

## Nimbutala ice plant on 'CHILL MODE'

### Fishermen gets ice blocks once in a week

KARTIK

**MAYABUNDER, DEC 13/--/** After EOI published a news report titled 'Fishermen in trouble water', highlighting the problems faced by the fishermen community of Nimbutala, Shivapuram, Kushalnagar and adjoining villages in Middle Andaman due to non-functioning of Nimbutala Ice Plant, the Fisheries department has undertaken repair work and made the ice plant functional. Accordingly, fishermen are provided ice blocks. However, to the dismay of the fishermen, ice blocks are provided to them only once in a week. According to sources, this is because the mechanic taking care of the ice plant at Nimbutala in Rangat has been posted at the ice plant at Mayabunder. Instead of making the ice plant at Nimbutala functional all days in a week, the Fisheries department is looking for a private firm which can open an ice plant in this region so that the existing ice plant can be shut down permanently. Earlier, the Fisheries department had adopted the same method in Mayabunder. The department has been offering lucrative proposals, along with subsidies and other incentives to private individuals to open ice plants in the private sector. Falling into the lucrative returns promised by the department, a mainland based

businessman opened an ice plant at Mayabunder. But after a few months, the Fisheries department decided to open their own ice plant. This step of the department has resulted in huge business loss to the private ice plant owners as ice blocks in the department run ice plant are available at much lower price than ice blocks sold by the private ice plant. After suffering massive losses, the businessman had to shut down his business in Mayabunder. Now, the Fisheries department instead of making the ice plant at Nimbutala functional for all days in a week for providing ice blocks to fishermen is providing ice blocks to fishermen only

### FISHY AFFAIR

once in a week, which has been drawing flak for the Fisheries department. Due to non-production of ice blocks at the Ice Plant, ice shortages have been a major concern for fishermen numbering over 200. The operation of the Ice Plant has been stopped because of staff shortage and non-availability of salt which is essential for making ice blocks. Meanwhile, some fishermen said that the problems have occurred due to lack of maintenance of the Ice Plant by the Engineering staff of the Fisheries department. The department is not deputing technical staff for regular checking and maintenance of Ice Plants, located in outer islands, he added.

## Kuldeep seeks re-introduction of ANISHI scheme for the benefits of Islanders'



**PORT BLAIR, DEC 13/--/** Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma, Member of Parliament, recently raised the issue regarding the poor healthcare system in the Islands in the Parliament under rule 377. He emphasized that for major health issues, the people of the islands are referred to referral hospitals at Chennai or Kolkata. Prior to the introduction of Ayushman Bharat scheme, the local Administration of Andaman & Nicobar Islands used to have ANISHI scheme. Under this scheme, the Islanders used to get Rs. 5 Lakhs for the treatment besides money assistance for to & fro travelling expenses. But after the introduction of Ayushman Bharat, the ANISHI scheme was dropped and the islanders were referred to under Ayushman

Bharat. Under the Ayushman Bharat scheme, the patients referred are not permitted with travelling expenses, which costs heavily on the poor Islanders. In view of all the difficulties faced by the islanders, the Member of

Parliament has requested the Government to re-introduce the ANISHI scheme for the Islanders or else in the prevailing scheme of Ayushman Bharat travelling expenses of the patient needs to be included.



## AATO requests Home, Tourism ministers to allow new water sports activities in ANI

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 13/--/** In his recent visit to Delhi, Mr. M. Vinod, President, AATO has submitted a representation to Mr. Amit Shah, Union Home Minister and Mr. Kishan Reddy, Union Tourism Minister to permit new water sports activities in A&N Islands. Water Sports activities play a vital role in promoting tourism in these remote islands. These activities are also a major source of employment for the local youth of these islands. However, in the recent past, there have been multiple administrative issues with the permissions for these activities. An expression of interest for running these activities was being drafted, but the same has not been feasible.

For the last one year, permissions for all activities are granted temporarily for a period of three months. Obtaining permissions is a tedious process and takes months to complete. This has led to the closure of activities in peak tourist season. Due to this, not only the tourists are deprived but

the locals are also rendered unemployed.

For the same reason no new permissions for any kind of activity has been granted in the last one year, many unemployed youths who have purchased boats and

setup Scuba Dive Centres are under the immense pressure of bank loans, staff salaries, and other financial hardships. Tourism has been badly affected due to COVID in the last 2 years leading to financial and mental

stress of the stakeholders who are mostly youths. Now that tourism has restarted, their hopes are being shattered due to permission issues for running water sports activities.

### GIVE YOUR WALLS & CEILING A NEW LOOK ! WITH DECORATIVE PVC / WPC PANELS & LOUVERS

- \* Wooden look and feel - Contemporary Designs
- \* Value for money - Long Life
- \* Water Proof - 100% termite and boror proof



**SRG SRG Traders**

M.A. ROAD, PHOENIX BAY, PORT BLAIR, ANDAMAN ISLANDS  
PH: +91 3192244400 / +91 9434281641 | WWW.SRGTRADERS.COM

More Local  
News on  
page- 3 & 5



**YESHUVA**  
**TRAINING ACADEMY Pvt. Ltd**  
NEAR MUBARAK MALL, JUNGLEHAT, PORT BLAIR. 744 103  
Ph. No. 9476092535; 9933274252; 9476060793



Admission Starts For Following Skill Courses Offered by NDA Govt. of India  
& All India Paramedical Council

S.No	COURSE NAME	DURATION	QUALIFI
1.	AIRPORT MANAGEMENT	1YEAR	10 <sup>TH</sup> / 12 <sup>TH</sup>
2.	AIR & SEA CARGO MANAGEMENT	1YEAR	10 <sup>TH</sup> / 12 <sup>TH</sup>
3.	AIRHOSTESS TRAINING	1YEAR	10 <sup>TH</sup> / 12 <sup>TH</sup>
4.	CABIN CREW MANAGEMENT	1YEAR	10 <sup>TH</sup> / 12 <sup>TH</sup>
5.	PRE - PRIMARY EDUCATION	1YEAR	10 <sup>TH</sup> / 12 <sup>TH</sup>
6.	PRIMARY EDUCATION	1YEAR	10 <sup>TH</sup> / 12 <sup>TH</sup>
7.	X - RAY TECHNOLOGY	1YEAR	10 <sup>TH</sup> / 12 <sup>TH</sup>
8.	SANITARY INSPECTOR	1YEAR	10 <sup>TH</sup> / 12 <sup>TH</sup>
9.	MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNICIAN	2YEARS	12 <sup>TH</sup>
10.	OPERATION THEATER ASSISTANT	2YEARS	12 <sup>TH</sup>
11.	AIRFARE & TICKETING	6MONTHS	10 <sup>TH</sup>
12.	AIRPORT GROUND STAFF TRAINING	6MONTHS	10 <sup>TH</sup>

➤ **ADMISSION GOING ON JAUNARY - 2023 BATCH.**

➤ **ADMISSION FORM SUBMISSION LAST DATE 28/12/2022.**

➤ **FOR INTER ISLAND STUDENTS ONLINE CLASSES ALSO AVAILABLE**

**Golden Opportunity for Andaman Youth**  
**Want to improve your Confidence & Professional Communication Skills**  
**Join Career Readiness Training Program**

#### Unique Features

**No Fees for the students (Only 30 students will be selected)**

Yuvajaya Professional and Job Readiness Skill Certificate

10 Weeks – 50 days training 2 Hours daily Between **3:30PM – 5:30PM**

Activity based mentor led sessions on Career Readiness competencies like

- Professional English Communication
- Team work & Leadership
- Professional Etiquettes
- Networking and Relationship Building
- Critical reflection & Decision making
- Work environment skills

Enroll Now  
Send Whatsapp Message to  
9474242222  
With your Name & Qualificaton

More details visit  
www.yuvajaya.org

Batch starts from 20-Dec-2022  
Training Location  
VIP Road  
Opposite Bangla school  
Portblair

## Natural River Sand Now Available For Construction Of Your New Projects

A&N Seaways & Project Pvt. Ltd.,



Pristine Quality

Affordable Price

Accurate Quantity

18 HSKP Building, Gurudwara Line, Port Blair, Andaman, India – 744 101

Contact: +91 86910 78775, +91 96795 93111



# Himachal: Cong govt to review decisions of previous BJP govt, puts all recruitments on hold

**SHIMLA, DEC 13 /--/** A day after taking charge as chief minister of Himachal Pradesh, Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has directed officials to terminate all extensions or re-employments granted by the previous BJP government and announced to review of all the decisions taken by the former Cabinet since April 1 this year.

Sukhu took oath as chief minister of Himachal Pradesh on Sunday and up to 10 more ministers will be inducted into the Cabinet. As per the orders issued on Monday by the chief secretary, appointments of all chairman, vice-chairman, and nominated members in boards and corporations, autonomous bodies, cooperative institutions and other committees, including temple committees and urban local bodies be terminated forthwith. The order also stated the termination of all extensions or re-employment

forthwith, except in government medical colleges. It also said that all the decisions taken by the previous BJP regime led by Jai Ram Thakur from April 1, 2022, will be reviewed and notifications for the creation



and up-gradation of institutions be de-notified and administrative departments may put up such fresh proposals for consideration of the Cabinet. Further, the recruitment process underway in government departments,

boards and autonomous bodies of state government, including public universities, except those being undertaken through the state Public Service Commission and State Subordinate Services Selection Board be held in abeyance.

However, these orders would not apply to government medical colleges and institutions of health and the status quo be maintained in respect of transfer orders which are unimplemented. All offices have been directed not to issue any fresh appointment letter or notice inviting applications in respect of para pump operators, para filters, multipurpose workers, para cooks and para helpers etc. The engineer-in-chief of the Jal Shakti Department also directed all the officials of the department to restore all foundation / inauguration stones which have been

damaged due to any reason. The government has also sought details of all foundation stones laid by the previous government during the last six months since June 1, 2022, to be submitted to the chief minister's office by December 15, 2022. All pending tenders under process will be put on hold, and no work will be awarded under any circumstances till further orders and no fresh tender will be invited, the order said.

A product of student politics, senior Congress leader and four-time MLA Sukhu, 58, was a known detractor of party veteran Virbhadra Singh who had dominated Himachal Pradesh politics for over five decades until his demise last year. He won the assembly election for the first time in 2003 from Nadaun, retained the seat in 2007 but was defeated in 2012 and won again in 2017 and 2022. (PTI)



Defence minister Rajnath Singh speaking in Lok Sabha during the winter session of Parliament

## FCRA registration of Rajiv Gandhi Foundation cancelled after it received funds from Chinese embassy: Shah

**NEW DELHI, DEC 13 /--/** No one can capture an inch of Indian land till the Narendra Modi government is in power, Home Minister Amit Shah said Tuesday and claimed the actual reason behind the Congress disrupting Lok Sabha proceedings was not the clash between Indian and Chinese soldiers but a question on the cancellation of FCRA registration of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation.

Shah said if the Question Hour, which was a washout following the opposition's protest, had continued, then he would have told the House that the RGF's Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) registration was cancelled as it got Rs 1.35 crore from the Chinese embassy for research related to development of the Sino-India relationship while its registration is for social work. In a swipe at the Congress, the home minister said since the RGF might already have conducted the research, have it included the issue of the occupation of thousands of hectares of Indian land by China in 1962? "If research is



conducted on this subject then what is the outcome of it," he told reporters. Seeking to turn the tables on the Congress as the opposition party has been targeting the Modi government over its handling of the border dispute with China, the home minister claimed India lost its membership of the United Nations Security Council because of the personal relationship its leaders had with foreign leaders.

Shah asked whether the party also researched issues like Jawaharlal Nehru "sacrificing" India's seat in the United Nations Security Council, denial of visa by China to the then chief minister of Arunachal Pradesh Dorjee Khandu and issuing of staple visa to residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

He also said the RGF headed by Congress leader Sonia Gandhi received Rs 50 lakh from Zakir Naik, founder of the Islamic Research Foundation (IRF), which was banned by the government for its alleged involvement in terrorism. On the border issue, the minister made it clear that the "BJP government will not allow any incursion on land. We will not leave an inch of land. The bravery shown by soldiers is appreciable, they have saved our land". Recalling that China had raised questions about then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Arunachal Pradesh on October 13, 2009, he asked if the party carried research on the issue.

"Between 2005 and 2007, the RGF had received Rs 1.35 crore from the Chinese embassy. After following due diligence, the home ministry cancelled the FCRA registration of the RGF," he said. According to law, any NGO which intends to receive foreign funding must register itself under the FCRA. Shah also alleged that when the Indian soldiers were fighting the Chinese PLA at Galwan, someone from the Congress was throwing a dinner for an official of the Chinese embassy and asked why work on vital infrastructure projects was stalled in 2012 following a threat from China.

The FCRA registration of the RGF and Rajiv Gandhi Charitable Trust (RGCT) were cancelled in October last after an investigation carried out by an inter-ministerial committee formed by the home ministry in 2020. The trustees of the RGF are former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Congress leaders P Chidambaram, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Suman Dubey and Ashok Ganguly. The trustees of the RGCT are Rahul Gandhi, Ashok Ganguly, Banshi Mehta and Deep Joshi.

Set up in 1991, the RGF worked on a number of critical issues, including health, science and technology, women and children and disability support, till 2009. It also worked in the education sector, according to its website. The RGCT was established in 2002 to address the development needs of the underprivileged people, especially the rural poor. (PTI)

## Kerala Assembly passes Bill for removing Guv as Chancellor of varsities

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DEC 13 /--/** The Kerala Assembly proceedings on Tuesday saw high drama as it passed the bill to replace the Governor as the Chancellor of universities in the State and appoint eminent academicians in the top post, while the opposition UDF boycotted the House over non-acceptance of its suggestions regarding the bill. "The University Laws (Amendment) Bill is passed," Speaker A N Shamseer said. The Bill, which had undergone scrutiny by a Subject Committee of the House, was passed after hours long discussions during which the Congress-led UDF said it was not opposed to the removal of the Governor as Chancellor. It said that it wanted retired Supreme Court judges or former Kerala High Court chief justices to be considered for appointment at the helm of universities. The Opposition also said there need not be different chancellors for each of the universities and the selection panel should comprise the Chief Minister, Leader of Opposition (LoP) and the Kerala High Court Chief Justice. The UDF said one Chancellor for all universities was sufficient as day-to-day activities would

be handled by the respective Vice Chancellors.

However, state law minister P Rajeev said that a judge cannot be a part of the selection panel and the Speaker would be a better option. He also said that the government has not decided how many chancellors there would be, but laws of each university regarding appointment of Chancellor need to be amended. "The number of chancellors can be decided later," he said. Rajeev's suggestion regarding the selection panel was accepted by the opposition subject to the condition that retired judges are appointed as Chancellor. The minister, however, said that retired judges cannot be the sole option for being appointed at the helm of universities. In view of the stand taken by the government, the Opposition said it was boycotting the House proceedings as it feared that the state government was attempting to turn universities in Kerala into Communist or Marxist centres by appointing their favourites at the helm.

Satheesan said that just like saffronisation of universities in the state, turning them into Communist or Marxist centres was equally

unacceptable and the opposition as well as the general public fear that is the intention behind the bill to remove the Governor as Chancellor. He said the Opposition suggested appointing retired judges as Chancellor to address such apprehensions and also criticism in the future that the appointments were political in nature. "Since the modifications suggested by us have not been accepted, we are boycotting the assembly proceedings," he said and the opposition MLAs walked out of the House even as Rajeev told their action would not be seen in a good light in the future.

Earlier in the day, the UDF said the financial implication of having 14 Chancellors would turn it into a "white elephant." "Let there be only one Chancellor," the LoP said and was supported by IUML leader and MLA P K Kunhalikutty with the latter also saying "there is no doubt that the Governor has to be removed as Chancellor". "We are not at all in agreement with the recent conduct or actions of the Governor," Kunhalikutty said and added that no one can be allowed to behave as a government over the elected administration. (PTI)

## Leaders pay tribute to 2001 Parliament attack victims

**NEW DELHI, DEC 13 /--/** Vice-President and Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday led the nation in paying tributes to those who laid down their lives during the 2001 Parliament terrorist attack.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, former Congress president Sonia Gandhi and Parliamentarians across the party lined up to pay tributes to the martyrs of the 2001 Parliament

terrorist attack. After paying floral tributes, Union minister and leader of the House in Rajya Sabha Piyush Goyal along with Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi were seen interacting with Gandhi, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge and leader in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury.

Twenty-one years ago on December 13, terrorists of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) attacked

the Parliament complex and opened fire. Their attempt to storm Parliament House was foiled by personnel from Parliament Security Service, CRPF and Delhi Police.

The attack victims included five Delhi police personnel, a woman Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) trooper, two Parliament watch and ward staff and a gardener. A journalist who was injured died later. All five terrorists were shot dead. (PTI)

# Omar says will repeal PSA if NC comes to power in J&K; terms India-China face-off unfortunate

**SRINAGAR, DEC 13 /--/** Former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said the National Conference will repeal the controversial Public Safety Act (PSA) if it forms the government in the Union Territory after the Assembly elections.

Omar also termed as unfortunate the face-off between the armies of India and China in Arunachal Pradesh and said the two countries should work together to improve their relations. "They (Centre) have only kept those (old) laws here which can be used to harass people. There is no (Public) Safety Act anywhere in the country.. it is only in Jammu and Kashmir. I have said it

earlier and I repeat when the National Conference government comes, on the first day, this law will be repealed," Abdullah told party workers at Dooru in Anantnag district. The PSA was first enacted by the then J&K government headed by National Conference founder Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah in 1978 to curb timber smuggling. The law, which provides for detention of up to two years without trial, was later used against terrorists and separatists after the eruption of militancy in Jammu and Kashmir in 1990.

While the Centre did away with a large number of laws passed by the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly after the abrogation of

Article 370 and the reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019, the



Omar Abdullah

PSA was one of the few laws that were retained. Omar said the abrogation of Article 370 will be an issue in the Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, which will be held for the first time

## Potential for spread of terror through social media higher than ever: Govt

**NEW DELHI, DEC 13 /--/** The potential for spread of terror through the use of social media is higher than ever, posing a threat to sovereignty and integrity of the country, Union minister Nityanand Rai said in Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

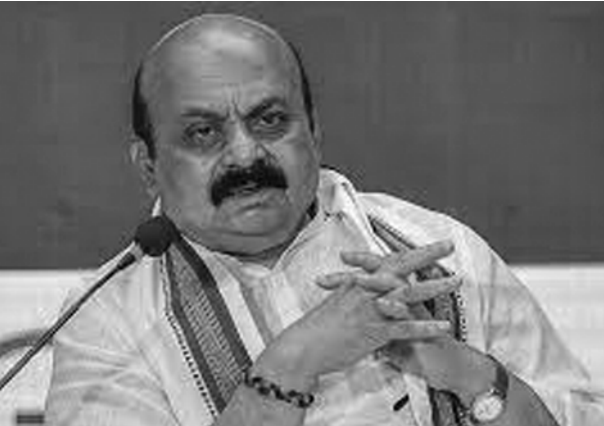
Rai also said cyberspace is virtual, borderless and offers complete anonymity. "With a borderless cyberspace coupled with the possibility of instant communication and anonymity, the potential for spread of terror through the use of social media is higher than ever, posing a threat to sovereignty and integrity of the country," he said in a written reply to a question. The minister of state for home said terrorism in India is largely sponsored from across the border and global terrorist groups and some foreign agencies inimical to India have been making efforts to radicalise people and spread terrorism through use of social media platforms, internet etc. "The law enforcement agencies keep a close watch on activities on the social media platforms and take suitable action as per the legal provisions.

Further, the government under the Section 69A of the Information Technology Act 2000, blocks unlawful and malicious online content including social media account, in the interest of sovereignty and integrity of India," he said. Rai said for effective and prompt investigation and prosecution of offences relating to cyber terrorism, National Investigation Agency (NIA) Act 2008 was amended in 2019 to include Section 66F of Information Technology Act, 2000 in its Schedule. (PTI)

## Will make state's stand on border row clear during CMs' meeting: Bommai

**MYSURU, DEC 13 /--/** Karnataka chief minister Basavaraj Bommai on Tuesday said he will make the State's stand clear on the border dispute with Maharashtra during the meeting of Chief Ministers of both states, called by Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

The meeting is likely to take place in New Delhi on



Basavaraj Bommai

Wednesday evening. "The Union home minister has called chief ministers of both states to discuss the border dispute, where we will make our stand clear. I will be sharing details about all the developments that have taken place after the State Reorganisation Act till now when the case (is) before the Supreme Court," Bommai said. Speaking to reporters here, the chief minister said, he will also elaborate on the provisions of the Constitution, State Reorganisation Act, and petition about the dispute before the Supreme Court. The border row had intensified last week, with vehicles from either side being targeted, leaders from both states weighing in, and pro-Kannada and Marathi activists detained by police amid a tense atmosphere in the border district of Belagavi.

Following this, the Karnataka and Maharashtra chief ministers spoke to each other over phone and agreed that there should be peace and law and order should be maintained on both sides. The border issue dates back to 1957 after the reorganisation of states on linguistic lines. Maharashtra laid claim to Belagavi, which was part of the erstwhile Bombay Presidency, as it has a sizeable Marathi-speaking population.

It also laid claim to 814 Marathi-speaking villages which are currently part of Karnataka. Karnataka maintains the demarcation done on linguistic lines as per the States Reorganisation Act and the 1967 Mahajan Commission Report as final. And, as an assertion that Belagavi is an integral part of the state, Karnataka has built the 'Suvarna Vidhana Soudha', modelled on the Vidhana Soudha, the seat of legislature in Bengaluru, and a legislature session is held there annually.

The winter session of legislature is scheduled to be held in Belagavi from December 19 to 30. (PTI)

extraction contracts are given to outsiders...Even the postman who delivers letters will be brought in from other places. Our youth are not deemed fit for these jobs," the former J&K CM claimed.

He said a National Conference government will ensure that the land and the resources of Jammu and Kashmir are reserved for locals only. On development, he lambasted the J-K administration alleging that it is not able to carry out even 10 per cent of the work that should have been done. "During our time, we might have been able to get only 70 per cent of the work done, but this administration has failed to get even 10 per cent done," he added. On China-India

tensions, Omar said the two countries should work together to improve their relations. He, however, said China should also take responsibility for establishing good relations with India.

"We are not able to have good relations with our neighbouring countries. Everyone knows the status of our relations with Pakistan but the relations with China are also not working out. China has not completely gone back from Ladakh and now there are reports of a face-off in Arunachal Pradesh," Omar told reporters at Dooru in Anantnag district. He said the Vajpayee policy on relations with neighbours would be ideal for India. (PTI)



# DC(SA) chairs DCC, DLRC meeting

## Reviews performance of banks under ACP, Govt. sponsored & flagship schemes

PORT BLAIR, DEC 13/--/ The District Consultative Committee and District Level Review meeting of South Andaman District for the quarter September-2022 was held on Tuesday under the Chairmanship of Mr. Suneel Anchipaka, Deputy Commissioner (South Andaman) at the conference hall of District Office to review the performance of Banks under Annual credit Plan, Government Sponsored Schemes and Flagship Schemes launched by Prime Minister.

The Deputy Commissioner advised the banks to give more focus on flagship schemes and Jan Suraksha like Pradhan Mantri

Suraksha Bima Yojna (PMSBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojna (PMJJBY), Atal Pension Yojna (APY), Stand up India and PMEGP. He was also instructed to achieve the targets allotted to banks in time. He also advised the banks to conduct financial literacy camps in coordination with PRIs and ULBs. He also advised Canara Bank and Andaman & Nicobar State Co-operative Bank to cover the unbanked villages by 15th January 2023. CD Ratio of the District is improved by 3.88% and stands at 60.87%.

Mr. C Raj, Chief Manager, SBI, welcomed the Chairman and

informed that Banks had organized 58 Digital Awareness Camps and 104 Financial Literacy Camps during the quarter in South Andaman District. Under Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojna banks enrolled 6617 and in PMJJBY 3357 beneficiaries upto the quarter in South Andaman Districts. 1372 beneficiaries enrolled under APY. South Andaman District achieved 44.27% of the Priority Sector Lending Targets as on 30.09.2022. The meeting was attended by Mr. Debajyoti Datta, AGM, RBI, Mr. P K Ummer Farooq, Lead Bank Manager, SBI, Ms Swathi, AGM, NABARD Senior officials of banks and Govt departments.

# 3-days training prog on 'First Aid, Fire Fighting & Disaster Preparedness'



PORT BLAIR, DEC 13/--/ A 3-days training programme on "First Aid, Fire Fighting & Disaster Preparedness" is being conducted at Fire Service Training Centre, Fire Service(HQ) from 13th to 15th December 2022, to sensitize Teachers, Govt

Servants, Hoteliers, Coaching Institute and General Public.

During the training, participants will be made aware of various activities of Andaman & Nicobar Fire Service i.e Fire Control Room, operational techniques of Water Tender,

types of fire at Fire Service (HQ) by involving the participants.

In the inaugural function, Mr. S.K.Jain, Inspector General of Police (Law & Order) briefed about the importance of fire safety awareness to the participants. They were appealed to share and adopt the best practices and knowledge gained through this training programme. The Course certificates will be handed over to the participants at the valediction programme on 15 December, 2022.

About 87 persons are attending the training programme. They were briefed about fire safety precaution, fire mitigation and firefighting measures.

# 05-day training on para-taxonomy, including people's biodiversity register by ZSI gets underway

PORT BLAIR, DEC 13/--/ A five-day training course on Para-taxonomy, including People's Biodiversity Register (PBR) for the frontline staff of Department of Environment & Forests has inaugurated by the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Andaman and Nicobar Islands in Zoological Survey of India, Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre, Port Blair on Tuesday. Mr. Kamal Datta, PCCF was the chief guest while Dr. S. Senthil Kumar, Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), and Mr. Sanjay Waradkar, Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Department of Environment & Forests, A&N Islands were the guests of honour. The programme was also attended by Officers from Department of Environment & Forests, Fishery Survey of India, Botanical Survey of India, Pondicherry University. About 45 frontline staff from different divisions, across the Andaman and Nicobar Islands had registered for this workshop.



Mr. Kamal Datta in his speech deliberately signified how this course will be beneficial in capacity building and imparting knowledge on Coastal and Marine Biodiversity of Island ecosystem. He showed his gratitude to ZSI/ ANRC, Port Blair is playing an important role in the knowledge-based capacity building program of the island ecosystem. Moreover, he stated that about PBR and function of Biodiversity Management Committee (BMC) in which the biological diversity including preservation of habitats, conservation of land races, folk varieties & cultivars, domesticated stocks and breeds of animals and microorganisms and chronicling of knowledge relating to biological diversity of the area is documented workshop will focus the understanding the role of the coastal ecosystems and its vital importance in areas such as bio-diversity, food security, climate change and others. He emphasized on some insights of Nagoya Protocol, how it is significant in terms of conservation of biodiversity, equitable sharing of benefits of the genetic resources. He also mentioned helping local peoples in each panchayat to avoid being exploited for their traditional knowledge and expertise. He stated that an explicit survey has been carried out by the department during lockdown to list all the medicinal plants and the local communities' access to benefit sharing from the knowledge on bio-resources. All the participants that are enrolled to participate in this workshop were greeted by him and encouraged to implement the information gathered during this five-day course on local community awareness.

In his felicitation address, Dr. S. Senthil Kumar commended the current course and its plan for helping trainees in process of developing and strengthening the skills,

instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to be educated. He specifically mentioned about the formulation of patents including wild variety of grains and cereals and how the Biological Diversity Act, 2002 and Biological Diversity Rules, 2004 promulgated by the Government of India under National Biodiversity Authority (2004) has helped the local communities through resource conservation. He emphasized the role of forest rangers as a regulator of Collection of proposed biological resources which should not affect the sustainability of the resources; entail any environmental impact; shall not pose any risk to ecosystems; adversely affect the local communities. He also highlighted the importance of PBR and Para taxonomy on the above issues and how it would be beneficial to the trainees. He extended his congratulations to everyone who participated and successfully completed the workshop.

Mr. Sanjay Waradkar in his address stated that this form of workshops updates the knowledge on relevant issues and inspire trainees for a better experience which will be put out through interactions with the notables. He explicitly mentioned about the previous workshop on "Bird Identification and Basic Ornithology" and that the trainees have all given positive feedback for the course. He offered his thanks to the Officer-in-Charge, ZSI/ ANRC for organizing these educational workshops and seminars.

Dr. C. Sivaperuman, Officer-in-Charge, ZSI, Port Blair, greeted the dignitaries, invited guests, professors and trainees. In his welcome address, the speaker mentioned how the institute has developed this course for the front-line forest officials. The main objective of this course is to inform the duty personnel on how to prepare the People Biodiversity register through standard procedure. He signified the role of Zoological survey of India, Andaman and Nicobar Regional centre, Port Blair in training of newly recruited forest officials, Ph.D. candidates, M.Sc. Students, school students and teachers. He significantly said how the workshop has helped the participants to attain a better understanding of identification, documentation, preservation and conservation. He highlighted proposed fourteen lectures which will be presented during the course work. Many topics such as flora and fauna of ANI, mangroves, aquatic insects, spiders, techniques on preservation and documentation and preparation of PBR will be dealt with by lecturers from online and offline. He also mentioned about the addition of field trips in the current forum which the participants will cover in South Andaman. The inaugural function concluded with a vote of thanks.

# Shyam N Shyam

**Festive Collection**  
**NAYRA - CUT**  
**STRAIGHT PANT SETS**  
**SHARARA & PLAZZO**  
**CROP-TOP LEHENGAS**  
*Special Plus Size Collection. Sizes Upto 3XL*

**Aberdeen Bazaar, Port Blair, Andamans**

# Festival Sale

**Free 32" Smart TV**  
**Offer Valid on Limited Stock**

**CLIMBER**

**Preeta Cars India Pvt Ltd | Renault Port Blair**  
Phoenix Bay, South Andaman -744102 | email : [gecsalespb@gmail.com](mailto:gecsalespb@gmail.com)  
Contact Us: 9564783849 | 9564783856

# TEXTILE LAXMI

# NEERAJ TEXTILE

*A Complete Family Showroom*

**"This Festival Season Explore the Colours of Fabric with us"**

# Apollo Clinic

Expertise. Closer to you.

OPEN ALL DAYS - (24X7), OPD TIME - 09:00AM - 01:00PM & 04:00PM - 08:00PM

## CARDIAC CLINIC

## ORTHO CLINIC

**APOLLO CLINIC**  
192, GARACHARMA MAIN ROAD, PORT BLAIR, SOUTH ANDAMAN -744105  
X-RAY USG CT 2D-ECHO ECG EEG TMT NCS PHYSIOTHERAPY LABORATORY  
FOR APPOINTMENTS :  
**03192-252052/03192-252522/9531807777**



More than any other time in history mankind faces a crossroads. One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness. The other, to total extinction. Let us pray we have the wisdom to choose correctly

Woody Allen

## Tawang, a high tension border

The recent clash in Tawang in the LAC's eastern sector, that includes Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, comes when tensions in the northern sector of Ladakh are yet to be fully resolved. Tawang has been a high tension border since 1962, when the Chinese invaded Arunachal Pradesh, located on India's eastern tip and shares a border with China. Incidents of stand-offs and clashes have been regularly reported from the area, given differing claims on the border since 2006. In June 2020, Indian and Chinese troops were involved in a hand-to-hand combat in the Galwan Valley of Ladakh, abutting the Chinese-held Tibetan plateau. The incident that time had led to the death of 20 Indian soldiers, while China suffered an undisclosed number of casualties. Just three months ago, in September, Indian and Chinese troops disengaged in the Gogra Hotspring area of Eastern Ladakh, the last of the acknowledged "friction points" that were discussed over 16 rounds of military commander level talks that began in May 2020, after Chinese incursions at several points in the area. For long, troops on both sides have adhered to long-standing protocols to avoid the use of any firearms along the de facto border known as the Line of Actual Control. But, on December 9, Indian and Chinese troops clashed in Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh in the early hours of December 9, beating each other up with sticks and canes in their closest encounter since the deadly Galwan incident in eastern Ladakh in June 2020. Tensions in Ladakh continue over the build-up of Chinese troops in Depsang, intrusions in Demchok and the rapid infrastructure build up by the Chinese, including two bridges over the Pangonglake that will reduce Chinese mobilisation time on the southern bank.

A similar transgression had taken place in June 2016 when around 250 PLA soldiers had transgressed into the area but no clashes were reported then. A military officer said there was no predicting when the PLA would carry out such operations. Due to snowfall in the area, this was also the time for some Indian troops to withdraw from their positions, giving the Chinese side a further tactical upper hand. Besides, a heavy cloud cover made it challenging for Indian satellites to capture images of any troop build-up. This time, the PLA had "pre-planned" the transgression for an "opportune" time. The location of the skirmish is described as heavily forested terrain, with Chinese troops occupying "top of the wall" positions with deep supply lines and infrastructure. The latest incident came days after China expressed objection to Operation Yudhabhyas, an India-US joint military exercise at Auli in the Uttarakhand hills, claiming it was a violation of 1993 and 1996 border agreements. The continuing military tensions at different points along the 3,000 km-Line of Actual Control comes as New Delhi kicked off a series of events as part of its presidency of the G-20, a grouping of the world's leading economies that includes China. Incidentally, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping met at the G-20 summit in Bali in November and exchanged courtesies but did not hold any substantive talks or discussions.

# AAP's win in Delhi Municipal Poll gives a boost to its national ambitions

## REFLEX ACTION

Dr. Gyan Pathak

Delhi Municipal Corporation poll results have further brightened the stature of rising political star – Arvind Kejriwal, which has unnerved not only the BJP, but also shadows its national prospects and may lead to some churning before the 2024 Lok Sabha polls

Unsettling of BJP right under the nose of perceived to be invincible PM Narendra Modi is significant, especially when the party had brought 7 chief ministers and put 17 union ministers in the electoral field to defend BJP in power since 2007 in Municipal Corporations in the National Capital Territory of Delhi. The saffron camp failed miserably. This humiliating defeat of BJP in the MCD is also noteworthy in the backdrop that the party had won all the seven Lok Sabha seats in 2019Lok Sabha election, but could win only 3 of the 70 Vidhan Sabha seats in 2020 elections. AAP had won 67 seats in the Vidhan Sabha and ruling the UT with Arvind Kejriwal as chief minister in great political comfort.

Modi government did everything to clip Kejriwal's wing. Even the definition of a state was changed through a legislation – that says that government in Delhi means 'Lieutenant Governor'. It necessitated the Chief Minister and his government to depend upon the decisions of LG on every issue of importance who works on behest of the Union Government. Delhi CM's administrative power has been crippled by legislation. Not only that the Union Government has unleashed central investigating agencies like Enforcement Directorate, Central Bureau of Investigation, Income Tax Department etc to hound AAP leaders, several of who are now in jail. One can know about truthfulness of allegations only after court judgements, but politically all these have adverse effect on political activities of AAP and their leaders. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had recently alleged that the Union Government had filed 167 cases in the last seven years against AAP leaders, and about 800 probe agency officers were deployed to find out wrongdoings of their leaders. BJP keeps on accusing us of corruption, said Kejriwal, filed

cases but not one of them has been proved in court. Even in this backdrop Kejriwal led AAP has emerged as irresistible force in the National Capital Territory right under the nose of Modi-Shah duo. It all proves that neither Narendra Modi is invincible, nor said to be BJP's Chanakya Amit Shah. It has unnerved both, and the entire BJP leadership with their rank and file, who now cannot take their win granted in the Lok Sabha Election 2024 which is only about one and half years away. They need to recalibrate their strategy, including the Hindutva communal card that has been rendered ineffective in the MCD polls.

The results show that anti-incumbency against the BJP is now a threat for the party, and Modi's charisma is on the wane. Under their 15 years of rule, the BJP could not keep Delhi clean, rather they made mountains of garbage. They were exposed as very bad performers as against the Delhi government under Kejriwal. Education, health, electricity, and water were the areas affecting the common man and APP has performed well than the BJP. By now BJP must have known that mere "jumlabaji" cannot guarantee their win, they would need to improve their performance if they want to return to power after 2024.

MCD polls have acquired national significance due to several other reasons including the aspirations of the AAP and Kejriwal to play a greater role in national politics. AAP has been enlarging its political base in several other states. They are now ruling another state Punjab. The party is most likely to succeed in penetrating even into the Narendra Modi's secured home political turf Gujarat. AAP may not gain many seats in the state but even its penetration into the

state shows that the BJP cannot defend itself everywhere. Presently, AAP is a state party, and with inroads in Punjab, Gujarat, and several other states, they are likely to become a national party well before the Lok Sabha Election 2024. It should be noted that several states are going to poll in 2023, that is a pre-general election year, and is considered as semi-final to the Lok Sabha General Election.

This good prospect of AAP, will set the new tune for 2024 general election. Arvind Kejriwal has all along been revealing his attitude against the Congress and Rahul Gandhi, and he will likely to resist any opposition alliance under the leadership of Congress, which is at present the largest opposition political party in the Lok Sabha. On this strength of the Congress, Bihar CM Nitish Kumar has been trying to forge a grand alliance of opposition with Congress in the lead for some time now. Rahul Gandhi is on his Bharat Jodo Yatra which finds overwhelming response. However, the MCD results in Delhi puts a question mark on any grand alliance under Congress leadership. For the non-BJP non-Congress political parties ruling or dominating the states will now have a second thought on opposition alliance. If Rahul Gandhi has ambition, Arvind Kejriwal has greater ambition to emerge as mail political challenger of Narendra Modi in General Election 2024. All political parties in opposition will have to rethink over the question of alliance with AAP also. Entire political landscape in the country is set to change, and the state elections in 2023 results will decide its future course. Modi is most likely to face Arvind Kejriwal as his chief political challenger in Delhi and several other states, especially in those where no state political party has political dominance.

MCD results have greatly increased the hopes of regional political parties ruling the states, because it has provided a proof that BJP and Modi-Shah duo can be thrown out of power more so with a humiliating defeat, as in Delhi. Congress has also a lesson to learn that they not only need to protect their support base in states but also to perform well to ward off their existential threat. (IPA)



A hand pulled rickshaw driver waits for passengers in front of roadside stalls selling Christmas decorative items outside New Market in Kolkata on Tuesday--Arijit Ganguly

# Bengal BJP not in a position to man all booths in 2023 Rural Polls

## FOCUS

Tirthankar Mitra

With panchayat elections inching closer, West Bengal unit of Bharatiya Janata Party received a wakeup call. For all the sound and fury spouted by the state saffron camp leaders, the organisational strength of the state BJP is nowhere in a state to give ruling Trinamool Congress a run for its money in next year's rural polls.

Given the increasing number of activists dissociating themselves from the party, uncertainty looms large whether state BJP can field 24 lakh party workers to man 80,000 polling booths in the coming rural polls. The facts are not part of a campaign launched by Trinamool, Left or Congress but have surfaced at a recent BJP meeting in the national Capital.

A clash between veterans and new entrants to the state saffron camp is stated to be the reason behind activists detaching themselves from the saffron cause. A fact which looked the national leadership and it's state counterpart in the face pointed out that the veterans now cooling their heels at home away from party programmes swore by the principles and policies of the BJP when it was far away from the seat of power. The national BJP leadership seems to have

reconciled itself to the fact that presence of activists who can ensure electoral malpractice at the grassroot level read the booths cannot be achieved in 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Putting up a brave face, state BJP chief, Sukanta Majumdar has said that a 30 member booth committee can be set up before the elections.

Majumdar has no other alternative as his silence would amount to acceptance of the thinning of his flock. With senior Trinamool leaders hinting that a signal from them would lead a mass desertion from the saffron camp, Majumdar is not in a position to admit an erosion of rank and file before rural polls.

Incidentally, the state BJP chief has left no clue as how to set up the booth committees of the numerical strength that he has promised. But some leaders taking a more realistic view of things feel the target of

organisational strength is an achievable one in 2026 Assembly elections.

Given the present state of things, the BJP leaders are apprehensive whether they can retain half the number of seats in which BJP nominees emerged victorious in 2018panchayat polls. With a slim chance of boosting the morale of party activists, an electoral downslide in West Bengal seems to be awaiting the saffron camp round the corner.

In what appears to be a kneejerk gesture, senior BJP leaders have spent the night in several constituencies listening to people's grievances and expressed their "empathy" for the local people.

The second phase of third programme is scheduled to start in January. But political watchers of this state are sceptical of this game plan which they feel is going to be looked upon as cosmetic by the voters.

Emergence of a weak kneed state party organisation has been the upshot of the brainstorming session of the saffron camp at the national Capital. Grandiose plans of replacing the Trinamool dispensation have certainly been chalked out but they are yet leave the drawing board, is on finding which is jarring to the BJP is certainly music to TMC leadership's ears.

The national leadership has asked it's state counterpart to deploy party activists to zero in on individuals and request them for support. Of course, it has to have its reflection in the ballot box.

In the backdrop of the electoral reverses, the state BJP faced after Assembly polls, apart of the mass base it had in 2019, has shifted to Trinamool Congress. And the saffron camp can no longer look away from it.

Notwithstanding 17 parliamentary constituencies in its bag till date, the saffron camp in the state has realised that it will enter the electoral fray with its back to the wall. Given the present state of low morale and weak organisation of the state BJP unit, an expeditious political turnaround is not in sight for quite some time to come. (IPA)

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								

ACROSS					DOWN																						
1	Seraglio	4	Female deer	6	Otherwise	8	Uttered wildly	9	Wan	11	Dry	12	Register	15	Bury	18	Tranquil rest	20	Male deer	21	Of punishment	22	Body of water	23	Still	24	Waterlily
1	Multitude	2	Waterway	3	Decoration	4	Expensive	5	Observed	7	Country	10	Citrus fruit	13	Tidy	14	Greek letter	15	Drive	16	Held principle	17	Acting parts	18	Catch sight of	19	Preservative

SUDOKU:3725														
			3	6	2		8						1	
						8	3			9				
8										3				
	4	2			3		9							
				2		6								
		9			5		6	2						
	9												8	
	8			5	6									
3		5		7	8	1								

Yesterday's Solution 3724														
9	3	1	5	6	7	2	4	8						
6	5	2	9	4	8	1	7	3						
8	4	7	2	3	1	5	9	6						
2	8	6	3	5	9	7	1	4						
4	1	5	7	8	2	6	3	9						
7	9	3	4	1	6	8	5	2						
3	6	8	1	9	5	4	2	7						
1	7	4	6	2	3	9	8	5						
5	2	9	8	7	4	3	6	1						

Yesterday's Cross Word Solution 1733														
S	H	A	M		S	P	R	A	T					
L	I	D		M				R	O	V	E			
A	D	O	R	E				O	M	E	N			
Y			P	R				P	E	R	T			
				T	W	I	N	E			S			
S			A	T	O	L	L							
T	E	R	N		M		E				L			
A	R	I	D		A	D	A	G	E					
R	I	F	E		D		V	A	N					
E	N	T	R	Y			B	E	G	S				

### DISCLAIMER

The views in the articles published here are absolutely the views of the author and The Echo of India does not stand liable for them.



# Abandoned vehicle owners asked to contact Traffic Police

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 13/--/** Altogether 129 unused/abandoned vehicles which were lying unattended on roadside have been dumped at BathuBasti by A & N Traffic Police. Thus, the owners of such vehicles have been informed to visit the Traffic Unit with valid documents to collect the vehicles within 07 days, else further necessary action will be initiated to dispose of the vehicles. The details of such vehicles are mentioned below:

AN01 B-0173	M/cycle	AN01 C-7569	M/cycle	AN01 D-7676	Omni
AN01 B-4635	M/cycle	AN01 C-0706	M/cycle	AN01 F-1985	Car
AN01 E-3784	M/cycle	AN01 G-4680	Scooty	AN01 C-0697	Omni
AN01 A-7526	Scooter	AN01 D-3943	M/cycle	AN01 D-9005	Santro Car
AN01 A-7895	M/cycle	AN01 H-0112	M/cycle	RJ145 C-7146	Hyundai Car
AN01 C-0728	M/cycle	AN01 C-9484	M/cycle	AN01 E-3442	Car
AN01 B-5712	M/cycle	AN01 E-6983	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 K-6876	Scooty	AN01 B-7306	M/cycle	AN01 C-4210	Car
AN01 C-4617	M/cycle	AN01 E-3013	M/cycle	AN01 G-6766	Tata Sumo
AN01 C-4645	M/cycle	AN01 C-4835	M/cycle	AN01 A-8396	Jeep
AN01 G-1826	Scooty	AN01 E-0692	M/cycle	AN01 M-9628	Battery Auto
AN01 F-2823	M/cycle	AN01 B-6892	M/cycle	AN01 D-0897	Auto
AN01 G-5345	M/cycle	AN01 H-3031	Scooty	AN01 H-5200	Car
AN01 G-1826	Scooty	AN01 E-0692	M/cycle	AN01 M-9628	Battery Auto
AN01 F-2823	M/cycle	AN01 B-6892	M/cycle	AN01 D-0897	Auto
AN01 G-5345	M/cycle	AN01 H-3031	Scooty	AN01 H-5200	Car
AN01 G-9309	Scooty	AN01 D-1393	M/cycle	AN01 H-7644	ZanEstito car
AN01 B-7138	M/cycle	AN01 E-2240	M/cycle	AN01 G-0533	M/cycle
AN01 F-4113	Scooty	AN01 E-0184	M/cycle	AN01 C-0343	Omni
AN01 H-7121	Scooty	AN01 E-9732	Scooty	AN01 B-8135	M/cycle
AN01 C-5270	Scooter	AN01 E-2795	M/cycle	AN01 J-2351	M/cycle
AN01 D-6173	M/cycle	AN01 D-3472	Omni	CHO1A J4305	Car
AN01 E-4722	M/cycle	AN01 B-6820	Scooter	AN01 D-1783	M/cycle
AN01 B-2964	M/cycle	AN01 E-9375	M/cycle	AN01 G-5866	Scooty
AN01 D-9026	M/cycle	AN01 F-7094	Scooty	AN01 C-4210	Car
UP81B S 2818	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 C-8770	M/cycle	AN01 F-7094	Scooty	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 K-0387	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 D-9681	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 G-6855	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 B-7400	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 E-5473	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 E-0213	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 C-7390	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 H-3193	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 B-4136	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 B-2949	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 C-8065	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 J-3079	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 D-7629	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 B-8367	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni
AN01 C-0544	M/cycle	AN01 H-3756	M/cycle	AN01 D-3854	Omni

# CCS seizes over 01 kg meth amphetamine from Little Andaman, one nabbed

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 13/--/** Acting on a specific intelligence input received from reliable source, Police team from Central Crime Station consisting of Inspr S. Kannan, SI M.A Rasheed, Constables K. Rajendran & Raja Rao arrested one person namely Swapan Biswas S/o Late Rashik Biswas, resident of R.K Pur, Little Andaman on 10/12/2022. 1.020 Kgs of Meth Amphetamine was recovered and seized after observing all codal formalities from accused which was clandestinely concealed behind house.

A case under relevant sections of NDPS Act-1985 has been registered at PS CCS and investigation is on. The general public especially from Little Andaman who are in possession of Meth Amphetamine received from sea shores are once again requested to surrender the contraband to local police and pass on information regarding storage of contrabands or any other illegal activity on the following telephone numbers- 100, 232586, 233307, 9474290250. The identity of the informer will be kept secret.

# Reschedule of BPCC-110 course Exam of IGNOU

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 13/--/** The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) TEE December-2022 examination of the Course BPCC-110 held at the Exam Centres on December 12, 2022 (morning

session) has been cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. The exam for this course has been rescheduled again on January 06, 2023 in the morning session. The learners who appeared for the BPCC-110

exam are advised to re-appear on the scheduled date. For more details, visit IGNOU Regional Centre, Port Blair or contact over Phone: 03192-242888, 03192-230111 or Email: reportblair@ignou.ac.in.

# MP, President IPA urge LG to conduct written exam for Pharmacist on schedule date



**PORT BLAIR, DEC 13/--/** Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma, Member of Parliament, Mr. B. P. Ray, ex-MP and Mr. Abhay Kumar, National President, Indian Pharmacist Association in a letter to the

Lt. Governor has urged to conduct the much awaited written exam for the recruitment for the post of Pharmacist Grade III, under DHS, which was scheduled to be held on 18th of December

2022. This exam has been postponed stating administrative reasons.

In their respective letters, it is stated that after the gap of 9 years, the recruitment notice was floated by the DHS in 2018, for filling up the 25 posts of Pharmacist which was later revised to 28 posts in 2019. In the same year, the eligible list of candidates were also published by the administration and candidates were waiting for the exam to be held on 18th December 2022. Many candidates had travelled from different destinations to attend this exam at Port Blair. More-over many candidates are on the verge of age bar as it could be the last chance for them as this vacancy was called after almost 9 yrs.

Keeping all the above into consideration, it was worth fully requested by the administration to declare and conduct an exam at an earliest. It was also conveyed to the administration that many vacancies are anticipated after 2019 under DHS and around 40 vacancies of Pharmacist under ANIIMS may also be filled calling for fresh recruitment notice.

# Blood donation camp by NYK Port Blair



**PORT BLAIR, DEC 13/--/** International Volunteer Day and Week is celebrated from 5th to 11 December 2022. The occasion is celebrated to promote the spirit of volunteering among people worldwide, encourage voluntary efforts and recognize volunteer contributions to the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs) at the local level. This year's theme is "Solidarity through Volunteering". To mark the week, Nehru Yuva Kendra, Port Blair has organized a blood donation camp in Maharashtra Mandal on Tuesday. On this occasion, 40 youth participated and after examining 25 of them donated blood. The programme was organized in association with Maharashtra Mandal and A & N Blood Donor Association. Mr. Aziz Ur Rahman,

SR Vice Chairman, PBMC was the chief guest on the occasion. He also made the youth aware of the benefits of blood donation and highlighted the power of collective humanity to bring about positive change through voluntarism. He inaugurated the blood donation camp by donated his blood first. While, Dr CH Hemanta Rao, Founder and Director Sarva Bhasha, Shri Gorakh Nath Patil, President, Maharashtra Mandal, Mr. Ajay Seth GTT, SSS Campbell Bay also present as guest and made the youth aware about the activities and role of volunteers. On the occasion, Mr. Ramesh Bhadhe, AGM, BSNL, Mr. Sanjay Kumar, President, A&N Blood Both Association, Mr. Pradeep Kumar divisional Engineer,

BSNL Mr. G. Ravi, ALLU Arjun Army Andaman (NGO) Mr. Sambhu Murthi Andaman Handicapping Hands, (NGO) Dr. Sunita Patil, Maharashtra Mandal, Mr. Rohit Kumar, News Aap Tak, Mr. Mustafa, Social Worker, Mrs. Sangeeta Jadav, Social Worker and Dr. Sunita Patil, President, Pradyut Youth Club, Panighat were also present and graced the program. Earlier, Mr. Gopal Chandra Biswas Nehru Yuva Kendra, Port Blair welcomed the chief guest and other guests. He has also made the youth aware of the purpose of the programme to participate in voluntary activities such as blood donation, organ donation, tree plantation, cleanliness campaign etc. The programme concluded with a vote of thanks.

# Registering in Ni-kshay 2.0 portal NGOs/Civil Societies Organizations, religious groups & individuals can provide nutritional support to TB patients

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 13/--/** The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has launched the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyaan on 9th September 2022, which was envisioned to bring together all community stakeholders (Ni-kshay Mitra/Donor) to support those on TB treatment, help to accelerate the country's progress towards TB elimination and to make this campaign a mass movement.

There is an inferiority complex associated with this disease, and the disease is viewed as a stigma, which also has to be eradicated. Everyone should be made aware that TB germs are often present in everyone's body and when the immunity of a person, due to some reason, decreases, then this disease expresses itself in that person. With treatment, one can definitely get rid of this disease. The type of additional assistance that may be provided by the Ni-kshay Mitra to on-treatment TB patients who have given

consent for support shall include Nutritional support, Additional investigations for the diagnosed TB patients, Vocational support, Additional nutritional supplements and minimum period of commitment for providing additional support to the TB patient shall be 6 months.

Ni-kshay Mitra (Donor) for this programme includes co-operative societies, corporates, elected representatives, individuals, institutions, non-governmental organizations, political parties and partners who can support by adopting the health facilities (for individual donor), blocks/urban wards/districts/States for accelerating the response against TB to complement the government efforts, as per the district-specific requirements in coordination with the district administration.

Mr. Suneel Anchipakka, Deputy Commissioner/Chairman, District Health Society (SA) has appealed

the NGOs, Civil Societies Organizations, Religious groups & individuals to come forward to provide nutritional support to the TB patients for which they may register themselves in the Ni-kshay 2.0 portal @ <https://www.nikshay.in> to join with this campaign to eliminate TB by 2025. The support provided by Nikshay Mitra to the patient under this initiative is in addition to the free diagnostics, free drugs and Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana (Nutritional Financial Assistance) provided by the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) to all the TB patients notified from both the public and the private health facility.

Accordingly, as per the initiative of District Administration towards community involvement for providing nutritional support to TB patients of the Society, 21 donors have been registered under South Andaman District and has provided nutritional kits to 178 beneficiaries of South Andaman District.

# Football tourney at Bakultala



ASHIM

**RANGAT, DEC 13/--/** The Bakultala Birsa Munda Club in collaboration with Gram Panchayat Bakultala organised a Bakra Cup Football tournament. About eight teams are participating in the tournament. The final match was played by Bakultala Boys and Duratang team in which Duratagn team was the winner. The tournament concluded with the Pradhan, GP Bakultala Mr Narayan Mondal proposed the vote of thanks to all.

# PS Aberdeen cracks burglary case within hours

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 13/--/** PS Aberdeen police cracked a burglary case within hours, which occurred in the ANIIDCO Wine shop at Junglighat, during the intervening night of 10-11/12/2022 by arresting one burglar and recovering stolen IMFL bottles.

The burglary case was reported at PS Aberdeen on 11/12/2022 at 1300 hours. As per the complaint, on 10/12/2022, Manager, ANIIDCO Wine shop, Junglighat had closed their shop at about 2120 hours and on 11/12/2022 at 0820 hours, when they came to open the shop, they found that the shutter of the shop was opened and 04 carton boxes containing 180 ml bottle of IMFL worth Rs22,080/- were stolen. Upon this, an FIR was registered and investigation entrusted to SI R. Dhiraj Kishen of the PS. A team was constituted consisting of SI R. Dhiraj Kishen (I.O), HC Sunil Singh Yadav, PCs S.N Rao, Sandeep Lakra, Asish Singh and Shiv Kumar under the supervision of Insp. Girish Kumar, SHO PS Aberdeen for the search of the accused and stolen property. The team swung into action and working professionally, nabbed the accused person, a resident of Brookshabad and recovered 119 stolen IMFL bottles within 04 hours of reporting of the crime.

The entire investigation took place under the supervision of Sh. Sunny Gupta, IPS, Sub Divisional Police Officer, South Andaman.

The general public is requested to share information pertaining to any crime or other illegal activities to Police at 112, 03192-232100, 03192-233077 & 03192-232400. The identity of the informant will be kept secret.

# AIKS conference begins at Thrissoor



**PORT BLAIR, DEC 13/--/** The 35th All India Conference of the All India Kisan Sabha began at Thrissoor, Kerala on Tuesday with hoisting of the AIKS flag by its President, Mr. Ashok Dhawle at the venue of the 35th Conference. The conference will conclude on 16th December 2022. AIKS played an important role in the joint movement of farmers against the four anti-farmer agricultural laws in the country during 2020-2021. With a membership of one crore thirty-seven lakhs kisans, All India Kisan Sabha is the largest kisan organization in the country.

A delegation from Andaman & Nicobar Islands comprising Dr Gouranga Majhi, President, Mr. SR Mridha, Secretary, Mr. Ramjiban Sarkar, Vice President and Smt Sarani Topno, Joint Secretary of Andaman & Nicobar State Committee of AIKS are attending the conference.

# CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF KERALA

(Established under the Central Universities Act, 2009)  
Tejaswini Hills, Periyar P.O., Kasaragod-671320

No. CUK/APPT/NI/AIO/2017 Dated 17th November, 2022

# EMPLOYMENT Re-NOTIFICATION (Non-Teaching)

Online applications are invited from the eligible Indian nationals for filling up the post of Internal Audit Officer on deputation basis.

The notification containing full particulars such as Number of Posts, Notification No., Category, Essential Qualifications, Experience, Pay, details of submission of Online Application etc are available at the University website: [www.cukerala.ac.in](http://www.cukerala.ac.in). The last date for receipt of Online application is 30th December, 2022

CBC-21253/12/0008/2223

Registrar





Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee trying her hands on dhol (traditional drum) as she reaches State Central Library for party workers' convention in Shillong. TMC national general secretary Avishek Banerjee is also seen

## Day after his death, Lalan's family members demonstrate outside temporary CBI office

**BIRBHUM, DEC 13 /--/** A day after the prime accused in the arson and violence in Bengal's Bogtui village was found hanging in a temporary office of the CBI, his family members on Tuesday staged demonstrations outside it, claiming that he died due to torture in custody. The



Family members of Lalan Sheikh demonstrating in front of CBI's temporary office in Birbhum

protesters, including several villagers who gathered outside the probe agency's office at Rampurhat in the district since morning, raised placards of Go Back CBI and squatted outside the temporary set up. A police officer said adequate personnel have been deployed in the area and the protests are being held in a "peaceful" manner. Lalan Sheikh, arrested earlier this month from a hideout along the Bengal-Jharkhand border, died by hanging himself with a 'gamcha' (thin cotton towel) in the washroom of the office that the agency has set up in a guest house in Rampurhat area of Birbhu, district, a CBI source had said Monday. Talking to PTI, the CBI source had said: "Sheikh was found hanging in the washroom of the guest house, where we have set up our temporary camp, around 4.30 pm. The two investigating officers (IOs) of the case were in the court at that time. One CRPF constable was outside the washroom, but the accused, despite his presence, managed to die by suicide." His family members, however, claimed that Sheikh was "severely beaten up" in CBI custody, and sought a probe into the matter. Another police officer of Birbhum district, when contacted, said a probe will soon be initiated. At least 10 people were killed in the arson and violence that followed the murder of local TMC leader Bhadu Sheikh on March 21. The CBI is probing the case on the orders of the Calcutta High Court. (PTI)

## BJP-led Centre neglected Meghalaya, N-E: Mamata

**SHILLONG, DEC 13 /--/** Chief minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday alleged that the BJP government at the Centre has neglected Meghalaya and other northeastern states. Mamata, addressing a 'TMC workers' convention here, said her party wants to assist the people of Meghalaya to ensure that the state is ruled by sons of the soil. "The Central government has totally neglected Meghalaya as well as other North-Eastern states. We will ensure that we bring change and the hill state prospers... Let us walk together on path of progress; why divide people based on caste and religion," she said. Mamata also promised a financial inclusion scheme under which a direct transfer of Rs 1,000 per month will be made to woman in every household of Meghalaya. "Women in Meghalaya have suffered enough. While the state government neglects them, we aim to empower them," she said. Assembly polls are due in Meghalaya early next year. Earlier in the day, the Trinamool Congress supremo also distributed Rs 5 lakh each to next of kin of those killed in clashes along the Assam-Meghalaya border last month. "Today, I met the families of the victims of the tragic Mukroh firing. It was my duty to stand by them in their time of grief. As a small act of assistance, I handed over ex gratia cheques of Rs 5 lakh to their kin," she said. Violence had broken out at Mukroh village near the disputed border between the two states in West Karbi Anglong district in November, after a truck allegedly laden with illegally felled timber was intercepted by forest guards from Assam. Six people - five tribal villagers from Meghalaya and a forest guard from Assam - were killed in the clashes. The TMC is now Meghalaya's main Opposition party in its 60-member assembly by virtue of the defection of 12 of the 17 Congress MLAs, including former chief minister Mukul Sangma in November last year. However, one of the 12 resigned from the assembly and also from the party last month, reducing the TMC's strength in the House to 11. Besides Tripura and Assam,

Meghalaya is one of the northeastern states where the TMC is trying to make inroads. The party had also contested the Assembly election in Manipur in 2012. While Meghalaya is being governed by a coalition of NPP, BJP and others, the saffron party-headed groupings are ruling Assam and Tripura. Accompanied by TMC national general secretary and her nephew Abhishek Banerjee, she reached the state capital on Monday. Abhishek Banerjee had visited Meghalaya twice this year. During his last visit, he had inaugurated a TMC party office in the Garo Hills region and met church leaders besides addressing a public meeting in western Meghalaya. Interestingly, the ruling NPP president and chief minister Conrad Sangma's father is the late PA Sangma, the former Lok Sabha Speaker who had merged his faction of the NCP with the TMC in 2004. Mamata's visit to Meghalaya came days after the state government filed a criminal defamation suit against TMC national spokesperson Saket Gokhale for making claims that a state-owned tourism firm misappropriated funds worth over Rs 630 crore. The TMC is also trying to make its presence felt in Tripura and Assam. Several politicians have joined the TMC in Tripura in recent times. The party had bagged over 20 per cent votes in the state-wide civic polls there but performed poorly in the assembly by-elections.

Out of the seven Congress MLAs, six had switched over to the TMC in 2016 but all of them joined the BJP the next year. The ruling CPM was defeated by a BJP-led coalition in 2018. Now, the Congress has been trying to gain ground in Tripura where the assembly election will also be held next year. In Assam, the TMC inducted former Congress heavyweights Sushmita Dev and Ripun Bora into the party with the former being made a Rajya Sabha member from West Bengal. Mamata, who frequently visited the state to offer prayers at the Kamakhya Temple, has been vocal on several occasions on issues related to the Bengali-speaking population in the Barak Valley. (PTI)

## Army bravely thwarted Chinese attempt to change status quo in Yangtse, no serious injuries: Rajnath

- Oppn questions Govt's handling of border issue with China
- Beijing says situation at border 'generally stable'

**NEW DELHI, DEC 13 /--/** Chinese troops tried to "unilaterally" change the status quo along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Yangtse area of Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang sector last week but the Indian Army compelled them to retreat by its "firm and resolute" response, defence minister Rajnath Singh said in Parliament on Tuesday.

In similar statements in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, Singh said there were "no fatalities" or serious injuries to the Indian soldiers and that the clash led to injuries to a few personnel on both sides. With the Opposition questioning the government's handling of the border issue with China, Home Minister Amit Shah told reporters that no one can capture an inch of India's land till the Narendra Modi government is in power. In his statement, Singh said: "On December 9, PLA troops tried to transgress the LAC in the Yangtse area of Tawang Sector and unilaterally change the status quo. The Chinese attempt was contested by our troops in a firm and resolute manner." "The ensuing face-off led to a physical scuffle in which the Indian Army bravely prevented the PLA from transgressing into our territory and compelled them to return to their posts. The scuffle led to injuries to a few personnel on both sides," he said. Singh's comments came a day after the Indian Army issued a statement on the incident. "I wish to share with this House that there are no fatalities or serious casualties on our side," the defence minister added.

Singh said as a follow-up of the incident, the local commander of the Indian Army in the area held a flag meeting with his counterpart on December 11 to discuss the issue in accordance with established mechanisms. "The Chinese side was asked to refrain from such actions and maintain peace and tranquility along the border. The issue has also been taken up with the Chinese side through diplomatic channels," the Union minister said. Singh assured the Parliament that Indian forces are committed to protecting the country's territorial integrity and will continue to thwart any attempt made on it. "I am confident that this entire House will stand united in supporting our soldiers in their brave effort," he said. Ahead of his statement in Parliament, the defence minister held a meeting with Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan, Army Chief Manoj Pande and some other senior officials. Sources said the Chinese troops were armed with spiked clubs and bamboo sticks and that the soldiers from both sides sustained

injuries in the hand-to-hand combat. In a related development, the top brass of the Army and the IAF separately reviewed their overall operational preparedness along the nearly 3,500 km LAC in view of the incident, which is the first such flare-up in more than a year. In Beijing, Chinese foreign

briefing on the Sino-India border situation, senior Colonel Long Shaohua, spokesman of the Western Theatre Command of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA), claimed that the December 9 clash took place when its troops on regular patrol on the Chinese side of the LAC

were blocked by Indian soldiers. Meanwhile, Congress said the defence minister's statement on the clash in Tawang was "incomplete" and accused the government of hiding the truth from the nation. Congress spokesperson and deputy leader of the party in Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi and party leader Pawan Khara also accused the government of diplomatic failure with China, claiming that India has lost its pre-eminent position in Southeast Asia.



ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin, without specifically commenting on the December 9 incident, said the situation along the border was "generally stable" and two sides have maintained smooth communication on border-related issues. However, hours after the Chinese foreign ministry

## No one can capture 1 inch of land till Modi govt in power: Shah

**NEW DELHI, DEC 13 /--/** No one can capture one inch of land till the Narendra Modi government is in power, Union home minister Amit Shah said on Tuesday as the Opposition demanded a discussion on clashes between Indian and Chinese forces along the LAC in Arunachal Pradesh.

Addressing reporters outside Parliament House, Shah also said the Congress had raised the border issue in Parliament to avoid questions on the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation's FCRA [Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act] cancellation. The Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGF), he alleged, had got Rs 1.35 crore from the Chinese Embassy. Its registration was cancelled as this was not according to FCRA rules, he said. "India's permanent seat in the UN Security Council was sacrificed because of Nehru's love for China," Shah said. He applauded Indian soldiers for their valour. "I want to say it clearly... till the time the BJP government led by Prime Minister Modi is in power, no one can capture an inch of our land," Shah said. (PTI)



Prime Minister Narendra Modi pays homage to martyrs who lost their lives in the 2001 Parliament attack on its 21st anniversary, at Parliament House complex in New Delhi

## Theme-based literary festival in the hills of north Bengal

DEBANJAN MUKHERJEE

**KOLKATA, DEC 13 /--/** A three-day Bengali literary festival recently concluded in north Bengal's popular hamlet Rishyap. Christened 'Pahar Porbo—Paharer Kole Pahari Golpo (Hill Episode-stories of hills on the lap of hills)', the literary festival was held On December 2 at the compound of a home stay at Rishyap.

Pahar Porbo was organised by publishing house The Café Table in association with Thy Soulmate, a hospitality group which has accommodation in several tourist destinations in north Bengal as well as Sikkim and Taahaan-Tales of Bengal. Tridib Chatterjee, the general secretary of Kolkata International Book Fair's organiser the Booksellers and Publishers Guild and the

owner of eminent publishing house Patra Bharati, was invited to the festival as the chief guest. Unlike other literary festivals, Pahar Porbo was a theme-based event where short stories on hills were read out in the presence of the writers, who also joined the event from different parts of the country. Stories focusing on hills, people of hilly areas, their lifestyle and culture were invited on the social media a few months back. The Café Table received 85 entries from which 15 best stories were selected for the event.

According to Avishek Aich, one of the co-founders of The Café Table, all the stories were distributed among respected people from different sectors, who have a love and passion for Bengali literature. Aich also said the best 15 stories will be published in the form of a book in the upcoming Kolkata

International Book Fair. Chatterjee, the event's chief guest also unveiled the cover of the upcoming book at the event. On December 3, a workshop was organised where Chatterjee shared his years of experience as a publisher and spoke at large on several points that budding writers should focus on to improve their quality of writing. Chatterjee appreciated the concept of Pahar Porbo and called it a 'unique idea. He also said that the event organisers should think of coming up with Pahar Porbo every year so that Bengali readers get the scope of reading more writings that focus on people, culture and traditions of hills. Aich said as a publisher they always wanted to bring in some fresh ideas in the world of Bengali literature and expressed hope that Pahar Porbo will encourage others to think about

literary festivals in a different way. The writers, who apart from Kolkata and different districts of Bengal, also joined Pahar Porbo from Delhi and Mumbai were delighted to be a part of the event. Pahar Porbo also had popular face of Bengali cinema and daily soaps, Mainak Banerjee as its special guest. Banerjee said their organization Wrong Turn Motion Pictures, one of the associates of Pahar Porbo, will make a short film on any one of the 15 selected stories.

Singapore-based Chayan Mazumdar, the owner of Taahaan—Tales of Bengal which is working on Bengali audio story segment, also said he will look forward to next editions of the event. Mazumdar feels Pahar Porbo will be an inspiration for budding writers in days to come.



Tridib Chatterjee, general secretary of Booksellers and Publishers Guild (R) and Avishek Aich, co-founder of The Café Table unveiling the cover of the upcoming book —EOI Photo



## Biden to sign gay marriage bill at White House ceremony

WASHINGTON, DEC 13 /--/ President Joe Biden is inviting thousands to celebrate at the White House on Tuesday as he signs into law gay marriage legislation before a bipartisan crowd that reflects growing acceptance of same-sex unions.

Lawmakers from both parties will be there, as will first lady Jill Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris and her



husband, Doug Emhoff. The White House promised musical performances but was trying to maintain suspense about the headliners. The triumphant mood will play out against the backdrop of a right-wing backlash over gender issues, which has alarmed gay and transgender people and their advocates. Among the attendees will be the owner of Club Q, a gay nightclub in Colorado where five people were killed in a shooting last month, and two survivors of the attack. The suspect has been charged with hate crimes. Plaintiffs from lawsuits that originally helped secure the nationwide right to gay marriage are also expected to be there, according to the White House. The new law is intended to safeguard gay marriages if the U.S. Supreme Court ever reverses Obergefell v. Hodges, its 2015 decision legalizing same-sex unions nationwide. The new law also protects interracial marriages. In 1967, the Supreme Court in Loving v. Virginia struck down laws in 16 states barring interracial marriage. "Congress has restored a measure of security to millions of marriages and families," Biden said in a statement when the legislation passed last week. "They have also provided hope and dignity to millions of young people across this country who can grow up knowing that their government will recognize and respect the families they build."

The signing will mark the culmination of a monthslong bipartisan effort sparked by the Supreme Court's decision in June to overturn Roe v. Wade, the 1973 ruling that made abortion available across the country. In a concurring opinion in the case that overturned Roe, Justice Clarence Thomas suggested revisiting other decisions, including the legalization of gay marriage, generating fear that more civil rights could be imperiled by the court's conservative majority. Lawmakers crafted a compromise that was intended to assuage conservative concerns about religious liberty, such as ensuring churches could still refuse to perform gay marriages.

In addition, states will not be required to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples. But they will be required to recognize marriages conducted elsewhere in the country. A majority of Republicans in Congress still voted against the legislation. However, enough supported it to sidestep a filibuster in the Senate and ensure its passage. "Together, we showed that it's possible for Democrats and Republicans to come together to safeguard our most fundamental rights," Biden said. Tuesday's ceremony will mark another chapter in Biden's legacy on gay rights. He memorably and unexpectedly endorsed same-sex unions in a television interview in 2012, when he was vice president. Days later, President Barack Obama announced that he also supported gay marriage. (AP)

## Ukraine Prez again presses West for advanced weapons

KYIV, DEC 13 /--/ Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy pressed Western leaders on Monday to provide more advanced weapons to help his country in its war with Russia, and he



Volodymyr Zelenskyy

repeated his calls for Russian forces to withdraw from occupied areas of Ukraine, suggesting Christmas as a retreat date. During a video conference, Zelenskyy told host Germany and other leaders of the Group of Seven industrial powers: "It would be right to begin the withdrawal of Russian troops from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine this Christmas. If Russia withdraws its troops from Ukraine, then a reliable cessation of hostilities will be ensured." He added: "The answer from Moscow will show what they really want there: either a further confrontation with the world, or finally an end to aggression." The Kremlin has rejected all previous appeals to reverse its land grabs in Ukraine. It didn't immediately respond to this latest one. The two countries haven't engaged in any recent peace talks and there is no end in sight for the war, which is in its 10th month and has killed and wounded tens of thousands of people and left dozens of Ukrainian cities and towns in

ruins. Russia has illegally annexed parts of eastern and southern Ukraine, including the Crimean Peninsula in 2014, though it doesn't fully control all of them. Zelenskyy has said his goal is to reclaim all occupied territory, while Russian President Vladimir Putin insists on solidifying his forces' control over the areas. In his address to the G-7, Zelenskyy echoed his prime minister's Sunday appeal for long-range missiles, modern tanks, artillery and missile batteries and other high-tech air defense systems to counter Russian attacks that have knocked out electricity and water supplies for millions of Ukrainians. He acknowledged that, "Unfortunately,

Russia still has an advantage in artillery and missiles. Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal told French broadcaster LCI that in addition to making Ukrainians suffer, Russia wants to swamp Europe with a new wave of Ukrainian refugees by continuing to strike power stations and other infrastructure. Zelenskyy said protecting Ukraine's energy facilities from Russian missiles and Iranian drones "will be the protection of the whole of Europe, since with these strikes Russia is provoking a humanitarian and migration

catastrophe not only for Ukraine, but also for the entire EU." Poland's president, Andrzej Duda, said his nation already has seen an increased demand to shelter refugees. "The number of refugees in Poland has risen (recently) to some 3 million. That will probably also mean an increase in their numbers in Germany," Duda said following talks with German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier in Berlin.

Millions of Ukrainians fled after Russia invaded on February 24. Thousands of people have died and dozens of cities and towns across Ukraine have been reduced to rubble. On Monday, Russia shelling again mostly focused on eastern and southern regions that Putin illegally annexed. To defend against further strikes, Shmyhal reiterated Ukrainian calls for Patriot surface-to-air missiles a highly sophisticated system.

During the LCI interview, he also asked for more German and French air-defense systems, resupplies of artillery shells and modern battle tanks. Organizers in France expect more than 45 nations and 20 international institutions to take part in a Paris conference starting Tuesday to raise and coordinate aid for Ukraine's water, power, food, health and transportation needs during the tough winter months. (AP)

## New Zealand imposes lifetime ban on youth buying cigarettes

WELLINGTON, DEC 13 /--/ New Zealand on Tuesday passed into law a unique plan to phase out tobacco smoking by imposing a lifetime ban on young people buying cigarettes.

The law states that tobacco can't ever be sold to anybody born on or after Jan 1, 2009. It means the minimum age for buying cigarettes will keep going up and up. In theory, somebody trying to buy a pack of cigarettes 50 years from now would need ID to show they were at least 63 years old. But health authorities hope smoking will fade away well before then. They have a stated goal of making New Zealand smoke-free by 2025.

The new law also reduces the number of retailers allowed to sell tobacco from about 6,000 to 600 and

decreases the amount of nicotine allowed in tobacco that is smoked. "There is no good reason to allow a product to be sold that kills half the

people that use it," Associate Minister of Health Dr Ayesha Verrall told lawmakers in Parliament. "And I can tell you that we will end this in the future, as we pass this legislation." She said the health system would save billions of dollars from not needing to treat illnesses caused by smoking, such as cancer, heart attacks, strokes, and amputations. She said the bill

would create generational change and leave a legacy of better health for youth. Lawmakers voted along party lines in passing the legislation

76 to 43. The libertarian ACT party, which opposed the bill, said many small corner stores, known in New Zealand as dairies, would go out of business because they

would no longer be able to sell cigarettes. "We stand opposed to this bill because it's a bad bill and its bad policy, its that straightforward and simple," said Brooke van Velden, ACT's deputy leader. "There

they endorse a sustainable future for all. "Under the German Presidency, we, the G7, together with other international partners, have demonstrated our resolve to jointly address both major systemic challenges and immediate crises while reiterating commitments towards an equitable world.

India formally assumed the G20 Presidency on December 1. The next G20 Leaders' Summit at the level of Heads of State/ Government is scheduled to be held on September 9 and 10 in New Delhi. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India will work to further promote oneness, inspired by the theme of "One Earth, One Family, One Future" and listed terrorism, climate change and the pandemic as the greatest challenges that can be best fought together. In a joint statement issued on Monday, the leaders of the G7 countries said

the Group of Seven (G7) is an intergovernmental political forum consisting of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the

UK and the USA. Additionally, the European Union (EU) is a "non-enumerated member". It is officially organised around shared values of pluralism and representative government. In an article that appeared in several newspapers and was posted on his website, Prime Minister Modi said India's G20 priorities will be shaped in consultation with not just its G20 partners, but also its fellow travellers in the global South, whose voice often goes unheard. India's G20 agenda will be inclusive, ambitious, action-oriented and decisive, he said. The G20 or Group of 20 is an intergovernmental forum of the world's major developed and developing economies. It comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea,

Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, the US and the European Union (EU). Together, they account for over 80 per cent of the global Gross Domestic Product, 75 per cent of international trade and two-thirds of the world population.

On Monday, leaders of G7 countries highlighted on the progress of their cooperation under Germany's Presidency to jointly address global challenges at a time of severe geopolitical crisis and critical moment for the world economy. The group was joined by Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. "This year in the face of Russia's illegal, unjustifiable and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine, we stood more united than ever, together with Ukraine and in an unwavering commitment to our shared values,

the rules-based multilateral order and international cooperation," said the joint statement. Reaffirming their unwavering support for and solidarity with Ukraine in the face of the ongoing Russian war of aggression, the G-7 leaders condemned Russia's continuous inhumane and brutal attacks targeting critical infrastructure, in particular energy and water facilities, and cities across Ukraine. "We are determined to help Ukraine repair, restore and defend its critical energy and water infrastructure. We will help Ukraine in meeting its winter preparedness needs, will continue to support Ukraine's civilian resilience, and will further enhance our efforts on this during the international conference to be held in Paris on December 13," it said. (PTI)

China has economic and mining interests in the country though those familiar with past talks between the Taliban and Chinese officials say Beijing wants Taliban commitments to prevent China's Uyghur opponents from setting up operations in Afghanistan. Chinese firms, with strong government backing, have tentatively sought to pursue opportunities in exploiting Afghanistan's vast, undeveloped resource deposits, especially the Mes Aynak mine that is believed to hold the world's largest copper deposit.

In October, Taliban-appointed government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid highlighted China as a key part of Afghanistan's economic development. China has also revealed its aspirations to play a leading role in Afghanistan following the withdrawal of US forces - Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at a regional conference recently led calls for the US to unfreeze Afghan assets held abroad and end sanctions on the Taliban government. There was no information on the identities of the injured Chinese guests at the Kabul hotel or what they were doing in Afghanistan. The IS statement, carried by one of the militant Telegram channels used by the group, said two of its members targeted the hotel because it is frequented by diplomats and owned by "communist China". (AP)

China on Tuesday advised its citizens in Afghanistan to leave the country "as soon as possible", following a coordinated attack by Islamic State militants the previous day on a Chinese-owned hotel in the heart of Kabul. The Chinese advisory appeared to be a setback for Afghanistan's Taliban rulers who seek foreign investments in hopes of halting the downward spiral of the Afghan economy since their takeover of the country more than a year ago. The militant Islamic State group - a key rival of the Taliban - claimed responsibility for the attack Monday afternoon on Kabul Logan Hotel, which left three assailants dead and at least two hotel guests injured as they tried to escape by jumping out of a window. Plumes of smoke rose from the 10-story building in the central Share Naw neighbourhood, according to images posted on social media as the attack unfolded. Residents reported explosions and gunfire. Taliban forces rushed to the area and blocked all roads leading to the site. Khalid Zadrar, the Taliban-appointed spokesman for the Kabul police chief, said the attack lasted several hours, followed by a clean-up operation. On Tuesday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin called the attack "egregious in nature" and said China was "deeply shocked". Beijing demanded a "thorough investigation" and

## China urges citizens to leave Afghan after Kabul attack

ISLAMABAD, DEC 13 /--/ China on Tuesday advised its citizens in Afghanistan to leave the country "as soon as possible", following a coordinated attack by Islamic State militants the previous day on a Chinese-owned hotel in the heart of Kabul. The Chinese advisory appeared to be a setback for Afghanistan's Taliban rulers who seek foreign investments in hopes of halting the downward spiral of the Afghan economy since their takeover of the country more than a year ago. The militant Islamic State group - a key rival of the Taliban - claimed responsibility for the attack Monday afternoon on Kabul Logan Hotel, which left three assailants dead and at least two hotel guests injured as they tried to escape by jumping out of a window. Plumes of smoke rose from the 10-story building in the central Share Naw neighbourhood, according to images posted on social media as the attack unfolded. Residents reported explosions and gunfire. Taliban forces rushed to the area and blocked all roads leading to the site. Khalid Zadrar, the Taliban-appointed spokesman for the Kabul police chief, said the attack lasted several hours, followed by a clean-up operation. On Tuesday, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin called the attack "egregious in nature" and said China was "deeply shocked". Beijing demanded a "thorough investigation" and

urged the Taliban government "to take resolute and strong measures to ensure the safety of Chinese citizens, institutions and projects in Afghanistan," Wang said.

The Chinese Embassy in Kabul sent its team to the site to help with the rescue, treatment and accommodations for the victims of the attack, Wang added. "In view of the current security situation in Afghanistan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs once again advised Chinese citizens and institutions in Afghanistan to evacuate from Afghanistan as soon as possible," Wang said. The Taliban swept across the country in August 2021, seizing power as US and NATO forces were in the last weeks of their final withdrawal from Afghanistan after 20 years of war. Since their takeover, the international community has balked at extending official recognition to the former insurgents who have broken promises of pursuing a more moderate path forward, including reopening schools to girls beyond the sixth grade and safeguarding minority rights. The Taliban government has recently also made statements saying it intends to implement Islamic law, or Sharia, as it did when the Taliban previously ruled Afghanistan in the late 1990s. In the past weeks, the Taliban have carried out executions and public floggings on several occasions of those convicted

in Taliban courts of crimes such as murder and adultery. China has economic and mining interests in the country though those familiar with past talks between the Taliban and Chinese officials say Beijing wants Taliban commitments to prevent China's Uyghur opponents from setting up operations in Afghanistan. Chinese firms, with strong government backing, have tentatively sought to pursue opportunities in exploiting Afghanistan's vast, undeveloped resource deposits, especially the Mes Aynak mine that is believed to hold the world's largest copper deposit.

In October, Taliban-appointed government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid highlighted China as a key part of Afghanistan's economic development. China has also revealed its aspirations to play a leading role in Afghanistan following the withdrawal of US forces - Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi at a regional conference recently led calls for the US to unfreeze Afghan assets held abroad and end sanctions on the Taliban government. There was no information on the identities of the injured Chinese guests at the Kabul hotel or what they were doing in Afghanistan. The IS statement, carried by one of the militant Telegram channels used by the group, said two of its members targeted the hotel because it is frequented by diplomats and owned by "communist China". (AP)

## India can comfortably achieve 30X30 biodiversity target: COP15 delegate

MONTREAL, DEC 13 /--/ India has about 27 per cent of its area under conservation and can comfortably reach the target of protecting 30 per cent of land and water by 2030, according to a senior delegate negotiating for the country at the COP15 biodiversity conference here in Canada. J Justin Mohan, the Secretary of the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), noted that India is already a member of the High Ambition Coalition (HAC), a group of 113 countries that aims at bringing 30 per cent of the geographical area under conservation by 2030, also known as 30X30 target. "With our protective area network comprising reserved forests, national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, mangroves, Ramsar sites, eco-sensitive zones, and community reserves, India has already achieved about 27 per cent of the area under conservation," Mohan told PTI. "We are now focusing on more areas to be brought under conservation through biodiversity heritage sites and Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMS). India can comfortably achieve the targets of 30X30 in 2030," he explained. OECMS are areas conserved by private and public entities. Large tracts of land are maintained with trees and biodiversity parks by private and public sector companies, educational institutions and army cantonments among others that could be brought under the conservation network as OECMS. "In India, there is a lot of potential for OECMS and this

will help to achieve our targets of conserving 30 per cent of our geographical area," Mohan said. "Since these are not tagged to any biodiversity law, there are no hurdles for the establishments designating their areas as OECMS," he added. Vinod Mathur, the former chairperson of India's National Biodiversity Authority (NBA), noted that India has developed a 14-category classification system to define OECMS. "These are clustered under three broad groups - terrestrial, water bodies, and marine areas, including agricultural landscapes, biodiversity parks, and industrial areas," Mathur said. However, in order to bring these OECMS under conservation, there is a need to sensitise the local communities to conserve them in a more formal way so that their involvement is recognised as part of the national policy, he said. Mohan noted that the Biological Diversity Act, which was enacted in 2002 by India to comply with its commitments to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), has provisions to declare areas rich in biodiversity as Biodiversity Heritage Sites (BHS). These are declared by the state governments and are managed by the biodiversity management Committees. "India now has 2,77,123 biodiversity management committees established in all the local bodies. There is a lot of scope for bringing more areas outside our forest ecosystems as biodiversity heritage sites," he said. (PTI)





**TODAY MATCH**  
**Semi-final 2 : France vs Morocco**  
**Morocco Time: 12.30 AM IST**

# FRANCE face tough exam from African Giant-Killers MOROCCO in World Cup semi-final

**DOHA, DEC 13** /--/ Defending world champions and title favourites France face African history-makers Morocco on Wednesday in what is sure to be a high-octane World Cup semi-final at the Al Bayt stadium. France, who defeated England on Saturday, are looking to become the first team in 60 years to retain the trophy but they can expect fierce resistance from the surprise package of the tournament. Morocco's giant-killing run to the last four, the first time an African nation has made it this far, has electrified fans at home and delighted the Moroccan diaspora in Europe and beyond. The Atlas Lions will again be roared on by thousands of passionate supporters in the stadium on the desert outskirts of Doha and can count on local Qatari support too as the first Arab team ever to make it to the last four. "It's not over yet, our ambition is to go to the final," former Morocco international Aziz Bouderbala, part of the 1986 World Cup team that reached the last 16, told AFP. "We are living a historic moment. We are among the four best teams in the world but it's fabulous, it's delirium." The game will have added spice given

France was Morocco's colonial power and hundreds of thousands of people with Moroccan roots live and work in the country. Morocco coach Walid Regragui, who was born near Paris and spent most of his playing career in the French league, believes his team have become the neutral's favourite. "We've become the team people feel positive towards at this World Cup," said Regragui. "We're showing the world what's possible with less talent, less quality, less money, and what you can achieve with desire, hard work and belief." France will have fewer fans in the stadium but will be supported in person by President Emmanuel Macron. On paper Didier Deschamps' team, packed with talent and experience, should progress with some comfort. But if the France coach, a World Cup winner as a player in 1998, is worried about complacency undoing his team, he need only remind his players how Morocco got to this stage. In the round of 16, playing aggressive, hard-running football, Regragui's team knocked out 2010 winners Spain on penalties before eliminating highly rated Portugal, leaving Cristiano Ronaldo in tears. Morocco had earlier served notice of their intent by topping Group F, beating Belgium and Canada and drawing with 2018 runners-up

Croatia. They have only conceded one goal in the entire competition but it will require another night of heroic defending if they are to keep out a potent France attack. Kylian Mbappe, the tournament's top scorer with five goals, attacks from the left while Olivier Giroud, level with Lionel Messi on four goals, occupies the traditional centre-forward role. Antoine Griezmann has been outstanding in a deeper, creative role. France defeated Poland and England in their two knockout games and pre-tournament concerns about their injury losses -- Paul Pogba, N'Golo Kante and Karim Benzema -- have dissipated. But the French will also have to be alert themselves to Morocco's swift counter-attacks, with Chelsea winger Hakim Ziyech on the right flank and Sevilla forward Youssef En-Nesyri looking to exploit weaknesses in Deschamps' back line. Morocco's willingness to run with the ball and then harry to retrieve should make for a high-energy game. "Obviously we know they are having an exceptional World Cup and have beaten some big nations, so it is a match we will be taking seriously," said France right-back Jules Kounde. "They are no longer a surprise package, they deserve to be here. We hope to make things difficult for them and qualify." (AFP)



## GAME NOTES

### Pele's health improving, but not ready for release: doctors

**SAO PAULO, DEC 13** /--/ Brazilian football legend Pele's health continues improving, but no date has been set for his release from the hospital, where he was admitted nearly two weeks ago, doctors said Monday. Pele, 82, considered by many the greatest footballer of all time, was hospitalized in Sao Paulo on 29 November for what his medical team called a re-evaluation of his chemotherapy treatments, which he has been receiving since having surgery to remove a colon tumor in September 2021. Doctors also diagnosed him with a respiratory infection. "There is no date set for his release, (but) the patient's clinical condition continues improving, especially the respiratory infection," the hospital said in a statement. "He remains in a standard room, conscious and with stable vital signs." Pele's daughters Kely Nascimento and Flavia Arantes have sought to reassure his fans on his health, denying reports that he has been placed in end-of-life care. Nascimento, who lives in the United States, posted a pair of pictures from the hospital on Instagram Monday, including one of her hand holding her father's, with the message: "I arrived." (AFP)

### Ronaldo backs this team to win FIFA World Cup; It's not Lionel Messi's Argentina

**DOHA, DEC 13** /--/ Former Brazil star Ronaldo says he cannot get behind his country's great sporting rivals Argentina at the World Cup, and backs France as "big favourites" to retain their title. Lionel Messi likely has one final chance to lift the only major trophy missing from his collection, but Ronaldo will not be rooting for the South Americans in Tuesday's semi-final against Croatia. "I'm not going to be a hypocrite and say I'll be happy for Argentina" if they win the World Cup, said Ronaldo. "But I see football as a romantic. And I will appreciate any champion." "Since the beginning, my prediction has always been Brazil and France in the final," the two-time World Cup winner told media including AFP at a roundtable in Doha. "Brazil are no longer there. But France, match after match, are backing up their status as favourites and I still see them as the big favourites." Ronaldo, who scored both goals in the 2002 World Cup final against Germany, expects France to see off surprise semi-finalists Morocco on Wednesday. "I would really like (Morocco to win) but I don't think they will. I think France have a very solid team, whether it's in defence, attack or midfield," said the twice former Ballon d'Or winner. (AFP)



### US seizes 55 websites for illegally live-streaming World Cup

**WASHINGTON, DEC 13** /--/ Fifty-five websites have been seized for illegally live-streaming matches from the World Cup in Qatar, the US Justice Department said Monday. The websites were shut down after a FIFA representative identified sites being used to distribute copyright-infringing content without the authorization of the soccer world governing body, the department said in a statement. FIFA holds exclusive rights to the World Cup, which has reached the semi-final stage. "While many may believe that such websites do not constitute serious threats, the infringement upon rights holders of any intellectual property is a growing threat to our economic viability," said special agent James Harris of the Homeland Security Department. "The impact can be felt across multiple industries, and it can be the conduit to other forms of criminal activity," Harris said. The Justice Department did not identify the seized websites but said visitors to the sites would be redirected to another site for additional information. (AFP)

## Aurelien Tchouameni emerges as new leader of France midfield at World Cup

**DOHA, DEC 13** /--/ Aurelien Tchouameni might do most of his work in the shadows, but the France midfielder lit up the World Cup with his brilliant opening goal in Saturday's quarter-final win over England. The 22-year-old later gave away the first penalty of the game at Al Bayt Stadium which Harry Kane scored to equalise for England, yet France eventually ran out 2-1 winners and Tchouameni's role for the holders has been vital given the problems they faced coming into the tournament. The outlook for coach Didier Deschamps and his side appeared grim when they were struck by an avalanche of injuries, not least with their starting midfield duo of Paul Pogba and N'Golo Kante both being ruled out. Deschamps had to completely reconfigure his team, including abandoning his experiment with a back three, but his decision to build a three-man midfield around Tchouameni with Adrien Rabiot and Antoine Griezmann either side of the Real Madrid man has paid off. Now when his teammates push forward to join the attack, "he is there to cover us, fill in, plug gaps and win the ball back," said Rabiot, who has also impressed on France's run to the semi-finals in Qatar, where they will face Morocco on Wednesday. Yet Tchouameni has hardly

come from nowhere to start for his country at this World Cup. The recurring fitness worries of Pogba and Kante -- two stars of France's triumphant campaign four years ago -- allowed the powerful and athletic midfielder to make his debut in a qualifier against Bosnia and Herzegovina in September last year. Since then he has played in all but one of his country's matches while also seeing his club career take off. Tchouameni's outstanding performances for Monaco saw him win the Ligue 1 young player of the year prize in 2021 and then earn a move to Madrid in the last close season for a fee of 100 million euros (\$105m) including bonuses. Kylian Mbappe, who had himself turned down a move to the Spanish capital, had asked Tchouameni if he might like to sign for Paris Saint-Germain instead. But joining the European champions and now standing on the brink of a World Cup final were, it seems, all part of the plan for the midfielder with Cameroonian roots, even if things have maybe happened a little faster than he might have anticipated. "I have objectives, dreams, the desire to play for the best clubs, to win titles, to impact my sport and my position. I want to be remembered for positive things. I want to leave my mark," he told L'Equipe last year. "I don't want to end



my career as an ordinary player and be forgotten about." The son of a pharmacist, Tchouameni was born in the Normandy city of Rouen but brought up near Bordeaux, and it was there that his career began. He was handed his professional debut by Gustavo Poyet at Bordeaux in 2018, just a few weeks after watching as a supporter when France won the World Cup in Russia. Tchouameni came through the ranks in south-west France alongside Jules Kounde, also in the side in Qatar. Yet he made fewer than 40 top-team appearances before joining Monaco in January 2020 for a reported 20 million euros. There he developed an outstanding partnership with Youssouf Fofana, another member of the current France squad who knows just how important Tchouameni is to the cause. "Football is supposed to be a spectacle, so when a player's game is not about that, some think they are just there to make up the numbers. But in fact he does a monumental job in the shadows," said Fofana, who has appeared four times so far in Qatar, starting once. "He does so much running and allows the other two midfielders to get forward without worrying." Tchouameni will again have a huge role to play against Morocco as France look to secure a place in Sunday's final and retain their title. (AFP)

## Azzedine Ounahi poised for bigger things after World Cup breakout

**DOHA, DEC 13** /--/ Azzedine Ounahi has been at the heart of Morocco's run to the World Cup semi-finals, tirelessly stamping his authority on the midfield and emerging as one of the revelations of the tournament. Yassine Bounou's penalty-saving heroics stole the headlines in the last 16, but it was Ounahi who caught the eye of Spain coach Luis Enrique following his side's shootout loss to Morocco. "I was surprised by (Ounahi). My goodness, where does that boy come from?" asked Luis Enrique, in awe of the midfielder's "spectacular" display. "He plays like the Spanish players. He plays really well. I was very surprised. He hasn't stopped running, he must be exhausted." On Wednesday he will face France, where he has forged his club career. It was only 18 months ago that Ounahi was toiling away in the French third tier, his slender physique put through the rigours of lower-league football -- a vital stepping stone on his journey. Ounahi is one of four players in the Morocco squad who are a product of the Mohammed VI Academy in Sale, a state-of-the-art facility opened in 2009 and designed to develop the country's young talent. Morocco's huge

investment in its football infrastructure -- after numerous failed bids to host the World Cup -- is paying off, as the performance of the Atlas Lions in Qatar has shown. Moroccan clubs are also the dominant force in African football right now -- winners of the men's and women's Champions League titles as well as the Confederation Cup. In addition, the Atlas Lionesses became the first ever North African team to qualify for the Women's



World Cup by virtue of finishing runners-up as hosts of this year's Africa Cup of Nations. Those successes are reflected by the progress made by the 22-year-old Ounahi, who has come on leaps and bounds since first signing for Strasbourg after leaving his homeland in 2018. He is now with Ligue 1 club Angers, who have made a habit of developing and selling on players such as Nicolas Pepe, Karl Toko Ekambi and current Morocco captain Romain Saiss. They are aware it won't be long before Ounahi departs. "Is the phone ringing? It's ringing quite a lot," Angers chairman Said Chabane told France's RMC of the interest in Ounahi and countryman Sofiane Boufal, who has also started every game in Qatar. (AFP)

Join our Team

**WE'RE AVAILABLE**

**FOR printing**

**Job**

**For Newspaper (Daily/Weekly/Fortnightly/Monthly)**

**please contact**

**ECHO PRINTING PRESS**

**KOLKATA**  
81, Nilgunj Road, Kolkata-700 109, Cell: 98307 64546/98301 34580

**GUWAHATI**  
Gorchuk, Near Katabari Maszid, Guwahati- 781 035  
Cell: 94350 44633/98307 64546

**SILIGURI**  
Jaduvita, P.O.: Champasari, PS:Pradhan Nagar, Siliguri-734 003  
Cell: 98307 64546/98301 34580

**PORT BLAIR**  
Dollygunj, Port Blair- 744 103, Cell: 99332 260853