

## G B Pant Hospital runs without Security Guards for nearly five months; Authorities assure to solve the issue this month

**John Wilbert & Rabindranath Biswas**

Sheekha News Service

Port Blair, Dec 08: The absence of Security Guards at Andaman Nicobar Islands' lone referral hospital, GB (See page 6)



## Member of Parliament demands release of pension for old age, widow, specially-abled and destitute in the first week of every month

Port Blair, Dec 08: The Member of Parliament of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma has requested the Lt. Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Islands to release pension for old age, widow, specially-abled and destitute in the first week of every month.

The Member of Parliament informed the Lt. Governor that old age, widow, specially-abled and destitute people are not getting their pension on time, which has caused huge hardship to them.

He mentioned that most of the people under this category are completely dependent on the pension amount released by Administration for their monthly expenditures like food, medical expenses and room rents and delay in the release of the pension amount, brings huge problems for them.

He pointed out that if pension amounts are credited to their account, in the first week of every month, they will be in a better position to plan their expenditure and survive in society with full confidence and dignity.

## Fire Guts Rice Mill at Madhupur village of Diglipur



**Rabindranath Biswas**

Sheekha News Service

Diglipur, Dec 08: A fire broke out at Madhupur, Diglipur in which a household Rice Mill was completely gutted in the fire in the morning hours today.

As per report, the fire caught in the country rice mill owned by Mr. Bisheswar Howlader at about 07.45 AM.

An adjacent neighbour residing close to the Rice Mill first noticed a shower of sparks and smoke that flew up from the meter installed at the Rice Mill and he screamed out and immediately informed Mr. Bisheswar Howlader and others about the fire. The villagers also rushed to the mill and found that the service wire of (See page 6)

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## Bango Bhasi Mahasabha Foundation plans Dharna with Road Roko Andolon

Port Blair, Dec 08: Mr. Sampad Kumar Roy, President, Bango Bhasi Mahasabha Foundation (National NGO) Andaman & Nicobar Unit has written a letter to the Lieutenant Governor Andaman & Nicobar Island recently in connection to holding a proposed "Dharna with Road Roko Andolon" at Kadamtala against the dilapidated condition of the Bridge and roads in the region.

Mr. Roy said in his letter that the Bridge & Road

(NH-4) constructed by Basistha&Mantena Company are in rundown condition. As a result of which, the senior citizens, medical patients, all auto owners & other vehicle owners have been suffering very much in the area, Mr. Roy claimed in his letter.

The condition of the roads and bridges are so bad that it is now beyond the tolerance of residents of Kadamtala & Uttara and which has driven the people of the region to hold a "Mass

Dharna & Road Roko Andolon" on 17-12-2022, (a deadline as set by Mr. Sampad Kumar Roy) near Kadamtala Bazar, Mr. Roy further wrote in his letter.

As per the letter, they will stop all commercial & non-commercial vehicles at Kadamtala Bazar between 08.15 AM to 12.30 PM on 17-12-2022. However, they will allow/let go School vans, Ambulance, Fire service vehicles etc.

According to the (See page 6)

## Ajoy Bairagi & Vishal Jolly Meet Union Agriculture Minister & Farmers Welfare at Delhi

Port Blair, Dec 08: Mr. Ajoy Bairagi, State President, BJP - A & N Islands and National Executive Member BJP, Mr. Vishal Jolly met Union Agriculture Minister & Farmers Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar and the Minister of State Adarniya Kailash Choudhary today at New Delhi. Both the leaders placed, highlighted & discussed the several issues pertaining to Farmers & Agriculture of Islands such as Providing Minimum Support Price for COPRA, by taking up the matter with National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd and also by involving all recognized Procurement Agencies.

Issue of including Arecanut as a Crop for ensuring the same under PM Fasal Bima Yojna.

Allotment of land to all those settlers and other allottees of whose respective



lands were washed away by passage of time, due to river/stream bank erosion.

All these issues were patiently heard by the Ministers and after lengthy discussion, the Minister held discussion with the concerned authority of NAFED and instructed them to immediately form a team to convene meeting with the recognized procurement agencies and chalk out plans for providing MSP for COPRA, throughout A & N

Islands.

The Ministers also assured that the Arecanut would soon be included as a crop within the purview of PM- Fasal Bima Yojna at the earliest.

In so far as the issue of loss of land due to soil erosion is concerned, the Ministers assured that soon a committee would be formed to conduct a detailed survey for proper assessment of the loss of land.

## CPI (M) Demands Special Drive to Fill Up Vacant ST Posts

Port Blair, Dec 08: CPI (M) has demanded a Special Drive to fill up backlog vacancies of ST reserved posts in various departments under the Andaman & Nicobar Administration. In a letter sent to the Lt. Governor, A & N Islands, Mr. D. Ayyappan, Secretary, CPI (M) A & N State Organizing Committee said that nearly one thousand posts of various categories in different departments under the A & N Administration are lying vacant for quite a long time. Mr. Ayyappan stated in his letter that no effort has been made by the Administration to fill up these backlog

vacancies reserved for ST candidates while hundreds of unemployed Nicobarese youths are waiting for a job. He further stated that since the tribal reserved posts do not attract the ban on filling up of vacant posts, the Administration should have taken proper steps to fill up these vacancies. Mr. Ayyappan further said that unlike other parts of the territory, there is no chance for any self-employment or private job in the Nicobar group of islands and the educated tribal youths completely depend on government jobs. He informed the Lt. Governor that CPI (M) is of

the view that only as a Special Recruitment Drive in a centralized manner through the Recruitment & Employment Cell of the Secretariat these backlog vacancies reserved for tribal's can be filled up as the normal recruitment process will delay filling up these reserved posts. Mr. Ayyappan requested the Lt. Governor to take immediate steps to fill up the backlog vacancies reserved for ST candidates through Special Recruitment Drive considering the growing number of unemployment among the tribal candidates in these islands.

## Member of Parliament donates dead-body freezer box to Teressa Island from MPLADS fund



Port Blair, Dec 08: The Member of Parliament of Andaman and Nicobar, Shri. Kuldeep Rai Sharma has handed-over a Dead Body Freezer Box to the Tribal Council of Teressa Island, from MPLADS fund.

The Member of Parliament had learnt that in case of any death in Teressa Island the residents of the Is-

land had to face a lot of difficulties in preserving the body till arrival of the family members of the deceased from other Islands.

Considering this problem, the Member of Parliament handed-over the Dead Body Freezer Box to the people of Teressa Island, in the presence of Tribal captains.

## AAP becoming national party with Gujarat vote, says Sisodia: 'First time...'

Delhi deputy chief minister and AAP leader Manish Sisodia on Thursday said Gujarat votes will make Aam Aadmi Party a national party. "For the first time, politics based on education and health is getting recognition in the country. Congratulations to the people of India," Sisodia tweeted as counting for

Gujarat Assembly Election 2022 is going on. Though far behind from the BJP and the Congress, AAP is leading in eight seats. To become a national party, AAP needs to win two seats and 6% of the vote share.

The Aam Aadmi Party aimed to make inroads (See page 6)

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## Sri Lanka lifts Covid-19 restrictions for overseas travellers



Sri Lanka on Wednesday decided to discontinue the Covid-19 vaccination certificate for travellers entering the island nation, officials said. Travellers to Sri Lanka would be free of mandatory Covid-19 restrictions with the lifting of a circular issued in 2021, Asela Gunawardena, the Director General of Health Services said.

Accordingly, the mandatory requirement of producing the Covid-19 vaccination certificate to enter the country would be no longer needed with effect from Wednesday.

The mandatory

regulation to produce a pre-boarding or on-arrival negative Covid-19 test (PCR/Rapid Antigen Test) (RAT) by any person arriving in Sri Lanka from overseas has also been removed from Wednesday. Any foreigner who tests positive for Covid-19 after arriving in Sri Lanka will be required to isolate for a period of 7 days at a private hospital/hotel/place of residence. Sri Lanka mandated the carrying of a negative Covid-19 test and proof of vaccination when it opened its borders to foreign arrivals amidst the Covid crisis in 2021.

## Magnitude 5.5 earthquake strikes Indonesia

An earthquake of magnitude 5.5 struck Abepura in Indonesia on Thursday, United States Geological Survey

said. The quake was 37.4 km (23.24 miles) below the earth's surface, the USGS said.

# Multilingual Writers Meet at Andaman Club

Port Blair, Dec 08: With the aim to promote encourage the multilingual literary endeavors of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Sahitya Akademi's Regional Office at Kolkata in association with the Directorate of Art & Culture, A&N Administration will be organizing a two days' duration Multilingual Writers' Meet on 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> December 2022 in the premises of Andaman Club, Port Blair. The meeting will be inaugurated by Mr. Subodh Sarkar, an eminent Bengali Poet and Convener, Bengali Advisory Board, Sahitya Akademi while Mr. Hari Kalikkat, Secretary, Art & Culture, A&N Administration will chair the Meet.

Writers of a total of 8 (eight) languages will be go-

ing to participate in the Meet. Dr. K. Srinivasarao, Secretary, Sahitya Akademi; Mr. Anadiranjan Biswas, Member, General Council, Sahitya Akademi and Dr. Devendra Kumar Devesh, Regional Secretary, Sahitya Akademi Kolkata will be other dignitaries in the inaugural session which will commence from 3.00 PM on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2022. Mrs. Roshanara Dilbar (Isles' eminent Urdu Writer) will chair the first session of multilingual poetry-reading. Mrs. Jharna Halder (Bengali); Mr. Jagdish Narayan Rai (Hindi); Mr. Chandran Kokkadan (Malayalam); Mr. A. Kartikainathan (Tamil) and Dr. Rashida Iqbal (Urdu)

will read out their poems in the session.

Second session will commence from 10 AM on the next day which will be chaired by Mr. Binayak Bandyopadhyay, a well-known Bengali poet and fiction writer, where Mrs. Moumita (Bengali), Neeta Samaddar (Hindi) and Ms. Jochiobed Vincent (Nicobari) will read their short stories. The programme will conclude with the third session chaired by Mr. Prateek Raj Yadav, Director, Art & Culture, A&N Administration and poetry-readings by Mr. Pranab Kumar Chattopadhyay (Bengali), Mr. Vyasmani Tripathi (Hindi), Mr. R. Gopalan (Tamil), Ms. D. Adi Lakshmi (Telugu) and Mr. Ilyas Ahmed Khan (Urdu).

## Sri Aurobindo Society Felicitates (Secretary Education - A&N Islands) For Promoting Quality and Innovation-Driven Education; Various Educational Initiatives of Sri Aurobindo Society Gain Momentum

Port Blair, Dec 08: GGSSS Port Blair - 'Zero-Investment Innovations for Education Initiatives' (ZIIIEI), a nationwide education initiative of Sri Aurobindo Society and HDFC Bank, felicitates Ms. Veditha Reddy - Secretary Education for improving the quality of education and promoting innovation-based experiential learning in schools in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Sri Aurobindo Society believes that the education officers play an instrumental role in nation building through their leadership and give momentum to the efforts of the teachers. On



receiving the honour by Sri Aurobindo Society, Ms. Veditha Reddy said that collective efforts contribute in

improving education and holistic development of students. Talking about Sri Aurobindo (See page 4)

## What Joe Biden admin told Supreme Court on law for social media companies

The Biden administration argued to the U.S. Supreme Court on Wednesday that social media giants like Google could in some instances have responsibility for user content, adopting a stance that could potentially undermine a federal law shielding companies from liability. Lawyers for the U.S. Department of Justice made their argument in the high profile lawsuit filed by the family of Nohemi Gonzalez, a 23-year-old American citizen killed in 2015 when Islamist militants opened fire on the Paris bistro where she was

eating.

The family argued that Google was in part liable for Gonzalez' death because YouTube, which is owned by the tech giant, essentially recommended videos by the Islamic State group to some users through its algorithms. Google and YouTube are part of Alphabet Inc (GOOGL.O).

The case reached the Supreme Court after the San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals sided with Google, saying they were protected

from such claims because of Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act of 1996. Section 230 holds that social media companies cannot be treated as the publisher or speaker of any information provided by other users.

The law has been sharply criticised across the political spectrum. Democrats claim it gives social media companies a pass for spreading hate speech and misinformation.

Republicans say it allows censorship of voices on (See page 4)

# 'Too many positives!': As China rows back 'zero-Covid', virus fears spread

As many Chinese embraced new found freedoms on Thursday after the country dropped key parts of its tough zero-COVID regime, some cities warned residents to maintain vigilance against a virus that, until now, has been largely kept in check. Three years into the pandemic, many in China had been itching for Beijing to start to align its rigid virus prevention measures with the rest of the world, which has largely opened up in an effort to live with the disease.

Those frustrations boiled over into widespread protests last month, the biggest show of public discontent since President Xi Jinping came to power in 2012.

Without saying it was a response to the protests, some cities and regions began relaxing COVID controls, in moves that heralded a nationwide loosening of the rules unveiled by the National Health Commission on Wednesday.



The NHC said infected people with mild symptoms can now quarantine at home and it dropped the need for testing and health status checks on mobile apps for a variety of activities including travelling around the country. Domestic ticket sales for tourist and leisure spots have soared, according to state press, while some people took to social media to reveal they had tested positive for the virus - something that had previously carried heavy stigma in China. Others expressed caution. "I know COVID is not so 'horrifying' now, but it is still contagious and will hurt," said one post on the Weibo platform. "The fear brought to our heart

cannot be easily dissipated."

"Too many positives!" said another Weibo user.

China reported 21,439 new local COVID-19 infections on Dec. 7, down slightly from the previous day and below a peak of 40,052 cases on Nov. 27. Cases have been trending lower recently as authorities across the country dropped testing requirements. Various multi-million dollar projects to build testing laboratories across the country, from Shandong province in the east to Sichuan in the southwest, have been scrapped as China has cut down the need for testing, reported Shanghai government-backed news outlet The Paper.

## 'Deeply disturbing': UN on 1st public execution since Taliban takeover

What is believed to be the first public execution in Afghanistan since the Taliban seized power last year, drew criticism from the UN human rights office, OHCHR on Wednesday. Taliban carried out the first public execution of a man charged with murder since the militant group took over the country last year, Voice of America (VOA) reported. Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid said the public execution took place in a sports stadium in western Farah province.

Hundreds of people witnessed the execution, including the group's top officials. The Taliban spokesperson said that the executed person was tried in the Taliban courts and subsequent appellate tribunals.

OHCHR spokesperson Jeremy Laurence described it as a "deeply disturbing" development. Moreover, he added, it was performed in the presence of local residents and some senior members of the de facto authorities.

Reminding that public executions constitute a form of "cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment", he stressed that they are "arbitrary in nature and contrary to the right to life protected under the Inter-

national Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Afghanistan is a State party". According to news reports, the man put to death was accused of murder in western Farah province, after being accused of fatally stabbing another man, 5 years ago. A Taliban Spokesperson reportedly said the execution was carried out by the father of the victim.

Over a dozen senior Taliban officials were reported to have been in attendance. In recent weeks, the country's supreme court has announced a return to public lashings of men and women, for offences such as robbery and adultery.

The death penalty is incompatible with fundamental tenets of human rights, and its use cannot be reconciled with full respect for the right to life, said OHCHR's Jeremy Laurence.

"We urge the de facto authorities to establish an immediate moratorium on any further executions, and act swiftly to prohibit use of the death penalty in its entirety". The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) echoed that message on social media. "The UN strongly opposes the death penalty in all circumstances", it tweeted, urging the Taliban to establish and immediate moratorium on executions, "with a view to abolishing the death

penalty".

Meanwhile, the United States has also slammed the Taliban after reports emerged on public floggings and execution of the Afghan population by the radical Islamic group.

Speaking during the US State Department press briefing on Wednesday, spokesperson Ned Price said, "this indicates to us that the Taliban seek to - seek a return to their regressive and abusive practices of the 1990s."

"We've seen the reports that the Taliban has ordered judges to impose their interpretation of Sharia law. That includes public executions; it includes amputations; it includes floggings. We've seen the reports of a public execution today," the state department spokesperson said during a press briefing. Taking note of "despicable videos circulated online", Price said, "It was an affront to the dignity and the human rights of all Afghans then; it would be an affront to the dignity and the human rights of all Afghans now."

The Taliban took over Afghanistan in August 2021 and imposed policies severely restricting basic rights--particularly those of women and girls. The Taliban have censored broad, limiting critical reporting, and detained and beaten journalists.

## Israel's Netanyahu secures parliament majority, close to forming government

Israel's incoming Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu secured a parliamentary majority on Thursday after his Likud party said it had reached an agreement with the Jewish ultra-Orthodox Shas party. Netanyahu's right-wing alliance won a comfortable victory in a Nov. 1 election, Israel's fifth in less than four years. His partnership with far-right parties has stirred concern at home and abroad.

"We have completed another step towards the formation of a right-wing government that will act to serve all of Israel's citizens," Netanyahu said in the statement.

The agreement with

Shas gives Netanyahu control over 64 of the Knesset's 120 seats, though a final coalition deal has yet to be signed.

According to the agreement, Shas leader Aryeh Deri will head the interior and health ministries during the first half of the government's term, then take up the finance ministry in the second half. Deri will also serve as deputy prime minister throughout Netanyahu's tenure. Deri, a veteran politician, was convicted of tax fraud last year but spared jail under a plea deal. The Knesset will have to pass legislation that would enable his return to the cabinet.

## Sri Aurobindo...

(From page 3)

Society's initiatives, she also said that such initiatives are the need of the hour and also emphasized that to improve the quality of education the efforts are needed at various levels, which includes promoting experiential learning as well as increasing the learning outcome levels of the students.

The various initiatives of Sri Aurobindo Society are in alignment with the vision of National Education Policy-2020. As per these initiatives, under 'Innovative Pathshaala' the teachers are being trained to impart experiential teaching to the students through online and offline classes; the students are being provided Micro-Scholarships by connecting them to an app; and the process of establishing of Role-Model Schools in the Island has started. At a recently organized webinar, 'National Conference - Empowering through Zero', the honorable Education Minister of the country supported and

launched these initiatives of Sri Aurobindo Society.

The 'Zero Investment Innovations for Education Initiatives' Program (ZIIIE) is preparing the District Innovation Quotient of 300 districts of the country for realizing the same qualitative improvement in various districts, thereby strengthening innovation and experiential education focused efforts in each district and leveraging micro-scholarships opportunity to maximum students. Sri Aurobindo Society aims that the education officers and teachers of the districts doing exceptionally well in education get national recognition and felicitation.

The 'Zero Investment Innovation in Education' program of Sri Aurobindo Society and HDFC Bank has been successful in orienting 20 lakh teachers of the country towards innovation driven teaching and is active in 30 states of the country.

## What Joe...

(From page 3)

the right and other politically unpopular opinions, pointing to decisions by Facebook and Twitter to ban dissemination of a New York Post article about the son of then-Democratic candidate Joe Biden's adult son, Hunter, in October 2020.

The Biden administration, in its filing to the Supreme Court, did not argue that Google should be held liable in the Gonzalez case and voiced strong support for

most of Section 230's protections of social media companies. But the DOJ lawyers said that algorithms used by YouTube and other providers should be subject to a different kind of scrutiny. They called for the Supreme Court to return the case to the 9th Circuit for further review.

Attorneys for Google could not be reached for comment on Wednesday night.

## India expressed support for all diplomatic efforts to end Ukraine war: Muraleedharan

India has expressed its support for all diplomatic efforts to end the Ukraine war and also consistently called for immediate cessation of hostilities and an end to violence, minister of state for external affairs V Muraleedharan told the Rajya Sabha on Thursday. In a written reply to a question on diplomatic initiatives taken by the Indian government to press for an early resolution of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Muraleedharan said Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to the presidents of both countries on multiple occasions.

"Since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine, India has consistently called for immediate cessation of hostilities and an end to violence. India has called upon both sides to return to the path of diplomacy and dialogue, and also expressed its support for all diplomatic efforts to end the conflict," he said. The Indian government has been in touch with Russia and Ukraine at various levels and



PM Modi has "urged for immediate cessation of hostilities and return to the path of diplomacy and dialogue for the resolution of the conflict", he added.

External affairs minister S Jaishankar has been in regular touch with his counterparts from Russia and Ukraine in this regard, and also met Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in September.

Defence minister Rajnath Singh held a phone conversation with Russian defence minister Sergei Shoigu on October 26 and pointed out that "nuclear option should not

be resorted to by any side as the prospect of the usage of nuclear or radiological weapons goes against the basic tenets of humanity". Muraleedharan said India is providing humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and has sent around 100 tonnes of relief materials. India has also provided financial aid for reconstructing educational institutions at the request of the Ukrainian government. India has refrained from publicly censuring Russia for the invasion of Ukraine even as it has consistently called for respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states.

## UK university launches new Jainism programme, enrollments to start from January

The University of Birmingham on Wednesday announced the launch of a new teaching and research programme in Jainism, which will open for enrolments from January 2023. A group of Indian-origin philanthropists belonging to the Jain community, including Dr Jasvant Modi representing US donors and Nemu Chandaria representing UK donors, made a gift of USD 1.5 million towards the establishment of the "world-leading" programme.

Rolling out from September 2023, the new programme features the creation of an Assistant Professorship in Jain Studies, an Assistant Professorship in the Ethics of Non-Violence, and a Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Jain Studies.

"The generosity of our donors means that we have the opportunity to establish a world-leading centre of excellence in Jainism at the heart of one of the world's most culturally and religiously diverse cities," said Professor Charlotte Hempel, Head of the School of Philosophy, Theology and Religion at the University of Birmingham. "I

look forward to welcoming students and researchers to this tremendously exciting project, which we believe will enhance understanding of Jainism around the world over the coming years," she said.

Named after an apostle of unconditional non-violence, the Bhagavan Dharmanath Jain Studies programme will develop teaching and research in relation to contemporary issues, such as environmental protection, human rights and inter-faith dialogue.

"I am delighted that the University of Birmingham is launching a Jain Studies programme named after the Jain apostle Bhagavan Dharmanath, whose teaching represents what I consider to be three pillars of a modern democratic society," said Dr Jasvant Modi.

"The Jain doctrine of ahimsa (non-violence) teaches us to avoid harming of any life form; the doctrine of aparigraha (non-possessiveness) teaches us to keep only what we need for ourselves and give the rest to others; and the doctrine of anekantvad (many-sidedness) teaches us to re-

spect everyone's opinion. I am excited that our donation will enable academics and students at the University of Birmingham to explore subjects which are relevant to these concepts in the School of Philosophy, Theology and Religion," he said. The University of Birmingham said, being located in a religiously and culturally diverse city, the local Jain community has been part of the Birmingham Council of Faiths since its beginnings in the 1970s.

Jainism, an ancient religion originating from India, has non-violence, self-control, compassion and non-possessiveness at its core. The Jain principle of non-violence or "ahimsa" profoundly influenced India's vegetarianism, movements of passive resistance and, more recently, environmental engagement, the university notes. Its academic team will jointly cover a wide range of topics, including Jain philosophy of religion, peace and conflict resolution, forgiveness, environmental ethics, ecology, human wellbeing, women's rights, animal rights and business ethics.

## Nearly 300 shops gutted after massive fire in Pakistan's Islamabad

A massive fire broke out Wednesday at a popular Sunday Bazaar in Pakistan's capital Islamabad, burning nearly 300 shops and stalls. The blaze started near Gate No 7 of the Bazaar where second-hand clothes and carpets are sold, according to various media reports.

Officials said that 10 fire brigade vehicles fought for several hours to extinguish the fire. They were helped by two fire tenders of the Pakistan Air Force.

However, no casualties have been reported following the incident.

The extent of the fire was so massive that it rapidly engulfed shops leaving over 300 burnt, media reports said.

Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah Khan has taken notice of the incident and sought a report from the district administration and ordered the deputy commissioner to monitor the rescue operation.

All routes going toward the bazaar have been sealed by the police. Taking to Twitter, the Islamabad po-

lice informed citizens to keep the adjacent part of the Srinagar Highway free and cooperate with the rescue department. It added that the traffic has been diverted toward 9th Avenue.

The bazaar located in the G-9 area of the city has a history of fire eruptions. In October 2019, over 300 stalls were gutted in an early morning blaze.

In July 2018, At least 90 shops and stalls were burnt in the clothing and hosiery section in a fire incident. A year earlier in August 2017, a fire broke out in sections E and F of the bazaar after a solar-powered battery exploded in a hosiery stall.

The Sector H-9 weekly bazaar set up in 1980 covers 25 acres of land with a capacity for 2,760 stalls and shops. The bazaar is held thrice a week on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday, but is locally known only as Sunday Bazaar. It is frequented by both the rich and poor of the city as a venue for groceries, fruit, vegetables, second-hand clothes, carpets and several other items of daily use.

## Spain: 27 flee plane after pregnant woman simulates labor



Spanish police were searching for 14 people who ran from a plane at Barcelona's airport after it made an emergency landing Wednesday to obtain assistance for a pregnant woman who allegedly simulated that she was about to give birth, authorities said. The office for Spain's government in the Catalonia region said the incident occurred when a Pegasus Airlines flight from Casablanca, Morocco, to Istanbul with 228 passengers on board requested the emergency landing at Josep Tarradellas Barcelona-El Prat Airport.

As the woman was getting evacuated from the plane, 27 passengers exited the aircraft without authorization and "tried to flee," of-

ficials said.

Police stopped 13 of them. The other 14 managed to elude the police at the airport and remained at large. The woman who was thought to be in labor was detained on charges of public disorder after doctors at a hospital determined that, although pregnant, she was not about to give birth. Of the 13 fleeing passengers grabbed by police, five agreed to get back on the plane and continue on to Istanbul. The other eight were getting processed for non-admission to Spain and expected to be put on another Pegasus flight out of the country, officials said. The Spanish government's office did not divulge the nationalities of the passengers.

## Lay offs, if not carried as per Industrial Disputes Act are deemed illegal, says Minister Yadav

Amid reports of mass layoffs by several firms, including in the IT sector, Labour and Employment Minister Bhupender Yadav on Thursday said any retrenchment and layoffs are deemed to be illegal if not carried out as per the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act. The minister was replying in the Rajya Sabha to a question about whether the government has taken cognizance of the mass layoffs in various multinational and Indian companies in the IT, social media, Edu Tech firms and related sectors.

Matters relating to layoffs and retrenchment in in-

dustrial establishments are governed by the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 (ID Act) which also regulates various aspects of layoffs and conditions precedent to retrenchment of workmen, said Yadav in reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha. "Further, any retrenchment and lay-off are deemed to be illegal which is not carried out as per the provisions of ID Act. ID Act also provides for right of workmen laid off and retrenched for compensation and it also contains provision for re-employment of retrenched workmen," he said.

Based on their respective jurisdictions as demarcated in the ID Act, Central and State Governments take actions to address the issues of the workmen and protect their interests as per the provision of the Act. The jurisdiction in the matters with regard to multinational and Indian companies in the IT, social media, Edu Tech firms and related sectors lie with the respective state governments, the minister said. He also informed that no data is maintained at the Central level on laying off and retrenchment with reference to these sectors.

## AAP becoming...

in the BJP bastion of Gujarat though the prospect shows it will be hard for them to get double-digit seats, as predicted in the exit polls. However, the outcome will be crucial as AAP will become a national party even if it bags at least two seats in the state.

In its national ambition to take on the BJP, AAP

fielded candidates in all 182 assembly seats and carried out a highly charged campaign. With AAP's government in Delhi and Punjab, AAP is recognised as a state party and the Gujarat Assembly Election Results 2022 will make it a national party. A political party needs to be recognised in at least four

states while to be recognised as a party in the state, it needs to win at least two seats and 6 per cent of votes.

With the Gujarat Assembly Election 2022 result, AAP will become a state party in Gujarat and Gujarat adding to the list of Delhi, Punjab and Goa will make it a national party.

(From page 2)

## G B Pant Hospital...

Pant, has become a grave concern for the patients as well as for the medical staffs. According to reports, 58 private security guards were posted at GB Pant Hospital assigned with tasks of security in all the wards such as Labour ward, Children's ward, General Wards, Psych Ward, security of patients and parked vehicles, parking management, etc.

The security of the patients and the hospital have been at stake since 1st July 2022 when the security men ceased to render their service as the tender of the private security guard expired on 30th June 2022. It has now been more than five months since the hospital authority hasn't bothered to reinstate the security service in the hospital which is an essential part of the management of a big hospital.

Talking to Andaman Sheekha the general public said that in absence of security guards various incidents of theft and petty crimes in the hospital campus have increased, and it is a matter of serious concern, while the authorities with myopic attitude have failed



to provide a security guard at the Hospital, they further alleged.

The nurses and other employees tasked with taking care of the patients feel unsafe working in the hospital; sometimes men from the nearby area try to enter the hospital under the influence of liquor, and under the given situation they have to remain alert all the time, the patients disclosed.

There had been theft cases last year in the GB Pant Hospital in which mobiles, personal belongings and other valuables were stolen from its premises, said a number of people. Complaints to the higher authorities, however, have fallen on deaf ears, they further rued.

Andaman Sheekha contacted Medical Superin-

tendent of the GB Pant Hospital who said that due to some unavoidable reasons the floating of tender in respect of security service was delayed; however, last month tender process was completed and the work of providing security service in the hospital was awarded to a private company.

The process is in its final stage wherein the Account Section of the GB Pant Hospital is in negotiation with the security agency in terms of the justification of rate.

From 15th Dec 2022, a sufficient number of security guards will be deployed in GB Pant Hospital Campus and who will provide security to the patients and assets of the hospital round the clock, the MS further assured.

(From page 1)

## PLOT FOR SALE

Plot for sale at Tushnabad at Rs 4 lakh  
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## LOST

I MILLY RANI BALLAVA, W/o AUGUSTINE BALLAVA, R/o TALBAGAN, PACHIMSAGAR, DIGLIPUR, NORTH & MIDDLE ANDAMAN-744202 lost my ISLANDER CARD, somewhere in PORT BLAIR area on 01-12-2022. Finder may please contact: 9531861829.

## LOST

I AUGUSTINE BALLAVA, S/o LATE NAREN BALLAVA, R/o TALBAGAN, PACHIMSAGAR, DIGLIPUR, NORTH & MIDDLE ANDAMAN-744202 lost my ISLANDER CARD, somewhere in PORT BLAIR area on 01-12-2022. Finder may please contact: 9531861829.

## LOST

I SANDEEP DEBNATH, S/o Shri NARESH DEBNATH, R/o MADHUPUR, DIGLIPUR, NORTH & MIDDLE ANDAMAN-744202 lost my ORIGINAL ISLANDER ID CARD, somewhere in SUBHASH BAZAAR DIGLIPUR area on 09-11-2022. Finder may please contact: 9531940335.

## Fire Guts...

(From page 1)

the electric meter was melting down while the fire was in its furious form. The owner then informed the Fire Brigade immediately.

In a quick response, the Fire Tender reached the site of fire immediately and swung into action. The jawans of the Fire Brigade put their best efforts and doused the fire completely in a short spell of time, the eyewitnesses said.

Though the exact cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained, according to the owner of the rice mill, the fire caught on due to the short circuit at the electric meter of his rice mill.

Though no loss of life was reported, the kutcha structure with Bamboo side wall and GI sheet roof that housed the village rice mill was completely gutted along with the material assets.

The owner of the rice mill sustained huge losses as all the machineries attached to the mill were completely destroyed in the inferno. While, the ruining of the Rice Mill this way has put the residents in the area in an inconvenient situation, as this was the sole rice mill in the region where the paddy of the villagers was processed to rice, the residents gathered at the fire accident said.

## Bango Bhasi...

(From page 2)

letter, their demands are that the repair/levelling of the road from Azad Hind Bridge to Camp no-3 should be

done immediately while the metalling & carpeting of the NH-4 should be started with immediate effect.



**QUIT SMOKING TODAY**



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