--/ The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has asked the Delhi government to shut schools till air quality in the national capital improves. The national capital's air quality has deteriorated to 'severe' in the last few days, according to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data. Air pollution in the 'severe' category affects healthy people and seriously impacts children and those with existing diseases, according to the CPCB. The apex child rights body said it had taken a serious view of the matter and expressed concern over the 'severe' air quality impacting the health of children. NCPCR Chairperson Priyank

Kanoongo has written to the chief secretary and strongly recommended considering appropriate action. He has urged the Delhi government to consider shutting schools in the interest of the children till air quality in the national capital improves. Delhi's air quality improved marginally on Wednesday owing to relatively better meteorological conditions, with the Commission for Air Quality Management saying there is no immediate need to implement curbs, such as a ban on the entry of trucks and a closure of educational institutions, under the fourth stage of the Graded Response Action Plan. SAFAR, a forecasting agency under the Union ministry of earth

sciences, said the share of stubble burning in Delhi's PM2.5 pollution increased to 32 per cent due to favourable transport-level wind speed.

Transport-level winds blow in the lowest two layers of the atmosphere -- the troposphere and stratosphere -- and carry smoke from farm fires to the national capital region. Moderately favourable surface-level wind speed (up to 8 kmph), however, did not allow rapid accumulation of pollutants, meteorology experts said. The 24-hour Air Quality Index (AQI) of the city stood at 376, improving from 424 on Tuesday, which was the worst since December 26 last year when it was 459. Addressing a press conference, Delhi

environment minister Gopal Rai said the impact of air pollution was not limited to the national capital and the situation was equally bad in other National Capital Region (NCR) cities such as Ghaziabad (AQI 332), Noida (339), Gurugram (310), Greater Noida (336) and Faridabad (346). Rai appealed to city residents to preferably work from home or use shared transport to reduce vehicular emissions, a major contributor to air pollution in the national capital. The minister said the Delhi government will run a special drive at the 13 pollution hotspots in Delhi, including Narela, Anand Vihar, Mundka, Dwarka and Punjabi Bagh. "Fire tenders will be deployed at these places to sprinkle water," he said. (PTI)



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the site, where an old suspension bridge over the Machchhu river collapsed on Sunday evening, in Morbi district

Meghalaya CM's chopper makes emergency landing near Umiam lake due to bad weather

SHILLONG, NOV 2 /--/ Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma's helicopter on Wednesday made an emergency landing near the scenic Umiam lake after failing to get down at an Advance Landing Ground (ALG) in Upper Shillong due to bad weather.

Sangma was returning from an official visit to his constituency in Garo Hills in the western part of the state. Taking to Twitter, he said that the chopper had to land at the United Christian College Ground near Umiam lake due to bad weather and that he enjoyed the beautiful scenery in the campus, met with the staff of the college and had lunch in the canteen. "The

weather is truly unpredictable. Thank the Captain & Pilot for bringing us back safely," he said. In a short video accompanying the tweet, the chief minister was seen walking from the ground to the college and sharing the story of the emergency landing with others while having a humble lunch.

"We diverted for safety reasons and it is good. We will figure out a way to get back to the city," the Chief Minister said. "Emergency landing at UCC in Umiam due to bad weather on the way from Tura but enjoyed the view of the lovely campus during my walk & had a good time there thanks to their hospitality. What a day!" he said in another Twitter

post while sharing some photographs of his visit to the college. Earlier in the day, he was seen paying with his mother floral tributes to the grave of his father P A Sangma on the occasion of All Souls Day. "Paid respect to my Father (L) Sh. P A Sangma with my mother at the Tura Catholic Cemetery on #AllSoulsDay. I join all the faithful in offering prayers for the departed souls of our loved ones who we cherish and remember especially today," he tweeted. Catholics across the state celebrate November 2 as All Souls Day and clean graveyards, lay wreaths and conduct special prayer services in memory of the dead. (PTI)

British PM Rishi Sunak reverses decision on COP27, says will attend climate summit

LONDON, NOV 2/--/ British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced on Wednesday that he will attend the COP27 climate summit in Egypt next week, reversing his previous decision to skip the meeting in Sharm El Sheikh to focus on domestic issues and the economic crisis in the UK.

Sunak took to Twitter to reveal his plans after criticism from climate activists and within the government from Indian-origin COP27 President Alok Sharma, who said it was important for the prime

minister to be present to show the UK's commitment on the issue of climate action.

The pressure mounted further as his ex-boss, former prime minister Boris Johnson, confirmed that he would be attending the summit scheduled between November 6 and 18.

"There is no long-term prosperity without action on climate change," tweeted Sunak.

"There is no energy security without investing in renewables. That is why I will attend COP27 next

week: to deliver on Glasgow's legacy of building a secure and



Rishi Sunak

sustainable future," he said, with reference to the COP26 summit chaired by the UK in

Scotland last November.

The Opposition Labour Party described the reversed decision to attend as Sunak being "dragged kicking and screaming into doing the right thing; embarrassing".

The Green Party called it a "screeching U-turn" and "an embarrassing mis-step on the world stage" to initially announce plans not to attend.

Earlier this week, Downing Street said Sunak's attendance at the summit was "under review" as progress was being made

with Chancellor Jeremy Hunt on the preparation of a crucial economic statement scheduled for November 17.

Many world leaders, including US President Joe Biden and France's Emmanuel Macron, are due to go to the 27th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

India's Union Environment Minister Bhopender Yadav will lead an 18-member delegation at COP 27, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's

attendance yet to be confirmed.

King Charles III, a passionate climate campaigner who will not be attending, is to host a COP27 pre-summit reception for world leaders at Buckingham Palace on Friday. It is planned as a review of progress made since the UK hosted the COP26 summit in Glasgow last November, with Sunak and Sharma among those attending alongside international business leaders and decision-makers. (PTI)

Australia plays down US B-52 bomber plan that angers China

CANBERRA, NOV 2/--/The Australian defence minister on Wednesday played down the significance of a major upgrade of B-52 facilities planned for northern Australia that has raised China's ire, saying the nuclear-capable US bombers had been visiting since the 1980s. China this week condemned US plans to deploy up to six of the long-range bombers at Royal Australian Air Force Base Tindal in the Northern Territory, arguing the move undermined regional peace and stability. China also warned of a potential arms race in the region. Asked if the upgrade could prove too provocative, Defence Minister Richard Marles told reporters, "I think everyone needs to take a deep breath here." The multi-billion-dollar US investment was part of the Enhanced Air Cooperation Programme, which has built on a range of air exercises and training activities between the two countries since early 2017.

"What we're talking about is a US investment in the infrastructure at Tindal, which will help make that infrastructure more capable for Australia as well," Marles said. "In terms of US bombers, they've been coming to Australia since the 1980s. They've been training in Australia since 2005. All of this is part of an initiative which was established in 2017," he added. Australia would be a "significant beneficiary" of the Tindal upgrade, Marles said. Some Australian critics argue the B-52s' increased presence in northern Australia, made possible by the new facilities, would make the country a bigger target in a war between the United States and China.

Malcolm Davis, a senior analyst in defence strategy and capability at the Australian Security Policy Institute think tank, said China and other observers were "hyping" and "over-egging" the significance of what was proposed. "This is not significant in terms of the hardware side of things. It is significant in terms of the strategic importance of the fact that we are now able to more easily support the US in its operations in the region," Davis said. The US Air Force would be able to operate B-52s for longer and with more ease from Tindal with an expanded parking apron, hangars and fuel storage tanks, Davis said.

"It also means that in a crisis, Australia is then one of the few locations that the B-52s can more easily operate from to support US operational requirements," he said. Tindal, like the US Pacific military base at Guam, was within range of Chinese long-range missiles. But the greater distance the missiles would have to fly makes Tindal an easier target to defend, Davis said. (AP)

Leaders meet in Algeria for final day of Arab League summit

ALGIERS, NOV 2/--/Arab leaders convened on Wednesday in Algeria for the second day of the 31st summit of the largest annual Arab conference, seeking common ground on several divisive issues in the region. The meeting comes against the backdrop of rising inflation, food and energy shortages, drought and soaring cost of living across the Middle East and Africa. The kings, emirs, presidents and prime ministers are discussing thorny issues such as the establishment of diplomatic ties between Israel and four Arab countries as former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his far-right allies appear to be heading to an election victory.

The summit's discussions are also focused on the food and energy crises aggravated by Russia's war in Ukraine that has had devastating consequences for Egypt, Lebanon and Tunisia, among other Arab countries, struggling to import enough wheat and fuel to satisfy their populations. Deepening the crisis is the worst drought in several decades that has ravaged swaths of Somalia, one of the Arab League's newer members, bringing some areas of the country to the brink of famine. Russia's reinforcement of its blockade on Ukraine's Black Sea ports on Sunday threatens to further escalate the crisis, with many Arab countries near solely dependent on Ukrainian and Russian wheat exports and fertilizers. The event provides an opportunity for Algeria Africa's largest country by territory to showcase its leadership in the Arab world.

Algeria is a major oil and gas producer and is perceived by European nations as a key supplier amid the global energy crisis that stems from Russia's war in Ukraine. Algeria, along with other Arab countries, remains fiercely opposed to the series of normalisation agreements the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco signed with Israel over the past three years that have divided the region into two camps. Sudan has also agreed to establish ties with Israel.

Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune vowed in his opening speech on Tuesday to put forth considerable efforts at the summit to try to reaffirm support for the Palestinians in their conflict with Israel as the Arab and international communities' attention shifts to other conflicts and crises. "Our main and first cause, the mother of all causes, the Palestinian issue, will be at the heart of our concerns and our main priority," Tebboune said. He blasted Israel for its "continued occupation" of Palestinian territories and "expanding its illegal settlements."

Last month, Algeria hosted talks in a bid to end the Palestinian political divide and reconcile the Fatah party, whose Palestinian Authority rules parts of the occupied West Bank, and the militant Hamas group, which has control of the Gaza Strip. The Arab summit comes at the time of heightened tensions in the West Bank, where the Israeli military has conducted nightly arrest raids in searches for Palestinian militants. Dozens of Palestinians have been killed in recent months, including armed gunmen, stone-throwing teenagers and people uninvolved in violence. The 22-member Arab League last held its summit in 2019, before the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. A final declaration from the gathering in Algeria's capital, Algiers, is expected later on Wednesday. (AP)



People look at pomegranates during a "pomegranate week" event showcasing harvested pomegranates and food made from pomegranates in Sidi Bou Said, north of Tunis

COVID-19 disrupts normal mix of gut bacteria, increases risk for other infection : Study

WASHINGTON, NOV 2/--/ Infection with the SARS-CoV-2 virus, can reduce the number of bacterial species in a patient's gut, with the lesser diversity creating space for dangerous microbes to thrive, a new study has found.

According to the study, results showed that the majority of patients had low gut microbiome diversity, with a full quarter dominated by a single type of bacteria. At the same time, populations of several microbes known to include antibiotic-resistant species increased, possible due to widespread antibiotic use early in the pandemic, the study said.

Further, the antibiotic-resistant bacteria found in the gut were observed to have migrated into the bloodstream in 20 per cent of the patients.

Led by researchers at NYU Grossman School of Medicine, the investigation involved 96 men and women hospitalized with COVID-19 in 2020 in New York City and in New Haven, Conn.

"Our findings suggest that coronavirus infection

directly interferes with the healthy balance of microbes in the gut, further endangering patients in the process," study co-senior author Ken Cadwell said.

"Now that we have uncovered the source of this bacterial imbalance, physicians can better identify those coronavirus patients most at risk of a secondary bloodstream infection," adds Cadwell.

The study is published in the journal Nature Communications.

According to Cadwell, the new study is the first to show that the coronavirus infection alone damages the gut microbiome, and not the initial use of antibiotics to treat the disease as others experts had thought. He adds that the study also provided the first evidence that the very same bacteria in the gut were also entering the blood stream of patients, causing dangerous infections.

The study built on the realization that widespread use of antibiotics to fight infections with disease-causing bacteria in recent decades has left in place

more species that are resistant to antibiotics. In addition, disruptions in gut bacterial ratios have previously been linked to more severe COVID-19.

However, researchers say, it has remained unclear until now which came first, the coronavirus infection disrupting the gut microbiome or an already weakened gut making the body more vulnerable to the virus.

The new study appears to favour the former explanation. The new investigation, which revealed that antibiotic-resistant species can escape into the bloodstream, put patients at greater risk for life-threatening secondary infections, the study said.

The study authors note that further research is needed to uncover why this group was at a higher risk for a secondary infection while others remained protected. For the investigation, researchers first infected dozens of mice with the coronavirus and analyzed the makeup of bacterial species in their stool samples. (PTI)

China panda experts visit Taiwan in rare point of contact

TAIPEI, NOV 2/--/Taiwan has welcomed a pair of experts from China to help with an ailing panda in a rare opportunity for contact between the sides. The two experts arrived Tuesday after Taipei Zoo's Tuan Tuan, suspected to have a malignant brain tumor, took a turn for the worse. The giant panda and his mate, Yuan Yuan, were gifted to the zoo in 2008 during a time of warming relations between China and Taiwan, which split amid civil war in 1949.

Ties have deteriorated since then, with Beijing cutting off contacts in 2016 following the election of independence-leaning President Tsai Ing-wen, who was re-elected in 2020. Polls routinely show Taiwanese rejecting China's demand for political unification between the sides, favoring instead the status quo of de-facto independence.

China sends pandas abroad as a sign of goodwill but maintains ownership over the animals and any cubs they produce. The animals are native to southwestern China and are an unofficial national mascot.

An MRI on Tuan Tuan showed that lesions on his brain had grown in a sign the disease was "progressing rapidly," the zoo said in a news release.

Zoo spokesperson Eric Tsao said the sides were pooling their knowledge and experience to provide Tuan Tuan with "the best treatment and the best daily care."

Chief veterinarian Lai Yen-hueh said the experts had agreed to hold off on surgery based on the animal's possible reaction to anesthesia and the location of the diseased area.

The experts, Wu Honglin and Wei Ming, have long experience working on panda health and reproduction at the main panda research base at Wolong in China's Sichuan province.

Pandas, which reproduce rarely in the wild and rely on a diet of bamboo, remain among the world's most threatened species. An estimated 1,800 pandas live in the wild, while another 500 are in zoos or reserves, mostly in Sichuan. (AP)

Turkey says Russia agrees to rejoin wartime grain deal

KYIV, NOV 2/--/Russia's defence minister has told his Turkish counterpart that Moscow has agreed to return to a Turkish and UN brokered deal that allowed the shipment of millions of tons of Ukrainian grain through the Black Sea, Turkey's president says. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu called Turkey's Hulusi Akar and informed him that the grain corridor agreement would "continue in the same way as before" as of Wednesday.

Erdogan said Wednesday that the deal would prioritise shipments to African nations, including Somalia, Djibouti and Sudan, in line with Russia's concerns that most of the grain was ending up in richer nations. Russia suspended its participation in the grain deal over the weekend, citing allegations of a Ukrainian drone attack against its Black Sea fleet. The Russian Defence Ministry said Monday that ship traffic from ports in southern Ukraine was halted, calling the movement "unacceptable."

Ships loaded with grain departed Ukraine on Tuesday despite Russia suspending its participation in a UN-brokered deal that ensures safe wartime passage of critical food supplies meant for parts of the world struggling with hunger. But the United Nations had said vessels would not move Wednesday, raising concerns about future shipments. The United Nations and Turkey brokered separate deals with Russia and Ukraine in July to ensure Africa, the Middle East and parts of Asia would receive grain and other food from the Black Sea region during Russia's war in Ukraine. (AP)

Israel elections: Former PM Netanyahu-led bloc on course for historic victory

JERUSALEM, NOV 2/--/With over 84 per cent of the votes counted, Israel's former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's right-religious bloc on Wednesday seems all set to make a dramatic comeback to power. The exit polls projected pro-Netanyahu parties may win up to 65 seats in the 120-member Parliament. The alliance comprised Netanyahu's Likud party, Religious Zionism/Jewish Power, Shas and United Torah Judaism. The Central Elections Committee has so far counted 4,081,243 votes, with 24,201 invalidated, The Times of Israel newspaper reported.

Based on the current count, Netanyahu's bloc would pick up 65 seats, though this number may change as more ballots are processed, the report said. Israelis voted on Tuesday for an unprecedented fifth time in four years to break the political impasse that has paralysed the country. The left-wing Meretz party is currently a hair short of the 3.25% vote minimum needed to win Knesset representation, with 3.2%. The opposition Arab Balad party is also closing in on the threshold with 3.05% of total votes. The Islamist Ra'am party, projected to win four seats in exit



Benjamin Netanyahu

polls, is currently well over the electoral threshold at 4.35%, according to the current count, as is Hadash-Ta'al with 3.92%.

If Ra'am, Balad, or Meretz fail to win Knesset representation it will further boost Netanyahu's prospects for forming a coalition, but if all three make it, it could stymie his chances. The ongoing count is not representative of the overall vote since ballots come in from different areas of the country at different times, and the percentages allotted to each party will likely shift as the tally continues. Exit polls have predicted 62 seats for Netanyahu's bloc, enough to secure a majority and form a coalition in Knesset. Israel has been locked in an unprecedented period of political stalemate since 2019, when 73-year-old Netanyahu, the country's longest-serving leader was charged with bribery, fraud and breach of trust.

About 6.78 million Israeli citizens were eligible to elect their 25th Knesset. Some 210,720 new voters were able to vote for the first time, accounting for about four to five seats, adding an interesting dimension to the polls. The prospect of the next government seems to be largely hinged on two factors - the level of right-wing polarisation, not necessarily in favour of veteran politician Netanyahu but for him to lead the coalition, and the extent of voter apathy, surprisingly, in the Arab sector. Netanyahu, the longest-serving prime minister and among one of the most polarising ones whose leadership plagued by charges of graft has been at the centre of current instability, is facing a battle of political survival. (PTI)

North Korea fires 23 missiles, prompting air-raid alert in South

SEOUL, NOV 2/--/Air raid sirens sounded on a South Korean island and residents there evacuated to underground shelters after North Korea fired more than 20 missiles Wednesday, at least one of them in its direction and landing near the rivals' tense sea border. South Korea quickly responded by launching its own missiles in the same border area.

The launches came hours after North Korea threatened to use nuclear weapons to get the US and South Korea to "pay the most horrible price in history" in protest of the ongoing South Korea-US military drills that it views as an invasion rehearsal. The White House maintained that the United States has no hostile intent toward North Korea and vowed to work with allies to curb North Korea's nuclear ambitions.

The North's barrage of missile tests also came as world attention was focused on South Korea following a weekend Halloween tragedy

that saw more than 150 people killed in a crowd surge in Seoul in what was the country's largest disaster in years.

South Korea's military said North Korea launched at least 23 missiles 17 in the morning and six in the afternoon off its eastern and western coasts on Wednesday. It said the weapons were all short-range ballistic missiles or suspected surface-to-air missiles. Also Wednesday, North Korea fired about 100 artillery shells into an eastern maritime buffer zone the Koreans created in 2018 to reduce tensions, according to South Korea's military.

The 23 missiles launched is a record number of daily missile tests by North Korea, some experts say.

One of the ballistic missiles was flying toward South Korea's Ulleung island before it eventually landed 167 km (104 miles) northwest of the island. South Korea's military subsequently issued

an air raid alert on the island, according to the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff. South Korean media published photos showing island residents moving to underground shelters.

Hours later on Wednesday, South Korea's military said it lifted the air raid alert on the island. South Korea's transport ministry said it has closed some air routes above the country's eastern waters until Thursday morning in the wake of the North Korean launches.

That missile landed 26 km (16 miles) away from the rivals' sea border. It landed in international waters but far south of the two countries' border, off the east coast of South Korea. South Korea's military said it was the first time a North Korean missile had landed so close to the sea border since the countries' division in 1948.

"This is very unprecedented and we will never tolerate it," South

Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

In 2010, North Korea shelled a frontline South Korean island off the peninsula's western coast, killing four people. But the weapons used were artillery rockets, not ballistic missiles whose launches or tests are banned by multiple UN Security Council resolutions.

Later Wednesday, South Korean fighter jets launched three air-to-surface, precision-guided missiles near the eastern sea border to show its determination to get tough on North Korean provocations. South Korea's military said the missiles landed in international waters at the same distance of 26 km (16 miles) north of the sea border as the North Korean missile fell earlier Wednesday.

It said it maintains a readiness to win "an overwhelming victory" against North Korea in potential clashes.

"North Korea firing

missiles in a way that sets off air raid sirens appears intended to threaten South Koreans to pressure their government to change policy," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul. "North Korea's expanding military capabilities and tests are worrisome, but offering concessions about alliance cooperation or nuclear recognition would make matters worse."

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff earlier identified three of the North Korean weapons launched as "short-range ballistic missiles" fired from the North's eastern coastal town of Wonsan, including the one that landed near the sea border.

North Korea's short-range weapons are designed to strike key facilities in South Korea, including US military bases there.

In an emergency meeting with top security officials, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol ordered officials to

take swift unspecified steps to make North Korea face consequences for its provocation. He said he would consider the North Korean missile's landing near the border "a virtual violation of (our) territorial waters."

During the emergency South Korean meeting, officials also lamented that the North Korean missile launches came as South Korea is in a mourning period over the crowd crush. They noted this "clearly showed the nature of the North Korean government," according to South Korea's presidential office.

Earlier Wednesday, Japanese Defence Minister Yasukazu Hamada told reporters that at least two ballistic missiles fired by North Korea showed a possibly "irregular" trajectory. This suggests the missiles are the North's highly maneuverable, nuclear-capable KN-23 missile, which was modeled on Russia's Iskander missile. (AP)

India survive Litton Das scare in wet Adelaide Rahul and Rain win it for India

They move to the top of the Group 2 table, but are still not guaranteed a semi-final spot



KL Rahul
Runs
50
Balls :
32

Litton Das was run out due to a direct-hit by KL Rahul from deep midwicket

We don't play enough close games to know how to finish them: Shakib

ADELAIDE, NOV 2 /--/ Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan feels that not having faced enough tricky situations in the shortest format has been his team's undoing as it lost another close T20 World Cup game to India on Wednesday. Just like it happened during a 2016 World Cup match in Bengaluru, where they lost from a winning position, Bangladesh bungled here after a rain break and went down by five runs via the Duckworth-Lewis method. "We don't play enough close games, and hence, we don't know how to win those games. Both 185 and the revised target of 151 were acceptable targets. It is unfortunate we didn't win," Shakib said after the heart-breaking defeat. The straight-talking Bangladesh captain said "a combination of emotion and lack of experience" tilted the match in India's favour after the rain interruption, when they were cruising at 66 for no loss in seven overs due to Litton Das' blitzkrieg. "It was a combination of emotion and lack of experience. I think 85 off nine overs, you will take that. Bhuvu (Bhuvneshwar Kumar) had finished his

spell. We don't play too many close games, so we don't know how to do it." The skipper was graceful in defeat when asked if he could have convinced the umpires to start the game at least 15 minutes late, which would have led to the outfield drying a bit more than what it was when it restarted. "Did I have an option? Do I have the ability to convince umpires? If we talk about rain break, yes it was crucial as we lost the momentum, but when the ball is wet, scoring runs is easier. "It was little slippery, and normally, it suits batting rather than bowling. But both teams played in right spirit." Shakib didn't want to pick one particular moment as the game-changer. "In a close match, you can pick a lot of moments (as turning points). Litton's run-out was crucial. We lost momentum after rain. But you can't control rain. We were close, but not close enough." Did he feel Litton slipped before the run-out, and fumbled while going for the second run that led to his dismissal in the next delivery? Shakib didn't want to make excuses. "If Litton slipped on grass once while running, then next time, he should have shown awareness and run on the pitch." The two overs, when Arshdeep Singh and Hardik Pandya got two wickets apiece, proved very costly, even though Nurul Hasan Sohan and Taskin Ahmed got them close with some lusty blows. "Most teams should get 52 off five overs with eight wickets in hand. We panicked a bit in the middle overs. We lost momentum in two to three overs big time. If you see in the last two overs, lot of teams score 30. It's unfortunate that we couldn't score," Shakib lamented. Losing close games to India does hurt the skipper, but he has faith in the current batch's capability to change the results in the coming times. "Our World Cup games against India are close and exciting ones, but we have not been crossing the line. Hope we can change the result as these boys have the capability." (PTI)



Litton Das raises his bat after he brought up a 21-ball fifty



Litton Das slipped while running between the wickets

If I can do what team wants from me, I sleep peacefully: Rahul

ADELAIDE, NOV 2 /--/ KL Rahul knows exactly what his team wants from him and as long as he is able to do that, he can sleep peacefully. Having logged only 22 runs from the first three games in T20 World Cup, it was Rahul's opportunity to do the star turn with one of his better half-centuries (50 off 32 balls) and a magnificent direct throw from the deep that became a turning point in India's five-run victory over Bangladesh. My emotions were good. We are all excited to be out here and we have all looked

forward to this World Cup for last one year. I have always tried to stay balanced whether I am doing well or not, Rahul said when asked about what was his mindset in the last one week. The team has given me a role and if I am able to do what team wants from me, I can sleep peacefully, the Indian vice-captain told reporters at the post-match conference. The most heartening aspect for Indian team over the past four games has been how different individuals have contributed to the side's success. This was an

important game for us. We all wanted to contribute. Today it was an opportunity for me to stand up and be counted. Every match, a different person is putting his hand up and making it count, Rahul said. Having been made an early exit from the last T20 World Cup, the Indian team, according to Rahul, worked hard to prepare themselves for difficult circumstances. We have really worked hard and prepared ourselves for difficult situations. So that when time comes, we can execute our plans in those

difficult situations. Talking about his sensational direct hit from the deep to dismiss the in-form Litton Das, he said: "We all train very hard on fielding. We work on our throwing and moving quickly. The ball came and I hit the stumps." Rahul also spoke about the quality time spent with Virat Kohli on the eve of the match during an indoor training session. Asked to shed some light on the kind of conversations that he has had with the maestro, Rahul said: We spoke about mindset and how we have

been coming to Australia for some years to play different formats but wickets this time have been very challenging. He (Kohli) has been getting runs and that means he has been doing something right. So I wanted to know what are the things that he is doing. He thanked the coaching staff for keeping him in a good frame of mind. Yes, there is bound to be disappointment if you are not scoring runs but the support staff has always been very helpful. Rahul was all praise for the little gem of a knock from Litton

(60 off 27 balls) but said that the Indian team was always confident that they would cross the line. Litton played an exceptional knock and innings like these put pressure on opposition teams. He hit the bowlers off good length. But he admitted that rain-break did help. Even without rain break, we knew that once the Powerplay was over, we could put pressure on them. We had the confidence and once the break was over, we were completely switched on, Rahul added. (PTI)

important to stay calm as a group to execute. Shortened games can go either way, but we held our nerves well after the game started, it was a good win in the end," Rohit said. Speaking about Kohli, who has been having a great tournament not long after enduring a prolonged lean patch, Rohit was full of praises. "In my mind, Kohli was always there. It was just a matter of few innings here and there, and he hasn't looked back since the Asia Cup. The guy has so much experience." Regarding Rahul, who returned to form with a 32-ball 50, Rohit said, "The way KL batted as well, it was important for him and the team. We know what sort of a player he is at the top of the order. "Some of the catches we took today was great to watch. When you're playing in front of a big crowd it's not easy. To take those catches, it shows the character of the guys. I have no doubts over our fielding abilities." Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan rued that his team lost after again coming so close in an ICC tournament against India. "It's been the story when we play India. We're almost there but don't cross the line. It was a great game, the crowd enjoyed, both teams enjoyed, in the end someone has to win and someone has to lose," Shakib said. (PTI)

ADELAIDE, NOV 2 /--/ A piece of sheer on-field brilliance by a rejuvenated KL Rahul and divine intervention by the weather gods took India one step closer to the T20 World Cup semifinals with an edge-of-the-seat five-run victory over Bangladesh in a rain-curtailed contest here on Wednesday. Having posted an imposing total of 184 for 6 courtesy Virat Kohli (64 not out off 44) and KL Rahul (50 off 32), little did India factor in what was about to hit them in the form of Litton Das (60 off 27 balls). Needing 151 in 16 overs as per the revised target after a brief spell of rain, Bangladesh managed 145/6 in the end. India, who now have six points from four games, will need to beat Zimbabwe in their last Super-12 match to clinch a last four place. Needing 20 off last over, young Arshdeep Singh showed ice-cool temperament despite Nurul Hasan hitting him for a six and four as he bowled couple of perfect yorker length deliveries to seal the tie. Just when Bangladesh were cruising along at 66 for no loss in 7 overs, heavens opened up much to the delight of the Bangladeshi fans and their partisan media. After the forced break, the revised target as per DLS method required Bangladesh to score 85 off 54 balls. The break did affect their momentum as Rahul effected a run-out that will be a part of any highlights package with the direct throw from deep mid-wicket getting rid of Litton. Just like it happened with Mohammed Nawaz in the Asia Cup, India's coaching staff had no planning for Litton, who cleverly played for the rain. After a quiet first over by Bhuvneshwar Kumar, the next over by Arshdeep saw the right-hander repeatedly stepping down the wicket, trying to negate any swing on offer. In the next few overs, he was all over Arshdeep and Bhuvneshwar as he converted good length deliveries into over-pitched ones and lofted them over the infield.

It was one of the finest T20I fifties for Bangladesh, coming only in 21 balls. Litton played cover drives, pulls and hit sixes behind square guiding the pace of the deliveries, making Rohit Sharma look clueless during the Powerplay overs which yielded 60 runs. By the time it started drizzling, Bangladesh were 66 for no loss in seven overs with a 17-run advantage on DLS par score. Once the target was reduced, Rahul's inspirational fielding from the deep found Litton short of his ground at the non-striker's end. Shanto (21 off 25 balls) struggled for timing for the better part before a mistimed pull off Shami's bowling found Suryakumar Yadav at wide long-on. While two wickets fell in quick succession, the moist outfield duo to rain made it difficult to grip the ball as Shakib Al Hasan launched into Ravichandran Ashwin for a couple of boundaries. But Arshdeep (2/38 in 4 overs) coming for his post-rain spell got the dangerous Afif Hossain caught by Surya and then skipper Shakib was caught by substitute fielder Deepak Hooda at deep mid-wicket to change the complexion of the match. Hardik (2/28 in 3 overs) then removed Yasir Ali and Mosaddek Hossain Saikat in one over to seal the match. Earlier, Kohli's eternal love affair with the Adelaide Oval continued as he powered India to a strong total. There were eight fours and a six in his 44-ball innings as none of the Bangladesh bowlers had any answer for his exquisite stroke-play. The pitch was way slower compared to Perth and the Bangladesh bowling attack fizzled out under extreme pressure in the post-Powerplay overs as Rahul (50 off 31 ball) also returned to form with his first fifty of the tournament. Kohli, en route to his third half-century of the competition, had couple of useful stands – 67 for second wicket with Rahul and 38 for the third wicket with Suryakumar Yadav (30 off 15 balls). Shakib Al Hasan (2/33 in 4 overs) picked wickets of Rahul and Surya but Taskin undoubtedly was the



Virat Kohli
Runs
64
Balls :
44

best bowler on view. Having copped a lot of criticism over the past three games, Rahul got into his element. He played his customary 'pick-up-pull-shot', which is a whip off the wrists behind square for a six. With skipper Rohit dismissed cheaply, Kohli eased the initial pressure put by Taskin with some fleet-footed running between the wickets. Rahul took 20 balls to score his first 21 runs but once the Powerplay was done away with, he suddenly upped the ante as in one over from Shoriful, he hit a short-arm pull over deep mid-wicket and a slash over backward point for two maximums. That ninth over from Shoriful yielded 24 runs and the pressure was completely released on the Indian batters. Rahul's next 29 runs came off 10 balls before his 31-ball-50 ended when an attempted lap-shot found the top-edge and Mustafizur took a well-judged catch off skipper Shakib's bowling. Kohli at the other end hit a flurry of boundaries – couple off Taskin, one from Mustafizur and the best of the lot – a copybook off-drive that one can watch on the loop as many times one wishes to. (PTI)

We've prepared Arshdeep for death overs: Rohit

ADELAIDE, NOV 2 /--/ India captain Rohit Sharma on Wednesday said the team has prepared young Arshdeep Singh for death overs, something that worked for them in the absence of injured Jasprit Bumrah. According to the skipper, the choice was between Arshdeep and his senior pace colleague Mohammed Shami. The 23-year-old left-arm seamer delivered for India in the five-run win over Bangladesh in the T20 World Cup here, continuing his impressive run. Needing 20 off the last over, Arshdeep showed ice-cool temperament despite Nurul Hasan hitting him for a six and a four and bowled a couple of perfect yorker length deliveries to seal the tie for India. "Arshdeep, when he came into the scene, we asked him to do the death overs for us. With Bumrah not there, it was a tough job for someone to take up. For a young guy to come and do that kind of a job is not easy, we've prepared him," Rohit said at the post-match presentation ceremony. "He's been doing it for 8-9 months. I had to back someone who had been doing it regularly, it was a choice between Shami and Arshdeep." Having posted 184 for 6, courtesy Virat Kohli (64 not out off 44) and KL Rahul (50 off 32), Litton Das (60 off 27 balls) got Bangladesh off to a flyer before rain interrupted play. Needing 151 in 16 overs as per the revised target after the brief spell of showers, Bangladesh managed 145 for 6 in the end. "I was calm and nervous at the same time, but it was



Arshdeep Singh was happy to have finished off the game