

Residents in rural villagers in N&M Andaman wary of rickety electric poles

Precariously perched poles strike terror in locals

KARTIK

MAYABUNDER, JAN 27/--/ Residents of various villages in North & Middle Andaman are living in constant fear of electricity poles, made of concrete, in bad condition which they say can collapse and fall at any moment, and cause major accidents. These concrete poles are so damaged that iron rods are jutting out for them, and they are in urgent need of attention by the authorities. Several poles in this region are leaning and are on the brink of collapse.

Villagers fear that if some of these poles fall then it will lead to long-hours power cuts in the region besides leading to major accidents. Even the Gram Panchayats of this region are unable to install street lights on these poles due to fear of falling.

"The dilapidated electric poles are corroded and can fall anytime and therefore pose a threat to residents and passers-by. These poles are unstable and

can fall on the people in the event of vehicles colliding with these people," said S. Subramaniam. A PRI member of Panchawati village said that frequent representations submitted to the Electricity department for the past many years seeking to replace the electric poles, had gone in vain. "I am worried that at any moment, these dilapidated concrete poles may fall, causing electrocution of passers-by and serious injuries," he said. Another resident complained that people were too nervous to drive their vehicles near the poles as they feared they could come crashing down. These concrete electric poles have been installed to provide electric connection to the villagers decades also and over the years they have become extremely weak, and now these poles pose a hazard to road users. Residents have demanded for the replacement of the concrete electric poles from this region with steel poles.



Isles' girl awarded University Gold Medal in the field of Ayurveda



field of Ayurveda. Speaking to EOI, Paramjeet attributed her success to her family, without the support of which it was not possible for her to secure highest marks in MD Ayurveda. She said that she will continue her hard work to bring lures for her family in future as well. She also thanked her husband and mother who supported and guided her from time to time.

PORT BLAIR, JAN 27/--/ Paramjeet Kaur Sethi, D/o Romila Sethi, R/o Junglighat, Port Blair has secured the highest marks in MD/MS Ayurveda from Pt. Deendayal Upadhyay Memorial Health Sciences and Ayush University of Chhattisgarh. For her outstanding performance, she has been awarded the University Gold Medal. At a function on 26th January 2023, the Vice-Chancellor of the University handed over the award to the gold medalist. Paramjeet has become the first islander to bag a Gold Medal in the

ANC celebrates Republic Day

PORT BLAIR, JAN 27/--/ A ceremonial parade was conducted to commemorate 74th Republic Day on 26 Jan 2023 at Marina Park Road, Port Blair, Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The parade was reviewed by Lieutenant Governor Admiral DK Joshi(Retd) as the chief guest. The parade was led by Lt Cdr Rohul Rana Ameen of the Andaman and Nicobar Command and comprised contingents from Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard and A&N Police. The parade witnessed unfurling of the National Flag by the chief guest. Each parade contingent was represented by one



officer, one Junior Commissioned Officer and fifteen other Ranks. Joint Band of Indian Army and Indian Navy were in attendance during the parade along with buglers. The pride and josh of all participating contingents reflected a high level of integration and discipline. The day concluded with a spectacular illumination of ships of Indian Navy, Coast Guard, DSS and Marine Police at anchorage off Marina Flag Post. The ships were 'Dressed Overall' during the day and fired colourful flares and switched on contour illumination lights at sunset.

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My govt was considered full of 'average' people, India now shining in world: PM

NEW DELHI, JAN 27 /--/Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday took a swipe at critics of the government's handling of economy, saying his dispensation was mocked as full of "average" talents but the same India considered "average" is now shining in the world and seen as a ray of hope in the post-pandemic era.



Interacting with students during the sixth edition of "Pariksha Pe Charcha", he also told them it is his "firm conviction" and "article of faith" that criticism is a purification exercise for a robust democracy. Criticism is precondition to a robust democracy, he said but noted that a "vast gulf" exists between criticism and allegations. Replying to a question, he said, "You would have seen two-three years back that it was written about our government that it has no economist. It is full of average people. The prime minister also has no understanding of economics. This is what was written. But the same country termed average is shining in the world." The world is looking at India as a ray of hope at a time when global economic condition is being discussed, more so after the Covid-19 outbreak, he said. "It is not that the world lacks economists. There are many big nobel prize winners who can guide as to what will effect what kind of chances in economic conditions. People spouting wisdom are available in every corner these days. There are also scholars who have done a lot of work," he said. With growth slackening in many developed countries, India is among the fastest growing large economies, with many global economic bodies favouring the country to do well in the near future.

Modi made the comments in reply to questions from students as to how those seen as average among them can handle studies. He told them that most of the successful people in the world are those who were once average. He said one does not need to be a "tees maar khan", a Hindi expression, used often mockingly, to refer to someone who thinks very highly of himself. Many people are below-average but consider themselves "tees mar khan", he added. Recognising one's capabilities and adapt and work accordingly put people on the road to become capable, Modi said. When another student asked him as to how he sees the opposition's criticism and allegations as a tonic and opportunity, something he has spoken about earlier, the prime minister refrained from making a direct political point and said in a lighter vein that such queries are "out of syllabus".

However, he asserted that he principally believes in the importance of criticism and cited the example of open source technologies that improve their system by engaging critics. Criticism allows one to remove their shortcomings, he added. It takes a lot of hardwork, analysis and study to criticise but most people level allegations in these times of shortcuts, he said. "A vast gulf exists between criticism and allegation. Criticism is a nutrient that makes us strong. But you don't need to take those levelling allegations seriously," he said. Some people criticise habitually and there intention is something else, he said, asking students to ignore them. (PTI)

India-Egypt MoU on cultural cooperation signed for 5 years: Culture ministry

NEW DELHI, JAN 27 /--/The pact on cultural cooperation signed between India and Egypt will entail a range of activities being hosted in both the countries, including in the fields of music, dance, theatre, library and research and documentation.

For continued cultural cooperation, the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed for a period of five years, the Union Culture Ministry said in a statement on Friday. The MoU was signed and exchanged on January 25 by Union Culture Minister G Kishan Reddy and Arab Republic of Egypt Foreign Minister Sameh Hassan Shoukry in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Egypt's President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, it said. "Both countries look forward to witness a host of cultural activities happening in due course in the realm of music, dance, theatre, literature, library, organising festivals in respective countries and research and documentation, etc," the statement said.z

The MoU was signed to strengthen the cultural ties with Egypt. Reddy had participated in the delegation-level talks headed by Prime Minister Modi and President Sisi on the occasion of celebration of India's 74th Republic Day, it added. (PTI)

BBC documentary: Delhi Police detains 24 students from DU Arts Faculty for planning to screen film

NEW DELHI, JAN 27 /--/Delhi Police on Friday detained 24 students from the Delhi University's Arts Faculty for planning to screen the controversial BBC documentary on the 2002 Godhra riots, a senior police official said.

The action comes days after a similar ruckus at Jawaharlal Nehru University and Jamia Millia Islamia over the documentary's screening. Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Sagar Singh Kalsi said, "Around 4 pm, some 20 people came outside the Arts Faculty gate to screen the banned BBC documentary. As it can cause disturbance of peace and tranquility in the area, they were asked to disperse from there. "When they did not, they were peacefully detained. A total of 24 people were detained."

Earlier in the day, the varsity authorities wrote to Delhi Police about the proposed screening. Delhi University Proctor Rajni Abbi said they would not allow the



screening and stressed that the students' outifts had not sought the administration's permission. There was heavy police deployment at the north campus after students' outifts gave a call to screen the documentary. The police have also banned large gatherings on north campus. When asked, another official said Section 144 was imposed on the campus in December. "Section 144 was

In 2024 Lok Sabha polls, Modi will break all records and NDA will retain power: Maharashtra CM

THANE, JAN 27 /--/Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde on Friday said that in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will break all records and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) will retain power with a thumping majority.

He was talking to reporters after attending the live screening of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' event addressed by PM Modi. Shinde saw the programme at the municipal school in Kisan Nagar locality of the city, where he had studied. Stating that he was pleased to witness the 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' programme in Thane, where he grew up, Shinde added that he was proud of being a civic school student. Replying to a question on the results of a recent political survey conducted by a media house on the next year's Lok Sabha polls, he said, "In the next general elections, PM Modi will break all records and the NDA will return to power with a thumping majority. Shinde said a survey conducted on just a handful of people does not give a true picture. "They ignored

the results of the recently-concluded gram panchayat elections, where the Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena (Shinde-led faction) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) performed very well," he said. "In politics, two plus two is not always four. A survey based on just a handful of people does not give the real picture...I have got the details of how many people were surveyed. I do not want to go into any figures," he said.

In the two-and-a-half years before he became the chief minister, a "government with negativity" was in power, Shinde said while referring to the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government led by Uddhav Thackeray. But there is a government with positivity in the state now. There was dissatisfaction in the state during the previous government's rule. But we launched several development works and changed

the entire atmosphere in the state, he said. "Now, even I will not be able to say as to who will join hands with whom and whose alliance will break apart. But the



Balasahebanchi Shiv Sena and BJP have been doing good work and this is a government of the common man. People have already decided whom they will vote for and we understand people's response," he said. "The survey said that the NDA government will come to power and that the popularity of PM Modi is increasing. Is it any different in Maharashtra?...We will be leading whenever elections are held. People of the state have already made up their mind. Hence, those who want to enjoy the opinion poll results for the next one-and-a-half years, let them enjoy," he said. We are not afraid of elections. Future itself will give replies to the predictions of the survey, he said.

During his visit to Thane city on Thursday, Shiv Sena (UBT) president and former chief minister Uddhav Thackeray had alleged that the Sena and Maharashtra were defamed due to the "betrayal and defections" that took place, a reference to Shinde and 39 MLAs bringing down the MVA government. Replying to Thackeray's remarks, Shinde said, "We give replies through our work. If you make two allegations, we will carry out four works. It will be our reply. People are not interested in allegations and counter-allegations." "When 50 MLAs, 13 MPs and several office-bearers of the party across the country and even close relatives deserted them, then they should have done soul searching and introspected. Instead of that, they are indulging in allegations. I wish them all the best," he said. Students from 968 schools, including 140 civic ones, in Thane witnessed the 'Pariksha pe Charcha' programme at their schools, BJP MLC and party's Thane city district president Niranjan Davkhare said in a release. (PTI)

Will come out with report on fulfillment of promises made in 2018 BJP manifesto: Karnataka CM

MYSURU, JAN 27 /--/Karnataka chief minister Basavaraj Bommai on Friday said his government will come out with an "action taken report" during the upcoming state budget, regarding the fulfilment of the promises made by the ruling BJP, ahead of the 2018 assembly polls.

The Congress, especially Leader of Opposition Siddaramaiah has repeatedly attacked the BJP government claiming that the party had given 600 promises in its election manifesto, but hardly 10 percent of them had been fulfilled. The Congress, Siddaramaiah claimed, had given 165 assurances in 2013 and of them 158 were fulfilled during its five-year-rule "We will give a report about all that



Basavaraj Bommai

during the budget, what we said, what we have done. We will give an action taken report," Bommai said in response to a question regarding manifesto promises fulfilled by the government. Bommai will table his government's last budget on February 17. Responding to a question by reporters on BJP's candidate list, while pointing out that JD(S) has announced the first list and Congress preparing one, the Chief Minister said, "We have a different election strategy, we need not do as they do, we will do our strategy. Ours is a different strategy." The JD(S) has already announced its first list of 93 candidates, while Congress and BJP are yet to finalise.

Reacting to Congress leaders saying that they will retire, if unable to fulfill their election promises, Bommai said, "They themselves are speaking about political retirement, we did not ask for it. If they are themselves speaking about it, it reflects the situation they are in. Like face is the index of mind." Siddaramaiah and other senior party leaders have claimed that they will retire from politics and "go home", in case they are not able to fulfill promises made to people, if voted to power in Karnataka, in the Assembly polls due by May. The Congress has recently announced Gruha Jyoti scheme', under which all households will get 200 units of free electricity every month and also Gruha Lakshmi scheme', a promise to provide Rs 2,000 every month to women-led households. (PTI)

Gujarat: Chargesheet filed in Morbi bridge collapse case, Orev'a's Jaysukh Patel named as 10th accused

MORBI, JAN 27 /--/Police on Friday filed a chargesheet in the suspension bridge collapse incident that had occurred in Morbi town of Gujarat in October last year, in which 135 people were killed and scores injured.

In addition to the nine arrested accused, Jaysukh Patel, managing director of Orev'a Group that operated the bridge, has been named as the tenth accused in the chargesheet, said advocate Dilip Agechaniya, who is appearing for the victims.

A magistrate's court has already issued an arrest warrant against Patel. Ajanta Manufacturing Limited (Orev'a Group) was responsible for the operation and maintenance of the British-era suspension bridge on the Machchhu river that collapsed, days after its repairs, on October 30 last year when nearly 250 persons were on it. The chargesheet, which runs into more than 1,200 pages, was filed in the court

of Morbi's chief judicial magistrate MJ Khan by Deputy Superintendent of Police P S Zala, who is the investigating officer of the case. "Orev'a Group's Jaysukh Patel, who was not named in the FIR initially by police, has been shown as the tenth accused in the chargesheet filed before the magistrate on Friday. The chargesheet runs into over 1,200 pages and it contains statements of over 300 witnesses," Agechaniya told reporters.

On October 31, a day after the bridge collapse, Morbi police had arrested nine persons, including two managers of Orev'a Group, two ticket booking clerks, two sub-contractors who repaired the bridge and three security guards deployed on the cable-stayed structure to guide and control the crowd. Two weeks ago, the same court issued an arrest warrant against Orev'a MD Patel in connection with the tragedy. His anticipatory bail plea will come up for hearing on February 1. (PTI)

India issues notice to Pak seeking modification to Indus Waters Treaty

NEW DELHI, JAN 27 /--/ India has issued a notice to Pakistan for modification of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) of September 1960 following Islamabad's "intransigence" on its implementation, government sources said on Friday. The notice was sent on January 25 through respective commissioners for Indus waters, they said. The sources said India has always been a steadfast supporter and a responsible partner in implementing the IWT in letter and spirit. "However, Pakistan's actions have adversely impinged on the provisions of IWT and their implementation, and forced India to issue an appropriate notice for modification of the pact," said a source. India and Pakistan signed the treaty in 1960 after nine years of negotiations, with the World Bank being a signatory of the pact. The treaty sets out a mechanism for cooperation and information exchange between the two countries regarding use of waters of a number of rivers. In 2015, Pakistan requested for appointment of a neutral expert to examine its technical objections to India's Kishenganga and Ratle Hydro Electric Projects (HEPs). In 2016, Pakistan unilaterally retracted this request and proposed that a Court of Arbitration adjudicate on its objections, the sources said. "They said this unilateral action by Pakistan is in contravention of the graded mechanism of dispute settlement envisaged by Article IX of the IWT. Accordingly, India made a separate request for the matter to be referred to a neutral expert. "The initiation of two simultaneous processes on the same questions and the potential of their inconsistent or contradictory outcomes creates an unprecedented and legally untenable situation, which risks endangering the IWT itself," the source said. "The World Bank acknowledged this itself in 2016, and took a decision to 'pause' the initiation of two parallel processes and request India and Pakistan to seek an amicable way out," it said.

The sources said that despite repeated efforts by India to find a mutually agreeable way forward, Pakistan refused to discuss the issue during the five meetings of the Permanent Indus Commission from 2017 to 2022. At Pakistan's continuing insistence, the World Bank has recently initiated actions on both the neutral expert and Court of Arbitration processes, they said. The sources added that such parallel consideration of the same issues is not covered under any provision of IWT. "Faced with such violation of IWT provisions, India has been compelled to issue notice of modification," the source cited above said. (PTI)



The staff of STS Unit, Hut Bay unfurled the National flag on the occasion of Republic Day on 26th January 2023.



Students of Swadeshnagar Sr. Sec School also participated in the 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' program of the Prime Minister. The The DEO, Mayabunder, Mr. Suresh Mazumdar, Pradhan, Swadeshnagar, Mr. Debbabrata Das, Mr. Dilip Das PSM and others were present on the occasion. —(PIX KARTIK)

Skill development training prog inaugurated at Billiground

KARTIK

PORT BLAIR, JAN 27/--/ A Skill Development Centre, a Unit of Dr B.R. Ambedkar Institute of Technology Pahargaoan, Port



Blair was inaugurated at Billiground, Middle School by Mr. Manojit Halder, Pradhan, GPT Harinagar on Friday. Mr. Shankar Mondal, ZPM, Mr. Dilip Das, PSM & PRIs members of Harinagar Panchayat were also present on this occasion. On behalf of the Skill Development Programme of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Institute of Technology (DBRAIT) Dollygunj a Skill Development Course on Fashion & Apparel Design was started at Billiground. The duration of the course is one year. Along with the course, courses like Tailoring, Glass Painting And other courses are offered. About 40 persons received admission on the spot today. This was one of the demands of the PRI Members of the area.

ICAR-CIARI celebrates Republic Day

PORT BLAIR, JAN 27/--/ ICAR-CIARI, Port Blair celebrated the 74th Republic Day with great patriotic zeal and fervour on 26.01.2023. Dr. E. B. Chakurkar, Director, ICAR-CIARI unfurled the tricolour flanked by staff and family members. In his address, he appreciated the scientists and staff for the achievements made by the Institute during the past one year with a special mention about Dr. A. Velmurugan, Principal Scientist joining as Assistant Director General (S&WM) at ICAR Headquarters, New Delhi. He further, appreciated Scientists and all team members of Social Science Section for organizing Agriculture Education Day to created awareness about agriculture and agricultural education among school children and also he lauded the work carried out by Scientists of Regional Station, Minicoy for demonstrating and popularising CIARI



technologies in the regions of west coast. During his speech, he elaborated achievement of research and development of the Institute particularly release of Dwarf coconut varieties (Dweepharitha and DweepSona), sproposal for registration of new animal breeds, registration of Morindacitrifolia cluster bearing accession and CARI Brinjal 2. He also highlighted the recent technologies commercialised by the institute like Dweep Tickure, Dweep-Gau Ma Humpsore Rakshak, Dweep-Vertigrow, and Process for extraction of calcium alginate and liquid fertilizer from seaweed. During this occasion, he inaugurated KOHA, an integrated Library Management System in Institute Library to access library books and catalogue online through a web browser. He further urged everyone to work hard for the betterment of the Institute.

Cleanliness drive as part of week-long celebrations on Police Raising Day

PORT BLAIR, JAN 27/--/ The Andaman and Nicobar Police celebrated a week long programmes on the occasion of Police Raising Day from 16th to 22nd January 2023. To mark the occasion, various programmes were organized by the Police Stations of North & Middle Andaman District. As part of the celebration, cleanliness drives were organized at all premises of Police Station. To facilitate senior citizens all Police Stations of the district organized door to door basic medical checkup with the help of health workers. As a mark of observation, Essay/Drawing competition were organized at school and Nukkad Natak were also organized on the topic POC SO, Cyber Crime, Drug Abuse and Domestic Violence

for awareness of school students. During the occasion fruit bearing saplings were planted by all Police Stations. Further, various



awareness programmes/bike rally were also organized by the Police Stations displaying banners to sensitize the local youths about Drug Abuse, Traffic rules and regulations, ATM fraud and Cybercrime etc.

ANTCC celebrates 74th Republic Day

PORT BLAIR, JAN 27/--/ Along with the entire Nation, The Andaman Nicobar Territorial Congress Committee has commemorated the 74th years Celebrations of the Republic Day of India on 26th January 2023 at Gandhi Bhavan, Port Blair in a befitting manner. The PCC President, Mr. Ranganal Halder has unfurled the National Tricolour on 26th January 2023, followed by National Anthem by all the office bearers of Pradesh Congress Committee, District Congress, Block Congress, City Congress and Frontal Organizations viz. Youth Congress, Mahila Congress, Seva Dal, NSUI, INTUC, PRI members, All cells and general public with patriotic fervour. The Freedom Fighters were especially remembered on this

Occasion for their incomparable Courage and Contributions towards building a Democratic Nation.



Mr. Halder said that on this day in the year 1950 the Indian Constitution came into force which made India a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic with a Parliamentary system of Government. He expressed the need for every islander to imbibe the spirit enshrined in the preamble of Indian Constitution and to work for development of these islands maintaining social harmony, peace and tranquility. He further said that the Indian constitution is unique, which takes care and respects the aspirations of every caste, religion and guarantees for equal rights.

CITU affiliated ASNVMs seeks bonus for all DRMs

PORT BLAIR, JAN 27/--/ CITU-affiliated Andaman Sarvajanic Nirman Vibhag Mazdoor Sangh has demanded a bonus to all daily rated mazdoors working in the APWD without any discrimination. In a letter addressed to the Chief Engineer, APWD, Mr. SP Kalairajan, General Secretary, ASNVMs drew the attention of the Chief Engineer to the letter dated 20th January, 2023 sent to all the Executive Engineers of APWD by EO to Chief Engineer forwarding therewith a copy of the letter dated 18th January, 2023 received from the Deputy Secretary (PWD), A & N Administration on the issue of grant of bonus. In the said letter, the Administration has conveyed the approval for grant of adhoc bonus to those DRMs who have been benefited with 1/30th of pay plus DA in terms of OM No. 289 dated 22.09.2017 against the existing vacancies of WC Beldar and Khallasi of APWD.

Mr. Kalairajan has pointed out that there is no mention about the grant of adhoc bonus only to 1/30th of pay plus category daily rated workers, in the orders issued by the Govt. of India till October, 2022. Restricting the benefit of bonus only to a section of workers is against the order of the Govt. of India on the subject of grant of Non-PLB (Adhoc bonus). Shri Kalairajan further drew the attention of the Chief Engineer to the settlement judgement of the Hon'ble Lok Adalat and High Court on this issue in which no distinction was drawn between the 1/30th category employees and others. The case is still pending in the Hon'ble High Court. ASNVMs has also drew the attention of the Chief Engineer to the judgement dated 19th December, 2022 in MA 09 of 2020 (Lt Governor & others -vs- ASNVMs & Others) of the Division Bench of Hon'ble High Court

at Calcutta, sitting Circuit at Port Blair. The Hon'ble High Court has ordered that all the daily rated mazdoors working under the A & N Administration are eligible for the 1/30th of pay plus DA benefits with effect from 22nd September, 2017. Shri Kalairajan said that since there is no stay on the said judgement of the Division Bench, the Administration has to implement the directions contained in the said judgement. In this way, all the DRMs working in the APWD are eligible for a bonus. Mr. Kalairajan further told the Chief Engineer that the CITU-affiliated ASNVMs has been taking up the issue of grant of adhoc bonus to all the Daily Rated Mazdoors working in APWD since 2015 but the APWD has always been opposing it without any reason. He referred to the latest agitation conducted by the ASNVMs, the 3-day mass demonstration in front of APWD Headquarters from 19th to 21st October, 2022. The agitation was called off on an assurance given by the Commissioner-cum-Secretary (PWD) that all the DRMs working in APWD will be granted Adhoc bonus. Mr. Kalairajan urged the Chief Engineer, APWD to take up the matter with the A & N Administration to re-consider the decision to grant the adhoc bonus only to a section of DRMs, leaving behind others as there is no specific direction in the Govt. of India's orders issued during 2018, 2019 and 2022 and also on the basis of the judgement dated 19th December, 2022 of the Division Bench of Hon'ble High Court. He further urged the Chief Engineer to pursue the matter with the A & N Administration to extend the benefit of adhoc bonus to all DRMs working in the APWD as has been done in various other departments under the Administration including Secretariat.

IGNOU launches MA. Environmental Studies programme from January 2023 session

PORT BLAIR, JAN 27/--/ IGNOU has launched MA. Environmental studies programme from January 2023 session. This programme aim to generate awareness on a wide variety of environmental concerns. In line with NEP-2022, the programme will be offered with modular approach. The learners after completing the first year course of study will be eligible to receive Post Graduate Diploma in Environmental Studies.

The programme will have lateral entry & exit. After completing the programme, learners will be able to play decisive roles in addressing the environmental and sustainability concerns in India and across the world. For more details, please refer to the IGNOU Common prospectus. The admission link is <http://ignouadmission.samarth.edu.in> or contact IGNOU, Regional Centre, Port Blair over Phone: 03192-242888 or 03192-230111 or Email to reportblair@ignou.ac.in.

V Campbell Bay to sail for Little Andaman

PORT BLAIR, JAN 27/--/ MV Campbell Bay will sail for Little Andaman on 28.01.2023 (Sat) at 2100 Hrs from Haddo Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on 29.01.2023 (Sun) at 0800 Hrs from Little Andaman. Passenger tickets for the above sailing will be issued to the general public on 28.01.2023 (Sat) at STARS Ticketing Counters.

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Bernadette Peters

UN report lowers India's GDP at 5.8pc

A new United Nations report has pegged India's GDP at 5.8 per cent in 2023 - slightly lower than the estimated 6.4 per cent in 2022 - as higher interest rates and global economic slowdown weigh on investment and exports. At the same time, it notes that India's economic growth is expected to remain "strong" even as prospects for other South Asian nations "are more challenging". Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have sought financial assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2022. The World Economic Situation and Prospects 2023 report says the world output growth is projected to decelerate from an estimated three per cent in 2022 to 1.9 per cent in 2023, marking one of the lowest growth rates in recent decades as a "series of severe and mutually reinforcing shocks — the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and resulting food and energy crises, surging inflation, debt tightening, as well as the climate emergency — battered the world economy in 2022." The report, produced by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), says that in South Asia, the economic outlook has significantly deteriorated due to high food and energy prices, monetary tightening and fiscal vulnerabilities. Average GDP growth is projected to moderate from 5.6 per cent in 2022 to 4.8 per cent in 2023. While economic growth in India is projected to moderate in the calendar year 2023 to 5.8 per cent, with higher interest rates weighing on investment and slower global growth weakening exports, the report estimates that the country will grow at 6.7 per cent in 2024, the fastest-growing major economy in the world.

In India, annual inflation is estimated at 7.1 per cent in 2022, exceeding the 2 to 6 per cent medium-term inflation target band set by the Central Bank. India's inflation is expected to decelerate to 5.5 per cent in 2023 as global commodity prices moderate and slower currency depreciation eases imported inflation. Most developing countries have seen a slower job recovery in 2022 and continue to face considerable employment slack. Disproportionate losses in women's employment during the initial phase of the pandemic have not been fully reversed, with improvements mainly arising from a recovery in informal jobs. Recovery in the labour market has been uneven across the region. The report said that among the large economies, unemployment rate dropped to a four-year low of 6.4 per cent in India, as the economy added jobs both in urban and rural areas in 2022. In India, the unemployment rate in 2022 declined to pre-pandemic levels through stepped-up urban and rural employment. But youth employment remained below pre-pandemic levels, particularly among young women, given the pandemic's severe impacts on economic sectors where women tend to cluster.

The report presents a gloomy and uncertain global economic outlook for the near term. Global growth is forecast to moderately pick up to 2.7 per cent in 2024 as some of the headwinds will begin to subside. However, this is highly dependent on the pace and sequence of further monetary tightening, the course and consequences of the war in Ukraine, and the possibility of further supply-chain disruptions.

Union Budget 2023-24 must provide relief to workforce

REFLEX ACTION

Dr. Gyan Pathak

implement these codes, and hence it is expected that the Union Budget 2023-24 may announce its implementation from the next fiscal.

Human resource Industry is expecting rollout of these codes, while joint from to Central Trade Unions have been agitating for their roll back since they find these codes pro-corporate and anti-labour and fearing that these codes will bring modern day slavery for the workforce. This fear must be read with the WESO Trend 2023 warning that workforce in general would be forced into lower quality jobs. Therefore, rolling back these codes would be proper at this time of deteriorating job market as demanded by CTUs, rather than rolling them out. It is recalled that two months ago Central Trade Unions had boycotted the budget consultation exercise in the last week of November, since Union Finance Ministry did not give more than three minutes to every CTU. However, CTUs have sent a letter to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman stating their expectations and demand from the Union Budget 2023-24.

Demands of the CTUs are worth noting which included taking such policy decisions that could boost demand to invigorate the sagging economy. It would require putting money into the hands of the people. The importance of full social security coverage for the entire workforce lies here. They have demanded increase in allocation of MGNREGA the rural employment guarantee scheme for rural India. Given the higher unemployment rate in the urban India at

about 11 per cent in December, the government must announce similar urban employment guarantee scheme for urban areas. CTUs demands also include giving scheme workers the status of government employees, paying them minimum wages, filling vacant posts, giving up plans to sell PSUs, shelving the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2022, not privatizing government hospitals, reducing GST burden on common people particularly in fuel and essential commodities, and increasing taxes on corporates and introduction of wealth tax to fund social sector programmes. Creation of new decent jobs is of utmost importance, which can be possible only through reverting back from profit oriented economic policies to human centered ones, as the UN and ILO has been emphasizing since especially since the outbreak of COVID-19. Informalisation of the job market is on the rise, and AITUC has said that it has reached now to 97 per cent of all jobs, who have no social security coverage. It should also be noted that above 81 crore people have been surviving for the last three years on 5kg of free foodgrains per month. Union Budget 2023-24 must create jobs for them or provide full social security coverage.

The high level of unemployment shows that all the earlier schemes of the Modi government towards job creation and improving the labour market have failed which included PLI Scheme, Make in India, Atmanirbhar Bharat, etc. It is imperative therefore for the Union Finance Ministry to announce correction measures in the Union Budget 2023-24.

To bring the job market back on track Modi government does not only need human centric development policies, but also to reverse its present policy to promote gig or informal jobs to create decent jobs with full social security coverage. (IPA)



Students from different schools performing at the 6th edition of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha 2023', at Talkatora Stadium, in New Delhi

Yatra catapulted Rahul to national stage but the Congress Party?

The Bharat Jodo Yatra will culminate on January 30 in Srinagar with a flag hoisting ceremony at Srinagar on the anniversary of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. By then, the yatra which began on September 7, 2022 would have traversed the length of the sub-continent from Kanyakumari to Himalayas. The yatra has undoubtedly enthused the Congress cadre and imparted new life in the party which was deemed incapacitated. More importantly, it has replaced the earlier 'Papu' image of Rahul Gandhi's with that of a mature individual and a creditable political leader. His image of removing hate and introducing love between communities in the nation has marked, igniting much debate in social media. Even Rahul Gandhi's detractors agree that the difficult Yatra has earned him the respect and support of the people in areas where it has passed. Attempts by BJP leaders to criticize the Yatra and Rahul Gandhi have not achieved much success.

The seminal question is whether the Yatra can bring electoral success for the Congress. While senior Congress leaders have said the aim of the Yatra is not to capture power, there is little doubt that unless this happens, the goal of social harmony would be difficult to achieve. This is because the Congress is the largest opposition party in the country with a footprint in regions—out of 403 Lok Sabha seats it

contested in 2019 general elections, it won 52, came second in 196, and obtained 19.5 per cent of total votes.

The Congress is main Opposition party in 12 states—Punjab, Assam, Karnataka, Kerala, Haryana, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Goa, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland. It is in direct contest with BJP in seven states—Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand, which account for 102 of the 543 Lok Sabha seats. Regional parties do not have significant presence or strength at the national level. Without a rejuvenated and transformed Congress, the opposition can not hope to dent the BJP's fortunes in these states in 2024 polls.

The AAP won just one seat in the Lok Sabha in 2019 and was ranked third in most of the constituencies. The TMC won 22 seats in 2019 compared to 34 in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections: the TRS won nine of 17 seats in 2019 compared to 11 in 2014. Opposition parties by not supporting / aligning with the Congress, where it is the major opposition force, will divide the anti-BJP

votes. However, it is doubtful whether the Congress is capable of being the fulcrum of opposition unity against the BJP in 2024. A party in decline since 2014 Lok Sabha polls, the Congress has three key problems:

First, centralization of power, and decision making at the top; second, organizational weakness; and third, lack of unity. Despite the election of a non-Gandhi as party president, the high command culture and the presence of the Gandhi family still continue—as a result of which decisions are taken at the top and local leaders are ignored. Elections to the Congress Working Committee have not been held for nearly 25 years, the last being in 1998. Organisationally, the strong federal structural of the party was destroyed by Indira Gandhi in the 1970 through centralization and personalization of power, creating a pyramidal decision-making structure. With the abandonment of the principal of representation, Congress committees and party offices were filled by appointment rather than through election. Centralization of power led to dismemberment of the party at the grass roots. Without a clear line of

leadership, factions have emerged that have destroyed the internal unity and coherence of the party. During the immediate post-independence period, factional group provided the building blocks of the party ensuring a measure of internal democracy. Over the years, factionalism has weakened the party, leading to loss of power. Being in office does not help, the party remains divided in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh between contending groups over the chief minister's post. The G-23 groups of senior leaders -- who following a series of elector defeats, demanded organizational reforms and an exclusive and collective decision -- making system -- have further divided the party.

The Yatra cannot reform the party. Yet there is urgent need to do so as the Yatra does have a political thrust evident from the Congress inviting 21 like-minded political parties to joining the collective event in Srinagar. With the grand finale, the Congress hopes to make the Yatra conclusion rally a show of strength of the Opposition. The Trinamool Congress, Janata Dal (United), Telugu Desam Party, CPI-M, Rashtriya Janata Dal, Samajwadi Party and BSP are among those invited; the AAP has not been invited. But the prospects of Opposition unity of the opposition parties uniting along with the Congress have many hurdles to cross. (IPA)

FOCUS

Harihar Swarup

Conventional Crossword							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9					10		
11						12	
				13		14	
15	16		17				
					18	19	20
21		22		23			
24				25	26		27
28				29			
30				31			

ACROSS				DOWN			
1	Sharp reply	6	Fuel	1	Scoundrel	2	First woman
9	Sheeplike	10	Habitual dwelling	3	Tint	4	United
11	Units of inheritance	12	Copy	5	Repose	6	Farm animal
13	Reel	15	At all times	7	Electrical unit	8	Prophet
18	Excuse	21	Powerful	14	Spinning toy	16	Stringed instrument
24	Drink	25	Not sleeping	17	Fish eggs	19	Permission
28	Connection	29	Vital organ	20	Vigilant	21	Wan
30	Finish	31	Ruler	22	Look after	23	Story
				26	Hairpiece	27	Knowledge

SUDOKU : 3768							
4				5	3	8	1
				4	8		9
	2			9		6	
3	8				2		6
6		4				3	9
	3		8			2	
	4		9	6			
2	6	8	7				5

Yesterday's Solution 3767							
4	8	3	1	6	7	9	2
7	9	5	4	8	2	1	6
1	6	2	3	5	9	4	8
3	7	9	2	4	1	6	5
2	4	8	5	9	6	7	3
5	1	6	8	7	3	2	4
6	5	4	7	1	8	3	9
9	2	1	6	3	5	8	7
8	3	7	9	2	4	5	1

Yesterday's Cross Word Solution 1776							
C	O	S	H		Z	E	R
A		T				T	E
C	H	O	R	E		S	A
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S	I	D	E		L	E	V
M		W	E	A	V	E	A
A	P	E	S		G	E	R
P	E	G				S	E
T	R	O	T			D	E

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Gauhati HC junks PIL on police encounters in Assam, says govt probing cases

GUWAHATI, JAN 27/--/The Gauhati High Court on Friday dismissed a PIL on a series of police encounters since Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma assumed power in May 2021, while saying that no separate probe is required as the state government is already conducting separate investigations on each case. A division bench comprising Justice Suman Shyam and Justice Susmita Phukan Khaund said the petition was filed by advocate Arif Md Yeasin Jwadder "without properly verifying the complete facts". Citing a government affidavit in the case, the court said 56 people have died, including four custodial deaths, while 145 others were injured in 171 incidents between May 2021 and August 2022. "...accordingly, 171 separate FIRs have been registered in connection with the said incidents. It appears that the process of enquiry in connection with all these cases of police action is still in progress. "What would be significant to note herein is that there has been no attempt on the part of the official respondents either to deny the occurrence or to suppress any fact from this court," the order said. Advocate General Devajit Saikia also assured the court that appropriate action will

be taken against all guilty persons, including the erring police officials, after the enquiry is over and it cannot be stated that no action has been initiated by the state in these cases of police action. "... it appears that having read some media reports on police actions leading to death/injury of some accused persons in police custody, the petitioner has rushed to this court by filing the present petition, without properly verifying the complete facts," the order read. The possibility of the petitioner approaching the court "merely seeking some publicity" cannot be entirely ruled out, it said. The Bench also rejected the petitioner's prayer for constitution of an SIT or hand over the probe to CBI, saying that this will happen only when a proper case is made out from the facts to demonstrate that the state government has not taken proper action in the matter or there is a deliberate attempt to shield the culprits. On another prayer in the petition regarding setting up of human rights courts in Assam, the HC noted that 12 such courts have already been set up in different districts. Jwadder claimed in the PIL that more than 80 "fake encounters" between Assam Police and the accused have taken place since May



2021, when Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma took charge, resulting in deaths of 28 people and injuries of more than 48 others. The people killed or injured were not dreaded criminals and the modus operandi of police has been the same in all the encounters, the PIL said. Jwadder sought an enquiry by an independent agency like CBI, SIT or any other police team from other states under the supervision of the court. The petition elaborated that as per police statements published in newspapers, the accused tried to snatch service revolvers of the police personnel and in self-defence, police had to retaliate and kill or injure the alleged criminal. Jwadder cast doubt on the contention and said that as the injured or dead persons were not militants, they were not trained to use pistols and it cannot be the case that all the accused could snatch a service revolver from a trained police officer, whose pistols are normally tied to a rope to their waist belt. Besides the Assam Government, Assam Police DGP, state Law and Justice Department, National Human Rights Commission and Assam Human Rights Commission respondents to the case. (PTI)

Mamata urges people to uphold democratic ideals of equality, fraternity

KOLKATA, JAN 27/--/The 74th Republic Day was celebrated with pomp and gaiety across West Bengal on Thursday amid tight security, with Governor CV Anand Bose presiding over an hour-long parade by the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, policemen and civilians, including school students. Early in the day, a military helicopter showered rose petals on Red Road, the venue of official programme here, to greet the dignitaries, including Bose and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. The governor hoisted the Tricolour on the occasion in the presence of Banerjee and a host of her cabinet colleagues, senior officials of the state and the three wings of the Indian Armed Forces. Extending his greetings to the people of the state on the occasion, Banerjee urged people to take a pledge "to protect and uphold democratic ideals of justice, liberty equality and fraternity as enshrined in our Constitution". "Together, we shall strive to build a nation our founding fathers envisioned," she also tweeted. After a gap of two years, people were allowed at the Red Road parade this time. Several tableaux displaying the Army's guns, rocket launchers and missiles rolled out on the road as part of the celebrations, one of which raised awareness on safe driving and another on UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage accorded to Durga puja. (PTI)



West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose takes first lesson in Bengali — Photo : EOI

Never take shortcuts, exam results not end of life, gadgets not smarter than you: PM to students

NEW DELHI, JAN 27/--/Never take the shortcut, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said in his message to students on Friday, cautioning that cheating may help them in an exam or two but not in the long run and asserting that exam results are not the end of life. The prime minister also advised parents that they should not pressure children due to social status, and asked students to focus on their work to come out of any such burden of expectations. Responding to questions from students during the sixth edition of "Pariksha Pe Charcha", his annual interaction with students on issues such as exam stress, at the Talkatora Stadium here, he said they should maintain focus on their work. "Life cannot be successful with cheating. You may clear an exam or two but it will remain questionable in life. Hard-working students should not despair at the temporary success of the cheaters and said that hard work will always benefit them in their lives. Exams come and go but life is to be lived fully," he said. Giving the example of people who cross railway tracks to go to another platform instead of taking the foot overbridge, the prime minister pointed out that shortcuts will not take you anywhere and said, "Shortcuts will cut you short." He also noted that some schools or teachers who run tuition classes strive for unfair means so that their students excel in the exams. "Students should refrain from wasting time in finding ways and preparing cheating material and spend that time in learning. Secondly, in these changing times, when life around us is changing, you have to face exams on every step," he said as he noted that such people can only clear a few exams but eventually fail in life. He cautioned students against excessive use of gadgets and asked them to believe in their smartness and not of their mobile phones. The prime minister also advised students against boasting about how well their exam went to avoid stress. "Don't consider your gadget to be smarter than you" is the advise PM Modi had for students to avoid addiction to online games and social media which result in distraction. "Technology fasting" at regular intervals and a demarcated area as a "technology-free zone" in every household will lead to the enhanced joy of life and help children come out of the clutches of slavery of gadgets, the prime minister suggested. The prime minister took a swipe at critics of the government's handling of economy, saying his dispensation was mocked as full of "average" talents but the same India considered "average" is now shining in the world

and seen as a ray of hope in the post-pandemic era. Modi said it is natural for family members to have expectations but it is wrong if they are linked to consciousness about social class or status. "Exam results are not the end of life. There is nothing wrong with family expectations. However if these expectations are due to social status-related expectations then it is concerning. It is not good to be bogged down by the surrounding web of expectation and one should look inwards and link the expectation with one's own capabilities, needs,

even after so many people in the audience plead for a six or a four. Drawing the link between the focus of a batsman on a cricket field and the minds of students, the prime minister said the pressure of expectations can be obliterated if you remain focused. "Parents should not burden their kids with expectations and asked the students to always evaluate themselves according to their potential. However, students should analyse the pressures and see if they are doing justice to their own potential. In such a situation these expectations may spur better performance," he told the students. "One of the reasons for stress is boasting about how well we did in our exam. Parents start believing in what the children say and start telling this to people around them. Avoid giving a wrong impression about your performance in exams," Modi said. Underlining the need for students to expand their horizons, Modi advised parents to give their children some money after classes 10 and 12 exams to travel to a few places and ask them to write about it. "Students should be encouraged to go and meet people from different strata of society. Students should not be bound by many restrictions. We should allow them to expand their horizons," he said. The prime minister advised teachers to welcome students who ask questions. "When a student asks questions, that means he or she is inquisitive. This is a good sign," he said. A record 38 lakh students registered this year for participation in "Pariksha Pe Charcha". The number of registrations is at least 15 lakh more than last year, according to Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. The first edition of the prime minister's interactive programme with school and college students was held on February 16, 2018. (PTI)



Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacts with students, teachers and parents during a 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' programme, in New Delhi

intentions and priorities," he said. Giving the example of the game of cricket where the crowd keeps on rooting for fours and sixes, he said a batsman who goes out to bat remains unperturbed



Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacting with the students, teachers and parents, during the 6th edition of 'Pariksha Pe Charcha 2023', at Talkatora Stadium, in New Delhi on Friday

Ex-Odisha CM joins BRS; Leaders winning, but people losing in polls, says KCR

HYDERABAD/BHUBANESWAR, JAN 27/--/Former Odisha chief minister Giridhar Gamang and several other leaders on Friday joined Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) in the presence of party president K Chandrashekar Rao, who formally welcomed them by offering a pink scarf. Gamang, also a nine-term Lok Sabha MP from tribal-dominated Koraput in Odisha, and his son Sishir had on Wednesday announced their resignation from the primary membership of the BJP. The veteran tribal leader had earlier quit the Congress and switched over to the saffron camp in 2015. Speaking on the occasion, Rao said the BRS party was floated in order to change the future of India and its philosophy and in that endeavour, several leaders from Odisha came and joined. Gamang's wife Hema Gamang, a former MP, and his son and ex-Odisha minister Jayram Pangti joined the BRS. Odisha's former legislators - Navin Nanda, Ratha Das, Arjun Das, Raghav Sethi, Brundaban Majhi - along with Naba Nirman Krushak Sangathan leader Akshya Kumar and Sesadev Nanda were also inducted in the Rao's party. Around 300 people from Odisha travelled to Hyderabad by charter flight, trains and buses to attend the programme, sources said in Odisha's capital Bhubaneswar. According to KCR, despite the change in governments and leaders, the fate

of the people remained the same as political parties always focused on winning elections wherein "people are losing". "How many governments and leaders changed, but the fate of farmers and poor people did not change. Why is it so? This is what we should ponder upon. It is because when there are elections, parties are winning but people are losing. Serious change is required in the Indian political landscape where not leaders but people win," Rao, also known as KCR, said. The Telangana CM said though the country is celebrating 75 years of independence, the growth story is different from other countries. Despite having resources in abundance, more than China and the US, Indian youth prefer to go to other countries to pursue their dreams and people need to reflect on it. Recalling the farmers' stir against the Centre's controversial farm laws in the national capital, Rao said the rulers mocked the poor people and peasants of the country. "That's why I called for Ab Ki Bar Kisan Ki Sarkar. Several leaders have become MLAs and MPs, but this time (in 2024 general elections) farmers only should become MLAs and MPs," he opined. The BRS will bring about change in Indian politics and ensure that people win the elections. Citing statistics, the BRS chief said the country has four lakh MW installed capacity of power, whereas it never generated more than two lakh MW. Targetting

the central government over its disinvestment policy, Rao said the losses of the PSEs are on the people, while the profit-making companies are "privatised". "Socialisation of the losses and privatisation of the properties... this is what is

happening in this country nowadays we should save the country from this vicious cycle. That is why BRS was started," he said. Rao reiterated that the BRS's motto was to provide free power to farmers across the country. Two years after



Former Odisha Chief Minister and BJP leader Giridhar Gamang joined Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) headed by Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao in Hyderabad on Friday

the BRS government is formed at the Centre, electricity will be available in every nook and cranny of the country 24/7. He added that some of the flagship welfare schemes of the Telangana government such as 'Dalit Bandhu' will be implemented across the country for 25 lakh households every year. Meanwhile, Giridhar Gamang is likely to lead the BRS in Odisha in the 2024 general elections and also the Odisha assembly polls in the same year, the sources said. BJD leader Rabinarayan Nanda said Gamang's move to join the BRS "will not have any impact" on politics in Koraput as the tribals will continue to support Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. Another ruling party leader Prashant Muduli echoed Nanda. Congress MLA from Jeypore in Koraput, Taraprasad Bahinipati, said, "There was no adverse impact on our party when Gamang joined the BJP in 2015. There will be no difference this time." BJP state general secretary Prithviraj Harichandan said, "People have faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi. They will not support any other party like BRS at the Centre. It will not be able to become a significant political force in Odisha." Meanwhile, Gamang's son said the BRS will contest in all 147 assembly constituencies and 21 Lok Sabha seats in Odisha. "We may go with parties which are opposed to the BJD, BJP and the Congress," he said. (PTI)

Indian-American astronaut nominated by US Prez for appointment to grade of an Air Force brigadier general

WASHINGTON, JAN 27 /--/Indian-American astronaut Raja J Chari has been nominated by President Joe Biden for the appointment to the grade of Air Force brigadier general.

The nomination was announced on Thursday and will have to be confirmed by the Senate which approves all senior civilian and military appointments, according to the US Defence Department. Air Force Colonel Chari, 45, was nominated for the appointment to the grade of brigadier general, it said in a statement. Chari is currently serving as the Crew-3 commander and astronaut, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Johnson Space Center, Texas.

He earned a master's degree in aeronautics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and graduated from the US Naval Test Pilot School in Patuxent River, Maryland. Chari served as the commander of the 461st Flight Test Squadron and the director of the F-35 Integrated Test Force at Edwards Air Force Base in California. Inspired by his father Srinivas Chari, who went to the US at a young age from Hyderabad for an engineering degree, to get a higher education and make a successful career. He met his wife and spent his entire career at John Deere in Waterloo.

In 2020, Chari was selected as the Commander of the SpaceX Crew-3 mission to the International Space Station (ISS) by NASA and the European Space Agency. Chari joins this mission with extensive experience as a test pilot. He has accumulated more than 2,500 hours of flight time in his career. Brigadier General (BG) is a one-star General Officer rank of the United States Air Force. It is just above Colonel and below Major General. (PTI)

Women's economic empowerment is critical issue for the Biden-Harris administration: Neera Tanden

WASHINGTON, JAN 27 /--/Women's economic empowerment is a critical issue for the Biden-Harris administration, a top Indian American official has said, underlining that their full potential can have economic stability, and mobility and are vital to the core issues for democracy.

These remarks were made by Neera Tanden, White House Staff Secretary and Senior Advisor to the President of the United States during her address to the US-India Alliance Shatter Summit here on Thursday. "Women's economic empowerment is a critical issue for the Biden-Harris administration; for the President and for the Vice President," 50-year-old Tanden said. "We understand how ensuring that women are reaching their full potential can have economic stability, economic mobility, are vital to core issues for us, for democracy, ensures



stable and equal growth, both internationally and in our country," Tanden said addressing eminent women leaders from India and the United States.

Tanden shared with the audience her own personal experience. "I'm the child of Indian immigrants. When I was five years old, my father left and my mother was faced with the choice of going back to India or staying in the United States and having to go on a series of government programmes welfare, food stamps," she said. They were living in Bedford, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston. "I remember being the only kid in line using food stamps and those government programmes work. My mother after a few years was able to first get a job at an Indian travel agent office and then a few years after that work at Raytheon," she said. Tanden eventually went to UCLA law school and ended up in the Clinton White House where she worked for First Lady Hillary Clinton. Even as First Lady, Hillary Clinton recognised how vital it was to invest in women, to ensure growth for families, growth for communities, growth for democracies, and growth for countries.

As Secretary of State, Clinton, she said, really championed the interconnection between women's economic empowerment, and core national security and international security issues, like ensuring that there is stability and democracy throughout the world. "(I am) even more honoured to work in the Biden Harris administration with both the President and the First Lady recognising this interconnection between these issues; the interconnection between how democracies are functioning, how communities are growing, and how families are doing. And how families and communities are really centred on whether women have true opportunity, true access to economic opportunity and true ability to ensure that their families are growing," Tanden said. President Joe Biden, she said, is incredibly proud of the investments he's made in women-owned businesses in the United States. Tanden was a close ally of Hillary Clinton, the former secretary of state and the 2016 Democratic presidential candidate, and helped pass the Affordable Care Act under President Barack Obama. (PTI)

Indian mother-daughter duo's 26,000 ice cream-stick rangoli enters Singapore Book of Records

SINGAPORE, JAN 27 /--/An Indian mother and daughter team here has made it to the Singapore Book of Records by creating a 6-by-6 metre rangoli artwork using 26,000 ice cream sticks which depicts notable Tamil scholar-poets.

Sudha Ravi, already listed in the record book for creating a 3,200 sq ft rangoli in 2016 here, along with her daughter Rakshita, presented the rangoli last week during a cultural event organised as part of the ongoing Pongal festivities in the Little India

precinct. The rangoli, which took a month to create, depicts notable Tamil scholar-poets Tiruvalluvar, Avvaiyar, Bharathiyaar and Bharathidasan and coincides with the celebration of their works by Kalamanjari, a Tamil cultural organisation here, which organised the event, and the Little India Shopkeepers and Heritage Association (LISHA). Violin and mridangam artists regaled the audiences with Carnatic music and songs lauding the works of the poets in the event on January 21 the Friday weekly Tabla! reported.

"Kalamanjari and team did a vocal performance on the songs of these scholars," said Soundara Nayaki Vairavan, the founder of Kalamanjari, which promotes Tamil literary works through music and dance.

Ravi, a rangoli specialist who actively promotes Tamil culture, usually uses rice flour, chalks and chopsticks to make rangoli but switched to acrylics on ice cream sticks this time. She is also known for making rangolis at community centres, drawing the attention of non-Indian admirers in Singapore.

"Sudha and her daughter are part of the Tamil cultural activities in Singapore, and this is an assurance that the younger generation will continue to lift our traditions," said Vairavan, also a stalwart of Tamil language and culture. Rajini Asokan, who runs a food and beverage business, was in awe of the rangoli, which she said, was an outstanding highlight of the event and made her even prouder of Indian culture. Kalamanjari organised the event, supported by LISHA, as a part of LISHA Pongal Festival 2023'. (PTI)

India important partner of choice for US, says Biden admin official ahead of NSA Doval's planned trip

WASHINGTON, JAN 27 /--/India is an important partner of choice for the United States, the Biden administration has said ahead of a crucial visit by National Security Advisor Ajit Doval for talks with the top American leadership, including his counterpart Jake Sullivan. In response to a question on Doval's planned visit to Washington next week, State Department's Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel told reporters here on Thursday that enhanced security cooperation with India was also part of US-India relations. "India is an important partner of choice for the United

States in a number of spaces, and that includes trade cooperation," Patel said. "It, of course, includes security cooperation. It also includes technological cooperation as well. I don't want to get too ahead of the process or get ahead of any specific meetings that might be coming down the pike," he said. Both sides are yet to announce the visit of Doval to Washington. "This (India-US ties) is, of course, of great importance to us," Patel said.

Earlier this week, India Deputy National Security Advisor Vikram Misri was in Washington and met top officials from the Biden

administration. "Delighted to host India's Deputy NSA, dear colleague and friend @VikramMisri at India House.

Thank you @WhiteHouse NSC PDNSA Jon Finer, Indo-Pacific coordinator Dr Kurt Campbell and friends from the US Admin, think-tanks, strategic community & industry for joining," India's ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu tweeted on Wednesday. Addressing a Republic Day event here on Thursday, Sandhu said the global comprehensive strategic partnership between India and the US has continued to intensify,

covering almost all areas of human endeavour, driven by shared democratic values, convergence of interests, on a range of issues, and vibrant, people to people contacts. "Our two countries are benefiting from mutual exchanges, across domains including healthcare, clean energy, security, education, technology, translating the vision of PM Modi and President Biden, into action. Our engagements with partners in Quad, have expanded into infrastructure, supply chains, climate action, and space cooperation, to become a force for global good," Sandhu said. (PTI)

Pak Oppn leader Fawad Chaudhry remanded to judicial custody, sent to jail

ISLAMABAD, JAN 27 /--/Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's senior leader Fawad Chaudhry was on Friday remanded to judicial remand and sent to Adiala jail by a local court here on charges of "inciting violence" against a constitutional



institution. Fawad, a close aide of PTI party chief and former prime minister Imran Khan, was arrested in a pre-dawn raid on Wednesday from his residence in Lahore after a case was registered against him at Islamabad's Kohsar Police Station on the complaint of the Secretary Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The Dawn newspaper reported that the Islamabad district and sessions court sent Fawad, 52, to the high-security Adiala jail on a 14-day judicial remand in the case over alleged incitement of violence against a constitutional institution. The court on Wednesday night had granted police an initial two-day physical remand of Fawad, hours after he was arrested. The ECP's plea for an extension to Fawad's physical remand was heard by Judge Raja Waqas Ahmed on Friday. At the hearing, the election commission's lawyer Saad Hassan, the prosecutor in the case, informed the court that the PTI leader's voice matching had been completed. He requested an extension in remand, saying that Fawad had to be taken to Lahore for a photogrammetric test.

The prosecutor contended before the court that the former federal minister incited hatred against a constitutional institution. "Fawad is trying to create unrest," he said. "The statement threatens the lives of the election commission's workers." The ECP lawyer argued that an extension to the PTI leader's remand was imperative to carry out further investigation in the case. "A day had already passed when the remand was approved at 12am," the investigation officer said. The ECP lawyer told the court that Fawad's statement was available on record, adding that the PTI leader had also acknowledged his speech. "No one can object to the speech. The accused has accepted his statement." At this, Fawad's counsel Babar Awan accused the election commission of colluding with the government against PTI. "We are being blamed and pressured," he said. The ECP lawyer responded that Fawad was a senior politician but "no one is above the law".

He told the court that it was mandatory to search his home. "It is important to recover Fawad's laptop and mobile phone in his presence," he said. "Fawad's statement is not one person's statement but an entire group's narrative," the ECP lawyer said. "A campaign has not only been launched against the ECP but also against the top officials of the election commission," said. Separately, a bail application was filed by Fawad on the argument that the case against him was based on "mala fide intention" and "ulterior motives", and filed "only to harass, pressurise (sic) and blackmail" him. It adds that the allegations levelled in the FIR were "absolutely false, frivolous and baseless". "The petitioner was arrested illegally, unlawfully and without any justification in negation to the law and constitutional rights of the petitioner." The arrest of Fawad further deepens political fault lines in Pakistan where the Khan-led opposition is demanding snap polls. The general elections in Pakistan are due after August. However, Khan is demanding snap polls. (PTI)

Gunman kills security chief at Azerbaijan Embassy in Iran

DUBAI, JAN 27 /--/A man armed with a Kalashnikov-style rifle stormed the Azerbaijan Embassy in Iran's capital Friday, killing the head of security at the diplomatic post and wounding two guards, authorities said. Tehran's police chief, Gen. Hossein Rahimi, blamed the attack on "personal and family problems," according to Iranian state television.

However, the assault comes as tensions have been high for months between neighbouring Azerbaijan and Iran. Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry said it would evacuate its diplomatic mission, accusing Iran of not taking reported threats against it seriously in the past. Meanwhile, Iranian authorities replaced Rahimi as police chief hours later after footage emerged that appeared to show a police officer doing nothing to stop the attack. Video purportedly from the scene of the attack showed an empty diplomatic police post just near the embassy, with one man apparently wounded in an SUV parked outside. Inside the embassy past a metal detector, paramedics stood over what appeared to be a lifeless body in a small office as blood pooled on the floor beneath. A statement from Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry said that "an investigation is currently underway into this treacherous attack."

The ministry also described the attacker as destroying a guard post with assault rifle fire before being stopped by the wounded guards, whom authorities described as being in a "satisfactory" condition after being shot. However, the ministry said a "recent anti-Azerbaijani campaign against our country in Iran has encouraged such attacks against our diplomatic mission." (AP)

British Sikh engineer wins PM Rishi Sunak's award for low-cost invention

LONDON, JAN 27 /--/A British Sikh engineer behind an energy efficient manual washing machine for low-income groups around the world, inspired by his volunteering work in India, has won Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's Points of Light Award.

Navjot Sawhney, who set up his Washing Machine Project around four years ago, was honoured for his hand-cranked machine invention which can be operated in regions without electricity. Sawhney described the experience of winning the award from Sunak, announced earlier this month, as "surreal" after the British Indian leader praised his "ingenuity and compassion". "You have used your professional skills as an engineer to help thousands of people around the world who don't have access to electric washing machines," Sunak wrote in a personal letter to Sawhney. "Your innovative, hand-cranked washing machines are giving families the dignity of clean clothes and the time you are saving them is empowering many women who have been held back from education and employment," he said. "I know that your machines are also helping Ukrainian families who have been forced to flee their homes and are currently living in humanitarian aid centres. Your ingenuity, compassion and dedication to improving the lives of others is an inspiration to us all," he added.

Previously employed by Dyson, the technology firm well known for vacuum cleaners, Sawhney wanted to use his skills to improve the quality of life for disadvantaged communities. It was while volunteering in southern India with "Engineers Without Borders" that he saw the disproportionate burden placed on women to carry out handwashing, inspiring him to design a manual, off-grid and fully sustainable machine which saves 50 per cent on water compared to handwashing, and 75 per cent on time. He named his first machines after his neighbour Divya and the Washing Machine Project was created to manufacture the "Divya" devices on a wider scale, with over 300 machines so far distributed worldwide to places including refugee camps, schools and orphanages.

"Winning the Points of Light award and getting recognised by the Prime Minister is a phenomenal privilege," said London-born Sawhney. "The Washing Machine Project's mission is to alleviate the burden of unpaid labour, mainly on women and children. I'm so proud that giving back the dignity of clean clothes to those who hand wash them is getting the recognition it deserves. "Thank you to our team, volunteers, partners and beneficiaries who work tirelessly daily to make our mission a success," he said.

According to Downing Street, his hand-cranked washing machines have benefitted over 1,000 families without access to an electric machine in underdeveloped countries or refugee camps, including humanitarian aid centres in Poland for Ukrainian refugees. The Washing Machine Project's Go Fund Me crowdfunding campaign has raised over 91,000 pounds since July 2021. Points of Light are outstanding individual volunteers and people seen as making a change in their community and are regularly honoured by the British Prime Minister to recognise their inspirational work. (PTI)

Just 8 dope sanctions in 5 years in international hockey, but FIH wants to remain vigilant

BHUBANESWAR, JAN 27 --/ Hockey remains one the cleanest sport in the world with just eight players being suspended



for dope-related offences in the last five years, and the international hockey federation (FIH) wants to keep it that way by remaining vigilant. Since January 2017, only 14 dope violations (adverse analytical findings) have been reported, of which eight have been sanctioned. Almost all the cases related to recreational drugs and not

performance-enhancing substances. According to FIH, there was just one "potential anti-doping rule violation (ADRV)" in 2021 but no sanction was imposed. "In line with the World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) aims and ambitions, FIH takes its commitment to running a clean sport extremely seriously and works to ensure that it stays abreast of any developments in doping, testing and education around the subject," FIH senior communications manager Nicolas Maingot told PTI. The number of dope tests conducted in a year is, however, very low as compared to other sports like athletics, swimming, weightlifting and even a team sport like football. Due to the low number of positive cases over the years in hockey, there may not be the need to test a lot of

samples. Around 20 samples had been collected in the ongoing World Cup till the end of crossover matches, which is very low for a global showpiece. Twenty-eight matches out of a total 44 had been played till the crossovers stage. Compared to this, the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar saw more than 1,600 dope samples being collected. The FIH, however, said that "more samples may be collected" in the remaining matches (16 matches). It also said that the participating players have already been tested earlier. The samples were collected by the officers of the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA). "All the teams were already tested. Players to be tested are drawn and this is conducted by NADO (National Anti-Doping Organisation)," Maingot said. "The process is managed by ITA (International Testing Agency) but the Indian NADO is the one responsible for the sample collection." In 2021, 200 samples from 177 players were collected, out of which 127 were in-competition and 73 out-of-competition. Urine samples numbered 183, while 17 were blood samples. Fifty-one

per cent of the samples were of male players. The players from whom samples were collected in 2021 belonged to 32 countries. India was among 10 countries whose players were tested the most in 2021. In 2020, the FIH contractually delegated the management and implementation of parts of its anti-doping programme to Switzerland-based ITA. The FIH said that since 2016, the number of tests per year has been increasing in order to maintain its status as one of the cleanest sports in the world. Every athlete who competes in an FIH event must have completed an Anti-Doping online educational course within the previous two years and this was included in tournament regulations. "Since July 2015, the FIH has made it a requirement that all players must have completed an approved anti-doping education programme to be able to compete in FIH events. Any players who do not hold a valid Anti-Doping Certificate (valid for 2 years) will not be allowed to play in the competition until they have done so." (PTI)



Devon Conway scored 52 off 35 balls

Conway, Mitchell and spinners shine as NZ beat India In 1st T20I

RANCHI, JAN 27 --/ Devon Conway and Daryl Mitchell conjured up fluent and fiery half-centuries before the spinners choked the hosts as New Zealand outplayed India by 21 runs in the opening T20I to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series on Friday. Asked to take first strike, opener Conway continued his purple patch with a 35-ball 52, while Mitchell smashed a 30-ball unbeaten 59, which included a last-over thrashing of Arshdeep Singh for 27 runs, to power the Black Caps to a challenging 176 for six. The Kiwi bowlers, led by Mitchell Santner (2/11) and Michael Bracewell (2/31), then spun a web around the home batters, restrict India to 155 for 9 in 20 overs. India had a disastrous start to their chase with both Ishan Kishan (4) and Rahul Tripathi (0) sent back to the pavillion by the third over. While Ishan was bamboozled by Bracewell, pacer Jacob Duffy (1/27) induced a fine edge off Rahul's blade. Shubman Gill (7) too perished soon after being deceived by Santner as India slumped to 15 for three. Suryakumar Yadav (47), however, looked in good touch as he picked up two boundaries before picking one off his hips for a six off Lockie Ferguson (1/22). Santner then bowled a maiden as India reached 33 for three in the powerplay overs. With the pitch offering grip and turn, New Zealand spinners controlled the proceedings keeping it flat and mixing the length even as Hardik unleashed a drive over extra cover to ease the pressure.

"Thank you for inspiring millions": Sporting stars bow down to 'icon' Sania Mirza

Heartbreak for Sania; Indian pair goes down 6-7, 2-6

MEBOURNE, JAN 27 --/ Trailblazing Indian tennis star Sania Mirza capped off her glorious Grand Slam career with a runners-up finish alongside 'best friend' Rohan Bopanna in the Australian Open mixed doubles final here on Friday. Pairing up with her first-ever mixed doubles partner Bopanna, the unseeded Indian duo went down 6-7(2) 2-6 to the Brazilian pair of Luisa Stefani and Rafael Mataos in the final at the Rod Laver Arena. "If I cry, these are happy tears. That's just a disclaimer. I'm still going to play a couple of more tournaments but my journey of my professional career started in Melbourne," an emotional Sania said as she struggled to hold back tear.

"Rohan was my first-ever mixed doubles partner when I was 14 and we won the nationals, it was 22 year ago and I couldn't think of



a better person, he's my best friend and one of my best partners to finish my career," Sania said,

thanking Bopanna, who has one French Open mixed doubles title to his credit. "If I cry, these are happy

tears. That's just a disclaimer. I'm still going to play a couple of more tournaments but my journey of my professional career started in Melbourne," an emotional Sania said as she struggled to hold back tear. "Rohan was my first-ever mixed doubles partner when I was 14 and we won the nationals, it was 22 year ago and I couldn't think of a better person, he's my best friend and one of my best partners to finish my career," Sania said, thanking Bopanna, who has one French Open mixed doubles title to his credit. The 36-year-old, who earlier announced that the WTA event in Dubai next month will be her swansong, is India's most accomplished woman tennis player, having won six Grand Slam title, including three mixed doubles trophies. She had won the the mixed doubles titles at the 2009 Australian Open and the 2012 French Open with Mahesh Bhupathi and the 2014 US Open with Brazillian Bruno Soares. The Rod Laver Arena has been a happy hunting ground for the Hyderabad. She has a women's doubles and mixed doubles title each and has finished runner up four times at the Australian Open. "It started in 2005 when I played Serena Williams in the third round as an 18-year-old and that was scarily enough 18 years ago. I have had the privilege to come back here again and again, win some tournaments here and play some great finals amongst you all. "Rod Laver Arena has really been special in my life and I couldn't think of a better arena to finish my career at in a Grand Slam," Sania said. The presence of her son Izhaan , alongside family and friends made the occasion sweeter.

"I never thought I'd be able to play in front of my child in a Grand Slam final, so it's truly special for me, to have my four-year-old here and my parents here, and Rohan's wife, my trainers, my family in Australia who made me feel like home away from home. "Cara Black who is my best friend and one of my first partners, it's been truly special I wouldn't be able to achieve anything without you all," Sania said. (PTI)

ICC announces all-female panel of match officials for Women's T20 World Cup

DUBAI, JAN 27 --/ In a significant first for world cricket, the ICC on Friday named an all-female panel of match officials, including the Indian trio of GS Lakshmi, Vrinda Rathi and Janani Narayanan, for the upcoming Women's T20 World Cup in South Africa.

Three match referees and 10 umpires make up the 13-woman team in what is a landmark moment and is in part of the ICC's strategic ambition of advancing the involvement and visibility of women in cricket. The panel includes seven first timers at the and the announcement comes after a constant rise in the number of women officiating in global tournaments. India's Rathi and Janani, had earlier this month became the first female umpires to officiate in the prestigious Ranji Trophy, will be umpiring at a T20 World Cup for the first time. ICC General Manager - Cricket, Wasim Khan, said: "Women's cricket has been growing rapidly in recent years and as part of that we have been building the pathways to ensure more women have the opportunity to officiate at the highest level. "This announcement is a reflection of our intent in this space and just the start of our journey where men and women enjoy the same opportunities across our sport. We are committed to continuing to support our female match officials and provide opportunities to showcase their talents on the global stage." Eight women officials each were involved in the Women's T20 World Cup 2020 and the Women's Cricket World Cup last year, while nine women have been involved in the ongoing ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup in South Africa. Claire Polosak is the most experienced of the umpires, selected as she continues her record of officiating in every Women's World Cup, T20 and ODI, since 2016. The 34-year-old Australian will be officiating in her fourth T20 World Cup, while Sue Redfern of England, Jacqueline Williams of the West Indies, and Kim Cotton of New Zealand will be involved in their third Women's T20 World Cups . (PTI)

Match Officials at the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2023
Match Referees: GS Lakshmi (India), Shandre Fritz (South Africa), Michell Pereira (Sri Lanka) Umpires: Sue Redfern (England), Eloise Sheridan (Australia), Claire Polosak (Australia), Jacqueline Williams (West Indies), Kim Cotton (New Zealand), Lauren Agenbag (South Africa), Anna Harris (England), Vrinda Rathi (India), N Janani (India), Nimali Perera (Sri Lanka).

GAME NOTES

Lakshya Sen loses in quarterfinals of Indonesia Masters

JAKARTA, JAN 27 --/ Lakshya Sen's impressive run in the Indonesia Masters Super 500 badminton tournament ended with a quarterfinal loss to Asian Games champion Jonatan Christie here on Friday. World number 12 Sen squandered an opening game advantage to go down 21-15 10-21 13-21 to home favourite Christie, ranked 3rd, in a 62-minute men's singles match. Coming into the match with a 1-0 head-to-head record, Commonwealth Games champion Sen showed his prowess as he opened up a 8-5 lead and maintained it at the break. Christie knocked off the three-point deficit after resumption and made it 15-15 before the Indian reeled off six straight points to pocket the opening game. After the change of sides, Sen lost his grip on the match as Christie looked like a different player, zooming to 11-2 in a jiffy before levelling the match Christie made a good start in the decider, galloping to a 5-1 lead. Sen produced four points on the trot but he was left with too much to do. (PTI)

After World Cup debacle, Reid says his contract will be reviewed

ROURKELA, JAN 27 --/ India head coach Graham Reid's contract, which runs till the 2024 Paris Olympics, is likely to be reviewed after the hosts' early exit from the ongoing Hockey World Cup. The Indian team suffered a huge backlash after its loss to New Zealand in penalty shootout in the crossover match in Bhubaneswar on January 22 with some hockey legends of the country blaming Reid for the debacle. At the post-match press conference after India demolished Asian Games champions Japan 8-0 in an inconsequential classification match here on Thursday, Reid, who was appointed head coach in 2019, himself said his contract will be up for review. "Look, I have signed the contract through Paris (Olympics). But, you know, we will be reviewing, I assume, at the end of this (World Cup). But the next game is what I am focussing on," Reid said when asked if he will commit to the team through to the Asian Games this year. (PTI)

SANIA MIRZA'S CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- 2001 - Played the first event of her career on ITF Circuit in India
- 2002 - Won three singles titles and doubles title on ITF Circuit and won Asian Games bronze medal in mixed doubles with Leander Paes
- 2003 - played first WTA main draw at Hyderabad and won three singles and one doubles title on ITF Circuit
- 2004 - Won first WTA doubles title a Hyderabad and won six singles titles and two doubles titles on ITF Circuit
- 2005 - Became the first Indian woman to win a singles WTA Tour title and first Indian woman to reach a Grand Slam third round (at Australian Open). She also became the first Indian woman to crack the Top 50 and was named WTA Newcomer of the Year
- 2006 - Won two WTA doubles titles
- 2007 - Won four WTA doubles titles and Ranked 27th (career-high) in the WTA Singles Rankings
- 2008 - Made her debut at Olympic Games (Beijing); in the first round singles outing, had to retire due to a wrist injury and first Indian woman in tennis to surpass \$1 million in career prize money
- 2009 - Won first Grand Slam title in mixed doubles at Australian Open with Mahesh Bhupathi along with one WTA doubles title and one singles title on ITF Circuit
- 2010 - Won one WTA doubles title and won one singles title on ITF Circuit
- 2011 - Won three WTA doubles titles and Made doubles Top 10 debut
- 2012 - Won two WTA doubles titles and played in London Olympics; reached the quarter-finals with Leander Paes
- 2013 - Played first Top 10 doubles season (finished No 9) and Won five WTA doubles titles
- 2014 - Won three WTA doubles titles, including WTA Finals with Cara Black
- 2015 - First No. 1 season in doubles and became the first Indian woman to rise to No. 1 in either singles or doubles as well as the first Indian woman to lift a Grand Slam doubles title, at Wimbledon
- 2016 - Kicked off the season by recording 19 consecutive wins with Martina Hingis and won eight WTA doubles titles as well as reached Rio Olympics semi-finals with Rohan Bopanna in mixed doubles
- 2018 - Took a break from the professional tour after the 2017 season
- 2020 - Made a comeback and won the Hobart International alongside Nadiia Kichenok
- 2022 - Reached the semifinals at the WTA 1000 Qatar Open and the Italian Open as well as the French Open third round, partnering Lucie Hradecká.
- 2023: Announced her retirement with the last tournament being the WTA Dubai Tennis Championships in February. Ended her Grand Slam career with a loss in Australian Open mixed doubles final

