

Landslide cause extensive damage to residential houses at Panchawati

Victims awaiting help & calamity relief



KARTIK

MAYABUNDER, DEC 7/-- After the reports of the damages caused to about six residential buildings at Panchawati under Gram Panchayat Sivapuram in Middle Andaman due to incessant rains recently, the PRI members of the region have requested the Assistant Commissioner, Rangat to take preventive measures by way of construction of retaining walls. According to reports, some residential buildings located in the nearby hilly areas at GP Shivapuram suffered intensive damages, along with the NH-4 roads in the landslides.

PanchurMinj (Name changed), a local resident who suffered intensive damage to his house told EOI that in order to protect his house from landslides, he constructed a retaining wall at his own expense. But due to the landslides, the wall collapsed completely, damaging his house. A total of approximately 6 families in this village suffered damages to their houses due to landslides and are waiting for financial help from the administration. The PRI members have requested the Assistant Commissioner, Rangat to take preventive action to stop landslides to protect the residential buildings in his region.

MP seeks induction of 20 new buses in STS fleet

PORT BLAIR, DEC 7/-- The Member of Parliament, Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma called on the Lt Governor last Monday and raised several issues. Among other issues, Mr. Sharma requested the Lt. Governor to induct at least 20 more new buses in State Transport Service so that problems being faced by Islanders of far flung Islands can be minimized. He informed the Lt. Governor that during his recent visit to North, Middle and South Andaman villages as well as Nicobar District, he has personally witnessed that the buses of State Transport Service are in deplorable state and many of the STS buses are irreparable. He pointed out that thousands of people in various far flung Islands depend on these buses to reach their offices, schools, colleges, hospital,



market etc and due to the present condition of the STS buses they are going through severe mental and physical pain. Many buses, with leakages on the roof, missing windows, broken seats are being pressed into service, which can lead to a fatal accident anytime, he added. Mr. Sharma mentioned that in far flung Islands where everyone can't afford a car or hire an auto, the STS buses are the lifeline but the STS buses are now becoming a threat to passenger's life. School Children are suffering the worst because of this situation. He added that while Islanders living in South Andaman have options of travelling in private buses, AC buses and Green (Electric) Buses, people of far flung Islands do not have that many choices.

RUNWAY RE-CARPETING ON TRACK AT AIRPORT

Airport closure affects flyers; patients with long-term health conditions face the brunt

ROOPA LALL

PORT BLAIR, DEC 7/-- While the upgradation and re-carpeting work of the runway at Veer Savarkar International Airport is on track, closure of airport for flight services for about 4-days in periodic gaps is drawing flak from the citizens. The shutdown of the airport in installments led to citizens facing a plethora of inconveniences. While many citizens are unhappy that due to non-operation of daily flight services, flyers have to adjust their travel dates as per the flight schedule, those who lost a member in the family have to perform the last rights in the absence of their loved ones. "My elder son could not attend the funeral ceremony of his deceased younger brother as there was no flight service to Port Blair on that day and we cannot keep the dead body for 3-4 days," said a sad father. For many islanders who need urgent medical treatment in the mainland, the closure of airports has become a hurdle for them. They have to take the



risk and wait until the flight services resume. "Many patients with long-term health conditions such as cancer, kidney, liver and blood conditions have to urgently move to the mainland for emergency treatment. But due to the closure of the airport, they have to proceed to the mainland in advance to avail the treatment adding additional expenses over the cost of treatment. The closure of the airport has also affected the tourism industry, which after the Covid-19 pandemic is on its revival path. Tour operators and hotel businesses have been hit very hard due to the closure of airports as tourists look for other options instead of visiting A&N Islands. Citizens are hopeful that the re-carpeting work of Port Blair airport runway will be completed on the targeted date. As per the present operational status, the VSI Airport will remain closed for operation of flight services from 13 December to 16th Dec 2022, from 27th Dec to 30th Dec 2022, from 10th Jan 2023 to 13th Jan 2023, from 24th Jan to 27th Jan 2023 and from 7th Feb to 10th Feb, 2023.

The Lord will indeed give what is good. (Ps. 85:12)

Come!

Be blessed!!!

JESUS WITH US MINISTRIES (Presents)

Unto us a child is born, Unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

"Jesus shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Jesus the throne of his father David": and "Jesus shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of Jesus kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke 1:32,33)

**Place : Garacharma Prayer Centre
(Jesus with us)
Opp. District Medical Garacharma
Port Blair, Andaman**

**God's Message by:
Bro. J. Immanuel Koilraj
(Jesus With Us Ministries)**

DATE: 10/12/2022 (SATURDAY) TIME: 09.00 AM TO 01.00 PM

• Praise and Worship
• Praying for Prayer Request
• God's Message
• Special Prayer for Sick & Needy People

**For Prayer Contact:-
Ph.: 03192251327 (Prayer Tower)
Cell: 9434281945, 9434291946**

All are Welcome

Cooperative Bank Introduces

DHAN AMRIT UTSAV

DEPOSIT SCHEME - 2023

Enjoy this festive season with Highest Rate of Interest



**600 DAYS
TENURE**

GENERAL PUBLIC

7.60%

MAHILA

7.85%

SENIOR CITIZEN

8.10%

Visit your nearest branch today and avail the limited period offer

ANDAMAN & NICOBAR STATE COOPERATIVE BANK LTD.

98, Maulana Azad Road, Port Blair - 744 101, A & N Islands

Change in 'Raj' or 'Riwaaj'? Himachal verdict today

NEW DELHI/SHIMLA, DEC 7 /--/ All eyes are on Himachal Pradesh where the assembly election results will reveal Thursday whether the state bucks the anti-incumbency trend or re-elects the ruling party something that has not happened after 1985.

Going by Himachal Pradesh's "riwaj", or tradition, it should be the Congress' turn to form the next government. But with all but

pension scheme, and other challenges of life and livelihood the state residents have been facing. With a muted campaign by the Aam Aadmi Party and its former state in-charge Satyendar Jain lodged in Tihar jail, the Congress is upbeat that its vote share will only improve, while the BJP hopes to gain from a higher women vote percentage than men.



two exit polls predicting an edge for the ruling BJP, pollsters are keenly watching which way the voters have decided in the closely fought contest. Himachal Pradesh has not returned any incumbent government to power after 1985, a trend the ruling BJP, powered by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's personalised campaign, hopes to break. The BJP slogan this time has been "Raj nahin, riwaaj badlega", meaning the convention will change this time, not the government. Of 55 lakh voters in the state, over 75 per cent exercised their franchise in the November 12 election to elect its 68-member assembly and government. A total of 412 candidates are in the fray in this election. In the 2017 Assembly elections, the BJP had won 44 seats and the Congress 21, with one seat going to CPM, and two to independent candidates. Meanwhile, the Congress has been confident of its victory, saying the voters will decide on the fundamental issues of price rise, joblessness, the old

The party holds power only in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, both of which will go to polls in 2023. Congress insiders say that any hopes for the party's revival has to start from Himachal Pradesh.

"If we don't win Himachal, I don't know from where we will win," said a Congress leader. Both BJP and Congress camps are learnt to have been in touch with independent candidates who might play a key role in the event of a close contest, predicted in several exit polls, with a slender edge to the BJP. The BJP has bucked the trend in Uttar Pradesh, Goa, Assam, and Uttarakhand by repeating its state governments there, and is hoping to repeat its government in Himachal Pradesh, which is also the home state of BJP national president J P Nadda.

It is hoping for an encore on the back of its development agenda, while the Opposition Congress is urging voters to go by the four-decade old tradition of voting out the sitting government in the state. (PTI)

RS welcomes new Chairman Dhankhar, Oppn seeks more time for smaller parties

NEW DELHI, DEC 7 /--/ Rajya Sabha on Wednesday welcomed its new Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar with the treasury benches saying he would hold democratic values, while Opposition MPs stressed on scrutiny of government Bills by parliamentary standing committees (PSCs) and more time for smaller parties during debates.



Jagdeep Dhankhar

On the opening day of the winter session of Parliament, Prime Minister Narendra Modi led in felicitating recently appointed Vice-President of India Dhankhar, who is ex-officio chairman of the House. Modi said the 'Amrit Kaal' of India's independence will not only be a period of national development and glory but also an occasion when the country will play an important role in giving a direction to the world. He expressed confidence that Dhankhar will uphold democratic values as the chairman of Rajya Sabha. Leader of Opposition and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge assured support of his party in smooth functioning of the House.

In the previous sessions, the House witnessed several disruptions and adjournments due to protest by Opposition parties on various issues. "As the custodian of this House, your presence here is bigger than your other roles,"

Kharge said, adding all public issues could not be raised in the House due to shorter duration of sittings. He said earlier the House used to assemble for 100 days in year, but not it has come down to 60-70 days. Kharge further said though the number of opposition MPs may be less than the treasury benches, they have experience.

Welcoming Dhankhar, Trinamool Congress MP Sukhendu Sekhar Ray said there should be scrutiny of Bills by PSCs and select panels for better legislations. He also said there should be at least one short duration discussion or calling attention per week in the House. "From now we will expect that, with your elevation to this position will help strengthen the conducive atmosphere of this august house. Both the treasury and opposition

benches will get adequate opportunity in the deliberation to be made on various issues bills etc," Roy said. The TMC MP also voiced his concern that less time was being allocated for discussion on important legislations in Rajya Sabha compared to Lok Sabha. He rued that members of smaller parties get only two-three minutes to speak on bills and important issues, and suggested that this should be increased.

Former Prime Minister and JDS veteran H D Deve Gowda highlighted that allocation of only two-three minutes to MPs of smaller parties was not sufficient for them to raise important matters, like those related to agriculture and farmers. Senior NCP leader and former Union minister said experience of MPs too should be a factor in allocation of time. (PTI)

No plans to conduct SSC exams only in Hindi: Govt to RS

NEW DELHI, DEC 7 /--/ The Union government has no proposal to conduct the examinations of the Staff Selection Commission (SSC) only in Hindi, Union minister of state for home Ajay Kumar Mishra said in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

Mishra also ruled out making Hindi compulsory in all central government offices and institutions, saying the question does not arise. "There is no

proposal to conduct the examinations of SSC only in Hindi," he said replying to a written question on Wednesday. Mishra said the National Education Policy (2020) envisages imparting more programmes in higher education, using mother tongue or local language as medium of instruction, and or offer programs bilingually, in order to increase access and Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and also to

promote the strength, usage and vibrancy of all Indian languages.

The minister said the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) and the Staff Selection Commission (SSC) are major recruiting agencies in Union government and the preliminary examinations conducted by the two commissions comprise multiple-choice objective type questions in Hindi and English, wherein the candidate has to tick

mark the appropriate answer. Mishra said the UPSC holds examinations or recruitment tests for selection of candidates to various Group 'A' and Group 'B' services or posts, on the basis of the Rules of Examination and Recruitment Rules, as framed and notified by the concerned ministry or department, including the medium of language. However, in the Civil Services (Mains), examination conducted

by the UPSC, the candidate has the option to write his answers in any regional language, except in case of language and literature papers. He said the medium of examinations conducted by the SSC is normally Hindi and English. However, paper-II of Multi-Tasking (non- Technical) Staff Examination is conducted in all the languages included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. (PTI)

MCD polls: Overjoyed AAP promises improved amenities, BJP takes solace in avoiding rout

NEW DELHI, DEC 7 /--/ An elated AAP after winning the MCD polls on Thursday vowed to improve civic amenities in the national capital while the BJP thanked voters for "recognising" its work as it took solace in securing over a hundred seats despite exit poll predicting its rout.

The BJP, which exit polls had predicted would suffer a massive defeat, put up a spirited fight to win 104 wards. In what turned out to be a closer-than-expected contest, the AAP ended the BJP's 15-year stint in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) -- trifurcated in 2012 into north, south and east corporations and unified this year -- by winning 134 seats. The majority mark in the 250-ward civic body is 126. The Congress won just nine seats while three wards went to Independent candidates. BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla, on the other hand, said even after 15 years, the party retained its vote share on the basis of its work. The BJP's northeast Delhi MP Manoj Tiwari, in a tweet in Hindi, thanked the people of Delhi and party workers for showing faith by giving so many seats to the party for the fourth consecutive time.

AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh said the barely 10-year-old party's "defeat" of the country's largest party (BJP) in their stronghold "have once again proved the AAP is a hardcore honest party." The counting of votes began at 8 am and initial



Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party convenor Arvind Kejriwal with Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia and Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann flash victory sign after party's victory in MCD elections, in New Delhi on Wednesday

trends favoured the BJP. At one point, the BJP was leading in 107 seats and the AAP in 95. But as the counting progressed, the AAP went past the BJP and slowly consolidated its lead, finally winning 134 wards. The BJP bagged 104 seats, thus not losing as badly as was predicted by the exit polls. Singh also said the results were remarkable considering the BJP had deployed several top leaders, including 17 Union ministers, for the election campaign.

"The BJP would always say AAP has only defeated the Congress. Today, (Delhi Chief Minister Arvind) Kejriwal has

given them an answer," he said. AAP convener Kejriwal also thanked Delhiites for "choosing their son, brother" to run the civic body. Addressing supporters at the party office here, Kejriwal said he would try to live up to people's expectations and urged all parties to come together to improve Delhi. "We have to improve the condition of Delhi (for which we) need the cooperation of the BJP, the Congress and also blessings of the Centre and the Prime Minister," he said. Punjab chief minister Bhagwant Singh Mann called it a victory for Delhi's common people and said "Congratulations to everyone. Politicians fight

elections but people win. After 15 years, the public has won. The AAP has won the hearts of people." AAP leader and Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia said his "hardcore honest" party had defeated the "world's biggest and most negative party".

"Heartfelt gratitude to the people of Delhi for trusting (the) Aam Aadmi Party in Delhi MCD. By defeating the world's biggest and most negative party, the people of Delhi have made a hardcore honest and working @ArvindKejriwalji win," Sisodia said in a tweet in Hindi. "For us, this is not just a victory, it is a big responsibility," he said. (PTI)

Border dispute: Cong wants Maharashtra CM to convene all-party meeting

MUMBAI, DEC 7 /--/ The Congress on Wednesday demanded Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde immediately convene an all-party meeting on the border dispute with Karnataka and spell out the state government's stand on the issue. Senior Congress leader Balasaheb Thorat also said the recent attacks on Marathi-speaking people living around the border areas in Karnataka are very serious and asked, "if the Centre is instructing Karnataka on this issue". "The border issue has taken a different turn. Trucks, buses and vehicles are being vandalized in Karnataka. Maharashtra will not tolerate these kinds of attacks from Karnataka," he told a press conference. While the Opposition parties in Maharashtra have expressed concerns over the

border issue and are standing firmly behind the Marathi people, the chief minister (Eknath Shinde) continues to remain silent, Thorat said.

"What is Maharashtra's position on the border issue? What will be their next course of action? Since there is a BJP government in Karnataka and at the Centre, is the Centre giving instructions to Karnataka on the issue? We don't know this but as this matter is serious, our chief minister should call the leaders of all the parties in the state and discuss it. "We should be briefed about the facts and what is the next course of action the state government will be taking," the former minister said. He alleged Karnataka chief minister Basavaraj Bommai and other ministers are constantly making anti-

Maharashtra statements. "...There is a lot of anger among the people, but the chief minister of Maharashtra is not taking a clear and firm stand. Seeing all this, one wonders whether the Shinde-Fadnavis government in the state has taken the border issue seriously or not," Thorat said. The decades-old raging dispute between the two states spilled onto roads on Tuesday with stones being hurled at vehicles entering Karnataka from the Maharashtra side near a toll booth at Hirebaugwadi in Belagavi district of the neighbouring state. Similarly, at least four buses from Karnataka were defaced in Pune district allegedly by activists of the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) faction and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena. (PTI)

Fadnavis briefs Shah on developments

MUMBAI, DEC 7 /--/ Maharashtra deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnavis on Wednesday said he spoke to Union home minister Amit Shah and apprised him about developments related to the boundary dispute with Karnataka over the last one week, a period marked by war of words between leaders of the two neighbouring states, attacks on vehicles and protests by activists.



A statement from Fadnavis's office said Shah patiently heard the deputy chief minister's views on Maharashtra's stand on the decades-old boundary dispute which has flared up in the last few days, leading to tension in border areas. Fadnavis also apprised Shah about his telephone conversation with Karnataka chief minister Basavaraj Bommai on Tuesday. The deputy CM spoke to Bommai following attacks on vehicles from Maharashtra entering Karnataka in the adjoining state's border district of Belagavi. Meanwhile, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) president Raj Thackeray said the boundary dispute should be resolved amicably through talks. The bond between people of Maharashtra and Karnataka is very strong and they have family deities on either side of the border, Thackeray said in a statement. The border issue is being raked up with an eye on the 2023 Karnataka Assembly polls

and Maharashtra is being targeted, he said.

"Suddenly Maharashtra's border areas are being claimed (by Karnataka) and this is not a simple matter. Someone is deliberately raking up the issue from the Karnataka side. The Maharashtra government should find out who is deliberately fanning sentiments here. The Karnataka chief minister should not make provocative statements," said the MNS leader. The decades-old border dispute between the two states flared up and spilled onto roads on Tuesday with stones being hurled at vehicles entering Karnataka from the Maharashtra side near a toll booth at Hirebaugwadi in Belagavi district. Similarly, at least four buses from Karnataka were defaced in Pune district allegedly by activists of the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) and the MNS. 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 sizable Marathi-speaking population. It also laid claim to 814 Marathi-speaking villages which are currently part of the southern state. Karnataka, however, considers the demarcation done on linguistic lines as per the States Reorganisation Act and the 1967 Mahajan Commission Report as final. (PTI)

Melinda Gates meets CM Adityanath, hails UP's development as model for the world

LUCKNOW, DEC 7 /--/ Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation co-founder Melinda Gates on Wednesday said Uttar Pradesh could be a model not just for India but the world. During a special meeting with chief minister Yogi Adityanath at his official residence, Melinda discussed furthering the foundation's technical cooperation with the state government in health care, nutrition and agriculture, according to an official release. She said the Uttar Pradesh government's work on Covid management and the control of diseases such as encephalitis was exemplary. Amid the challenges posed by Covid, the way the leadership worked for the people is highly commendable. The world should learn from the manner the state vaccinated such a large and dense population, she said, according to the government release. The efforts of Uttar Pradesh in health security, financial inclusion, nutrition, education and women empowerment are inspiring and the state is a model not only for India but the world, Melinda added. Discussing the foundation's deep ties with the state, she said it intended to further improve relations in the time to come. Melinda also appreciated the digital banking system implemented in the state. "The work done for the betterment of infrastructure in the past years is unprecedented. The development of Uttar Pradesh is wonderful, its direction is right," the government release quoted her as saying.

Adityanath said the foundation had made a commendable contribution in health and nutrition. "Uttar Pradesh received logistics and technical support from the foundation amid the challenges of Covid. We are grateful to the foundation," the statement quoted the chief minister as saying. This apart, the foundation cooperated for the effective control of communicable diseases such as chikungunya and kala-azar, he added. Adityanath admitted that a lot still remained to be done in terms of health security and the major challenge was the availability of skilled nurses/paramedics. Referring to the results of Mission Shakti in Uttar Pradesh for women empowerment, the chief minister said the campaign focused on three dimensions of safety, respect and self-reliance. "Twenty per cent post in police recruitment have been reserved for women. Today, women beat constables have been deployed in every gram panchayat of the state. Along with security, it is also emphasising the efforts of public awareness. Panic buttons have been arranged in public transport to strengthen women's safety," he said. He also invited Melinda, who later met Uttar Pradesh Assembly Speaker Satish Mahana, for the investors' summit in February. Adityanath also spoke on India's G20 presidency and said it was a matter of pride for all. He added that this period would prove to be important for the happiness, prosperity and security of the world. (PTI)

Competition for poll tickets natural; BJP as national party will balance, work for victory: Karnataka CM

TUMAKURU, DEC 7 /--/ Indicating that there is competition for poll tickets in the BJP with a number of aspirants in every Assembly segment wanting to contest the 2023 Assembly election, Karnataka chief minister Basavaraj Bommai on Wednesday said it was "natural" for a party, which is confident of victory, and as a national party everything would be balanced out. Bommai said the BJP's ongoing 'Jana Sankalpa Yatre', a Statewide tour preparing the ground for the party ahead of Assembly polls, has been getting public response beyond expectations, and would turn out into "Vijaya Sankalpa Yatre" in the days ahead, ensuring victory in the elections. "We have already travelled in Hyderabad, Karnataka, central Karnataka, some coastal district and Belagavi regions, we are getting a huge response. Looking at public support, it is beyond our expectations. We are confident that this Jana Sankalpa Yatre will convert into Vijaya Sankalpa in the days to come," Bommai said. Responding to a question on reports of early rumblings within BJP, with too many ticket aspirants, he said: "Competition is natural in a party about which there is a confidence that it will come back to power; but as ours is a national party, we will balance everything and work towards the victory." (PTI)



Basavaraj Bommai

Chaos at Bambooflat jetty



PORT BLAIR, DEC 7/--/ Delay in operation of ferry services from Bambooflat to Chatham for about an hour in the morning on Wednesday created chaos like situation at Bambooflat jetty. Worried over non-

operation of ferry services, hundreds of commuters waiting to avail the ferry services gathered at the Bambooflat jetty. However, after an hour the ferry services resumed.

When contacted, the Director (SS)

told EOI that for about one hour, the operation of the ferry vessels were stopped due to inclement weather. The Master of the vessel was finding it difficult to berth the ferry at Bambooflat jetty due to high sea waves.

BJP delegation calls on Nitin Gadkari

Poor condition of NH-4 roads, Chatham-Bamboo flat bridge discussed



PORT BLAIR, DEC 7/--/ A BJP delegation led by Mr. Y. Satya Kumar, National Secretary and Prabhari, BJP, along with Mr. Ajoy Bairagi, State BJP President and Mr. Vishal Jolly, BJP's National Executive Member met Mr. Nitin Gadkari, Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways at New Delhi and discussed some of the issues concerning the Islands. The main issues include the extremely pathetic condition of NH-4 in North and Middle Andaman District and construction of

Chatham-Bambooflat Bridge. The BJP leaders apprised Mr. Gadkari about the problems being faced by the residents of North and Middle Andaman due to the bad condition of the NH-4 roads.

They also briefed the Minister about the importance of Chatham-Bambooflat Bridge for the residents of South Andaman. The Minister assured us to look into both the issues on priority. He also informed them that he will be visiting the Islands shortly to personally review the works.



On the occasion of Armed Forces Flag Day-2022, members of Rajya Sainik Board with Secretary Col. DS Godara (Retd.) called on Admiral DK Joshi (Retd.), Lt Governor of A&N Islands for Flag pinning ceremony at Raj Niwas on Wednesday. A cheque of Rs. 15,000/- as A&N Administration's contribution was handed over to the visiting delegation.

Vishal, Civic Chief meet CS, raises host of issues

PORT BLAIR, DEC 7/--/ Mr. Vishal Jolly, National Executive Member of BJP met the Chief Secretary on Wednesday and highlighted a host of issues. Mr. Jolly, along with the Chairperson, PBMC raised issue of regularisation of DRMs working under PBMC. Entire facts together with relevant documents were placed in order to impress that there is no impediment to regularizing the DRMs. The Chief Secretary expressed that an in depth analysis would be made afresh positively in this regard. The issue of granting 1/30th pay to all the left out DRMs under the A & N Administration was also placed and discussed. The Chief Secretary, A & N Administration has assured to take all required positive steps, soon. The issue of granting Bonus to all the DRMs employed under the A & N Administration was also placed and highlighted to which the Chief Secretary, A & N Administration has assured that soon a direction would be issued to all Departments heads regarding this.

Apart from this, Mr. Vishal Jolly had once again raised the issue of MSP for COPRA for the farmers, especially the members of

the Nicobari Tribal communities. The Chief Secretary, A & N Administration has stated that the concerned senior officials are looking into the issue and they are in constant touch with the NAFED in order to make sure that the farmers of our Islands get MSP for Copra.

He had vehemently placed the lingering issue of Katchal Tamil Settlers and requested for expediting the process of permanent settlement. The Chief Secretary, A & N Administration has assured that the issue is in progress at appropriate level and he is hopeful of a positive outcome soon. Mr. Vishal Jolly demanded for extension of Contracts of the Assistant Professors of ANCOL (College) and it was assured by the Chief Secretary, A & N Administration that appropriate & required steps would be taken soon in this regard. The issue with regard to hostel building for ANCOL was also taken up and it was highlighted that the construction of the hostel building is reportedly 95% complete and the eligible students hailing from inter islands are facing serious hardships for their

stay elsewhere. As such he demanded for early completion of the Hostel building. The Chief Secretary, A & N Administration has assured to make sure that the building construction gets completed at the earliest.

Geeta Gyan Yagna at Chinmaya Mission

PORT BLAIR DEC 7/--/ Chinmaya Mission, Port Blair will be organizing Annual Geeta Gyana Yagna from December 11 to December 17, 2022 at Mission Auditorium. Swami Madhavanandajee from Chinmaya Mission Patiala (Punjab) will be conducting the yagna. Swamijee will be speaking on the 15th Chapter of Bhagwat Geeta (Purushottam Yoga) in the evening from 6 pm to 7.30 pm.

Morning pravachan will be held from 7 to 8 am and topic will be "Kaivalya Upanishad". Morning session will be beginning from 12th December onwards. Around 50 delegates from mainland also will be attending the Yagna.

Counseling of professional/ technical/non-technical courses at mainland institutions to be held at TGCE

PORT BLAIR, DEC 7/--/ The candidates who have applied for allotment of various Professional/ Technical/ Non-Technical courses, including Malayalee Origin seats reserved at mainland institutions for the academic session 2022-23 have been informed that the counseling for BDS-2 seats, BHMS-4 seats, BAMS-3 seats, BAMS (Malayalee Origin) -1 seat and B.Sc Agriculture (Malayalee Origin) -1 seat will be held on Dec.12 at 10 am in the auditorium of Tagore Govt. College of Education. All the interested candidates whose names have appeared in the merit list of above courses have been directed to appear in person with all educational qualification certificates/ testimonials in original along with 5 (five) passport size photographs and 2 permanency certificates for sureties and other documents in support of their category for counseling on the date, time and venue as specified above.

If the seats are un-utilized from the respective categories, the same may be allotted from Category-V as per merit. No subsequent claim will be entertained or considered from any candidate, irrespective of his merit, fails to appear in person or does not produce necessary certificates in original at the time of counseling/ selection.

Shipping services likely to be disrupted due to inclement weather: DSS

PORT BLAIR, DEC 7/--/ The A&N Archipelago is presently experiencing extreme weather conditions and as such, operation of shipping service under such unstable state of weather becomes very difficult. The Directorate of Shipping Service considering the safety of passengers paramount, may therefore cancel or suspend its services across forechore and Inter Island sectors at short notice.

Similarly in the Harbour sector also maneuvering of vessels is considered unsafe during such adverse weather conditions, therefore the operation of Harbour ferries in Port Blair Harbour and at Outstation may also get disrupted. All the daily commuters, passengers and tourists are thus requested to kindly cooperate with this Directorate in the case of any such cancellations and advised to plan their journey suitably to avoid any inconvenience later. The services will be resumed immediately on improvement of weather conditions.

TO LET

01 BHK Single Bedroom 24 Hours Water Facility at Garacharma.

Contact: 9434264119 / 7063930649

TEXTILE LAXMI NEERAJ TEXTILE
A Complete Family Store

Fresh Collection for YOUR FAMILY

ABERDEEN BAZAR | BATHU BASTHI

Apollo HOSPITALS
Apollo Clinic
Expertise. Closer to you.

CARDIOLOGY CONSULTATION CLINIC

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

GET AN EXPERT OPINION ON YOUR HEART RELATED PROBLEMS

- ❖ CHEST PAIN
- ❖ BREATHLESSNESS
- ❖ HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE
- ❖ CHOLESTEROL
- ❖ STRESS
- ❖ BLOCKAGE IN HEART
- ❖ BLOOD VESSEL BLOCKAGES
- ❖ PALPITATION
- ❖ GIDDINESS
- ❖ VALVE PROBLEMS
- ❖ ANGIOGRAM
- ❖ ANGIO PASTLY
- ❖ PINHOLE PROCEDURES
- ❖ FAMILY HISTORY OF HEART DISEASE

#192, GARACHARMA MAIN ROAD, PORT BLAIR, SOUTH ANDAMAN -744105
FOR APPOINTMENT CALL: +91-9531807777, 03192-252 052 /03192-252 522

32" Free Smart TV
Offer Valid on Limited Stock

RENAULT

CLIMBER

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

Shyam N Shyam

Festive Season & Wedding Collection

NOW AVAILABLE IN STORE

UNMATCHED STYLES

UNLIMITED CHOICES

Ladies Wear • Kids Wear • Mens Wear

Sampat Lodge Building
Aberdeen Bazar, Port Blair

This is our purpose: to make as meaningful as possible this life that has been bestowed upon us: to live in such a way that we may be proud of ourselves: to act in such a way that some part of us lives on
Oswald Spengler

Indian economy withstands global shocks

Deteriorating external environment is likely to weigh on India's growth prospects, but the economy is relatively well positioned to weather global spillovers compared to most other emerging markets. The impact of a tightening global monetary policy cycle, slowing global growth and elevated commodity prices will mean that the Indian economy will experience lower growth in 2022-23 compared to 2021-22 (8.7 per cent). India's economy grew at 6.3 per cent in September quarter 2022-23 as compared to 13.5 per cent in the preceding June quarter, mainly on account of contraction in output of manufacturing and mining sectors. But saying that the economy was showing higher resilience to global shocks, and better-than-expected second quarter numbers, the World Bank has revised upwards its GDP growth forecast for India to 6.9 per cent for 2022-23 in its India Development Update. In October, the World Bank had cut India's GDP growth forecast to 6.5 per cent from 7.5 per cent earlier. Now, it has upgraded the projection to 6.9 per cent for 2022-23 (April 2022-March 2023). This is highly significant, being the first upgrade of India's growth forecast by any international agency amid the global turmoil. World Bank's Country Director in India Auguste Tano Kouame has, however, said that continued vigilance is required as adverse global developments persist.

In its report, 'Navigating the Storm', the World Bank said while a challenging external environment will affect India's economic outlook through different channels, rapid monetary policy tightening in advanced economies has already resulted in large portfolio outflows and depreciation of the Indian rupee while high global commodity prices have led to a widening of the current account deficit. But despite these challenges, it is expected that India will register a strong GDP growth and remain one of the fastest growing major economies in the world, due to a robust domestic demand. Moreover, India's economy is relatively insulated from global spillovers compared to other emerging markets because India has a large domestic market and is relatively less exposed to international trade flows.

Of course, the country remains affected by spillovers from the US, Euro area and China. Besides, India's external position has improved considerably over the past decade and the current account deficit is adequately financed by improving foreign direct investment inflows and a solid cushion of foreign exchange reserves. India has one of the largest holdings of international reserves in the world. Additionally, prudent regulatory measures have played a key role in developing resilience in the economy. Increased reliance on market borrowings has improved the transparency and credibility of fiscal policy and the government has diversified the investor base for government securities. Introduction of a formal inflation targeting framework during the past decade was an important step in lending credibility to monetary policy decisions. While there are still some challenges in the financial sector, the adoption of several regulatory and policy measures including introduction of a new Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code and creation of the new National Reconstruction Company Limited has facilitated an improvement in financial sector metrics over the past five years.

Budget making for 2023-24 would have to be a politically balancing act

REFLEX ACTION

Dr Gyan Pathak

link through social media platforms, inviting all the citizens to participate in the budget-making process. Had it been enough, it is a common sense, that government would not have organized the pre-budget consultations at all.

Nirmala Sitharaman also heard the Ministers of Finance of States. They asked for more funds, a greater say in centrally sponsored schemes and an increase in payments for royalty on minerals. All these demands are old and the opposition ruled states have been all along alleging that the Centre has been crippling their fiscal autonomy, by not giving their appropriate shares in taxes and royalty in minerals, and they are even ending up spending more than centre's contribution in centrally sponsored schemes.

The financial constraints of the Centre, and likely decline in GDP due to various domestic and international factors, may put the Centre in great difficulty while making plans for state finances. Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) asserted that depreciation of the rupee against the US dollars is affecting exports' competitiveness and therefore the sector requires more support. They wanted fiscal support to units providing additional employment, incentive to be linked to growth in exports and employment provided, 200 per cent tax reduction on the expenditure made by exporters for overseas marketing and freight. They said that Indian exporters remittance was \$82.65 billion as transport service charge in 2021. They suggested GST refund to foreign tourists at airports.

Farmers' organisations demanded lifting of ban on exports of foodgrains and restriction on imports that cost below the Minimum Support Price (MSP). It is worth mentioning here that earlier demand for legal guarantee for MSP is yet unmet and government is have not been willing



A man dressed as Santa Claus poses for a photograph with children at a school ahead of Christmas and New Year 2023 celebrations, in Ranchi

Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra gets good response in MP

FOCUS

LS Herdenia

Despite being the BJP's bastion, Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra is getting a good response in Madhya Pradesh. The most enthusiastic welcome was accorded by Indore whose corporation is controlled by the BJP. Besides majority of MLAs and Lok Sabha seats is represented by the BJP. The Rahul yatra entered Indore in the morning of November 27 from Mhow which happens to be the birthplace of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

After saluting Dr. Ambedkar Rahul left Mhow at 6 AM. He walked Indore for eight hours and won the heart of residents when he complimented them for keeping "Swachh" the city. He told the Indore residents "Today we walked for around eight hours on Indore roads. I looked at every corner but did not find any garbage. I want to thank the people of Indore and the sanitation workers for winning six prizes (as the country's cleanest city)" he said. Indore's history shows it is a 'centre of justice' he remarked. Apart from cleanliness he said he found "brotherhood on the roads of Indore". On these roads, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians along with elderly persons and people speaking different languages have walked (with the Yatra) and there was not hatred" the Congress leader said. He addressed two public meetings during his stay in Indore. Addressing a massive meeting at historic Rajwada Rahul said that Congress MPs tried to raise in Parliament pressing issues like agri-loan waiver, the three farm laws, demonetization and wrong GST several times but every time their "mikes were turned off".

Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), which is giving round the clock security cover to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi

during his ongoing Bharat Jodo Yatra, had found crowd in Madhya Pradesh to be 'uncontrollable' prompting the officials to increase number of personnel on Yatra duty in the state.

"In the states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the crowd was very disciplined. People were seen lined up alongside roads and following instructions of their local leaders' a senior CRPF officer, who had served for more than 25 years, told the media persons. He said that CRPF, which is providing 24x7 security cover to Gandhi, had to 'struggle' a bit as Yatra passed through Hyderabad city while similar 'difficulties' were faced in parts of Maharashtra.

"The situation in Madhya Pradesh is, however totally opposite to what we experienced in southern states. The crowd here is 'uncontrolled' and does not follow instructions of any leader. We have increased number of personnel multi-fold in Madhya Pradesh than what we started the Yatra with from Tamil Nadu" he said. According to a senior CRPF official, they have a separate and advanced communication system to stay connected with each security personnel and keep a close vigil on every movement. Besides the CRPF personnel carry advanced arms and other equipment required to ensure fool proof security cover to VVIP. The security cover is further enhanced by a two layer

cove provided by local police. AICC general secretary (in-charge of communication) Jairam Ramesh said that BJP's dirty tricks department' was working overtime to spread lies over Bharat Jodo Yatra. Addressing a press conference along with Congress MLAs Jitu Patwari, Sanjay Shukla and Vishal Patel, Ramesh blamed BJP for sharing and alleged 'morphed' pro-Pakistan slogan raising video as the Yatra passed through Khargone district. "It's BJP's dirty tricks department that is working overtime to spread lies" he said. Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh demanded a probe into the matter and appropriate action against the persons responsible for it.

Ramesh said that BJP was not talking about issues this Yatra is raising like inflation, economic disbalance, spreading hatred, fear and violence but only about containers, Gandhi's beard, T shirt and son on just to divert people's attention from real issues. Rahul Gandhi on Sunday morning rode a Motorcycle which was specially modified by a dog lover to join the Yatra with his pet from Burhanpur to Kashmir. Gwalior based civil engineer Rajat Parashar said that he along with his friend Sarthak Singh reached Burhanpur on November 23 and started following the Yatra on their specially modified motorcycle. "We have completed a journey from Kashmir to

Kanyakumari around eight months ago," they said, adding that it was their second journey on the same route with their pet Marvel, but learning about the yatra they took a halt in MP to meet Gandhi. "We finally met Gandhi, who also rode our motorcycle and walked with our pet Marvel to some distance. He appreciated our cause to save street dogs" he said.

Before leaving Indore, Rahul Gandhi addressed a press conference. In the course of the press conference he turned somewhat philosophical when he said "Let go of Rahul Gandhi. I let go of Rahul Gandhi years ago. He said personal attacks give me strength. He avoided political questions but answered about political crisis in Rajasthan. He asserted both Gehlot and Pilot are assets to Congress. He was confident that the controversy would not impact the Yatra. He paid compliments to the people of Madhya Pradesh saying that public response of Madhya Pradesh is ahead of all state. This Yatra had entered in depth in the minds of people of Madhya Pradesh. He ruled out entry of Scindia and his followers in Congress.

"Those who sold themselves are not welcome" he added. State BJP chief V. D. Sharma reacting to Rahul Gandhi's comment that GST is more dangerous than Chinese army said "it is clear now that Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra is actually Bharat Todo Yatra. But the mood in the BJP headquarter is of deep worry taking note of the response. The assembly elections are due in 2023 in the state. The Congress workers are feeling rejuvenated. State Congress president Kamal Nath is making all efforts to take full political advantage from the Yatra. (IPA)

to concede it is well known. They demanded that the government also focus on increasing domestic output of local oilseeds. At a time when India is undergoing shortfall of food production and rising food inflation these demands would be difficult to be met. India must reduce dependence on edible oil imports and impose higher taxes on processed food were other suggestions.

India Inc suggested an increased focus on creating jobs, boosting domestic growth and consumption, and further rationalization of taxes. They wanted India to stick to fiscal discipline. CII suggested keeping corporate tax at the present level. FICCI suggested continuance of the thrust laid on capex, especially in public sector, which they believed would increase private investment. It should be noted that Modi government has been focusing on private sector development and even a large number of public sector enterprises are being privatized, but private investment has remained insignificant compared to the requirement of enough job creation. FIMI, a miners' organization, suggested withdrawal of export duty on certain minerals, such as bauxite. CII batted for income tax cut to boost disposable income with people which seems very difficult for the Centre this juncture of multiple domestic and international crises including lower GDP growth rate of about only 6 per cent. Raising taxable income level or even reducing taxes seems to be complicated matter for fiscal math of the Centre. Central Trade Unions, except the RSS-BJP supported Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), who have boycotted the pre-budget consultation have demanded withdrawal of four controversial labour codes, stopping privatization of public sector undertakings, restoration of old pension scheme, and job creation among others.

FM Nirmala Sitharaman have thus many suggestions that her government has not been willing to do in the past. However, she would have to do the difficult balancing act in this full pre-election budget between the populist one and the hard decisions. She has got a fair idea through seven groups of stakeholders as to what India wants, and we will know how many she accommodated and how many fell in deaf ears only when she would be presenting the Union Budget 2023-24 on February 1, 2023. (IPA)

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

ACROSS										DOWN									
1	Spinning toy	2	Exhibit	3	Former Iranian leader	4	Little devil	5	Military force	6	Large cask	7	Torch	8	Commerce	9	Make amends	10	Pace
11	Large crowd	12	In addition	13	Bath	14	Festivity	15	Excuse	16	Hill	17	Pollute	18	Electrical unit	19	Stringed instrument	20	Distorted
21	Glossy fabric	22	Shallow dish	23	Prayer ending	24	Take as one's own	25	Rodents	26	Cavalry sword	27	Live coal	28	Certain	29	Mild explosion	30	Flying Saucer

SUDOKU:3719														
				3										
9	4	2											1	
		5			9	4	6							
8			9	4										
		9		6			3							
				5	2								7	
		1	4	3			2							
7							8	9	5					
					8									

Yesterday's Solution 3718														
9	1	7	3	8	6	2	4	5						
8	6	5	2	4	1	3	7	9						
3	2	4	5	9	7	8	6	1						
6	3	8	1	7	5	9	2	4						
7	9	2	8	3	4	1	5	6						
5	4	1	6	2	9	7	3	8						
1	7	9	4	6	2	5	8	3						
2	8	6	9	5	3	4	1	7						
4	5	3	7	1	8	6	9	2						

Yesterday's Cross Word Solution 1727														
A	R	I	A	S		M	O	S	T					
D		P	A	G	O	D	A							
O	F	F	E	R		D	E	N	T					
P		E	X	I	L	E		D						
T	A	R				L	E	A	D					
S	I	N	S			A	L	E						
R	I	T	E	M	S		A							
O	M	E	N		W	I	E	L	D					
E	Y	E	L	E	T									
K	N	E	W		S	E	D	A	N					

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.



Consul General of the Republic of Poland in Mumbai, Mr. Damian Jan Irzyk on official visit to A&N Islands called on Chief Secretary, A&N Administration, Shri Keshav Chandra, IAS at Secretariat on Tuesday. Senior officers of A&N Administration were also present on the occasion.

Andaman Food Processing Conclave on Dec.8

PORT BLAIR, DEC 7 /--/ The Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Govt. of India in association with Indian Chamber of Commerce will be organizing Andaman Food Processing Conclave on Dec.8, 2022 at Megapode Nest.

The Conclave will integrate sector players to explore opportunities for agri cluster development, contract farming, sourcing, processing, Value addition, distribution & marketing in the food processing sector of A&N Islands.

Agriculture and Food processing is one of the major sectors of the Indian Economy in view of it large potential for growth and likely socio-economic impact especially on employment and income creation.

The Ministry of Food processing Industries, Govt. of India is taking the initiative to promote investment, Pradhan Mantri Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises and awareness for up gradation for technology in the food processing industries sector

in Andaman through seminar where all important stakeholders will meet and discuss critical issues pertaining towards development of industry in food processing sector.

All the aspiring entrepreneurs willing to venture into the food processing sector or existing enterprises and other stakeholders have been invited to participate in the Andaman Food Processing Conclave scheduled on Dec.8 at 10 am at Megapode Nest.



Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Culture, Arjun Ram Meghwal inaugurates the first Light and Sound show of Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya on journey of India's space programme, in New Delhi

Delhi HC seeks Jamia's stand on challenge to dissolution of teachers' association

NEW DELHI, DEC 7 /--/ The Delhi High Court on Wednesday sought the stand of Jamia Millia Islamia on a petition assailing the university's order dissolving an association of its teachers.

Justice Prathiba M Singh issued notice on the petition by Amir Azam, a former president of the 'Jamia Teachers Association', and asked the respondent institute to place in a sealed cover a copy of the report of a committee constituted to examine the association's constitution.

The judge remarked she "agreed that there has to be an association of teachers" and granted time to the varsity to file its response to the plea. The court also said if a delegation of teachers wished to meet the Vice Chancellor (VC) to resolve the issue in the meantime, a meeting will be conducted in his office on December 20 at 11:30 am.

"The question that arises in the writ is two-fold. First, whether the petitioner can maintain the writ petition as he no longer works at the university. Two, whether the Jamia Teachers Association can function independently of the statute constituting the university, in the absence of a prohibition," the court observed.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal appeared on behalf

of the petitioner and argued that the teachers' association can and is entitled to function independently of the university and the orders passed by the VC cannot be sustained. "Can you imagine that a teachers' association has been disbanded? What is the authority of the VC to do that?" Sibal asked.

He emphasised the teachers have the fundamental right to form an association under Article 19(1) (c) of the Constitution, which is only subject to morality, public order and security of State. Advocate Abhik Chinnai also appeared for the petitioner. Lawyer Pritish Sabharwal, appearing on behalf of the university, said a teachers' association has to be as per the Jamia Act and a six-member committee has been formed to look into the constitution of the association and a report of may be awaited.

In the petition filed through lawyers Ch. Animes Prusty and Mukul Kulhari, the petitioner a scientist who earlier worked as a professor in the Department of Chemistry at JMI, said the Jamia Teachers' Association (JTA) was constituted in the year 1967 as an autonomous body and has since operated as per its Articles of the Constitution towards the interests of the teachers.

The plea said its office bearers are duly elected

by the members of the JTA but the VC "derailed" the election process this year and subsequently dissolved the association last month "illegally and arbitrarily". "Since JTA is an autonomous body and is governed by its constitution therefore it's trite in law that the JTA can only be dissolved in the manner prescribed in its Constitution. Therefore, the act of the Vice-Chancellor to dissolve the JTA and derail the election process on the recommendations of the Deans of Faculties, is illegal and arbitrary," the petition said.

The act of the University of issuing an advisory to the members of the association restraining them from attending the general body meeting of the JTA is in "direct contravention" of the fundamental rights of the members of the association to assemble peacefully and form associations, it added.

It is also contended the university's decision to constitute a committee to look into the shortcomings in the bylaws and the JTA constitution is "completely arbitrary" and liable to be set aside.

The plea claimed the university has no authority to interfere in the internal functioning of the JTA or to set up a committee to go into the shortcomings of its constitution. The matter will be heard next on February 14. (PTI)

Power cuts today

PORT BLAIR, DEC 7 /--/ Power supply will remain suspended at Bhatu Basti complete, Laxmi Motor Area, Pathergudda, Satellite Colony, New Pahargaon, Dollygunj, Pahargaon, ICMR Colony area, part of School Line, Lamba Line Water Treatment Plant area, part of Garacharama, Dollygunj, Attompahar, Old Pahargaon, ICMR Colony area, part of Minnie Bay, Garacharama complete, 5 MW Solar Power Plant area, CARI, Ayyanar Temple, Calicut, New Bilmbilitan, part of Teylaraboad, Macca Pahad, AKT

Miniplex, Bird Line, Mahaveer Nagar, Kamaraj Nagar, Beodnabad, Rangachang, Burmanallah, Chidiyatapu, Garacharama Sub Station, Japan Nallah, Austinabad, Prothrapur, Carbyn's Cove, Brichgunj, Brookshabad, part of Chakkargaoan, Sippighat, Teylarabad, Bimblitan, Manjeri, Guptapara, Manglutan, Wandoor, Chouldari Tushnabad, Port Mount, Tirur, Templemo, Ograbranj, part of S i p p i g h a t, Chouldari Lal Pahar, Tsunami Shelter, Mithakhari, Namunaghar, Dundus point & Hathi Tappu on 8TH December 2022 (Thursday) from 0700 hrs. to 0900 hrs to carry out urgent breakdown maintenance work of Busbars and Isolators at 33/11KV Garacharma Sub-Station.

MV Swaraj Dweep to sail for Chennai today

PORT BLAIR, DEC 7 /--/ The vessel MV Swaraj Dweep will sail from Port Blair to Chennai on Dec.8, 2022 at 1000 hrs. Embarkation of passengers will commence from 0800 hrs to 0900 hrs on Dec.8. The embarkation of passengers will be closed one hour before the scheduled time. Passengers reporting late will not be allowed to board the vessel.

The vessel will sail soon after the embarkation of passengers and completion of other formalities from Haddo Wharf. The accompanied baggage exceeding the prescribed norms is likely to be rejected. The packages found bigger in size and more in weight will be rejected. Excess baggage will be subject to double the rate of freight.

Tiger found dead in Maharashtra forest; territorial fight suspected

CHANDRAPUR, DEC 7 /--/ A sub-adult tiger was found dead at a forest in Maharashtra's Chandrapur district on Wednesday with officials suspecting it died in a territorial fight.

The carcass was spotted in Nagbhid forest range of Brahamapuri division, about 120 km from the district headquarters, Chief Conservator of Forest, Chandrapur Circle, Prakash Lonkar said. After receiving information, forest personnel along with veterinary doctors reached the spot for an inspection, he said.

The tiger might have died in a territorial fight as pugmarks of another feline were found at the spot, the official said. A portion of the carcass was eaten by a dog, he said. The Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve is located in Chandrapur district. Earlier, Nagbhid forest officials on December 3 captured a tiger, named P-2, which had killed four persons, a release from the range forest officer said. The feline was later shifted to a transit treatment centre here for further observation, it said. (PTI)

Pop culture extravaganza Delhi Comic Con returns after nearly 3 years

NEW DELHI, DEC 7 /--/ The epic comic convention, 'Comic Con', featuring comics book artists, cosplay competitions, gaming, and pop culture merchandise has returned to the national capital after nearly three years. Touted to be the "largest pop-culture celebration", the Delhi Comic Con will begin from December 9 at the NSIC Exhibition Grounds in Okhla here. Publisher Penguin Random House India will host international comic book publishing houses including DC, Marvel, Dark Horse,

IDW and Kodansha, while Simon & Schuster will bring in the manga publisher Viz Media. The three-day extravaganza will also feature Indian publishers such as Amar Chitra Katha, Raj Comics and several new indie publishing houses. National and international comic book artists and writers including Abhijeet Kini, Md Faisal of "Garbage Bin", Rick Leonardi and Matt Hawkins will also attend the festival. With Delhi Comic Con celebrating its 10th anniversary, this edition will feature "the largest

creators area" ever, with over 20 leading Indian and international artists and writers showcasing their work. Popular stand-up comedians including Zakir Khan, Ashish Solanki, and Gurleen Pannu, singer Fotty Seven, and illusionist Poshak Dua will be among the artists performing at the Delhi Comic Con. "We finally get to host Delhi Comic Con after a gap of almost 3 years by ringing in the 10th anniversary of our Delhi show, which was India's first-ever Comic Con! This year, Delhi will host India's

biggest Comic Con, in sheer scale and size with the best of comics, cosplay, merch, gaming, and other experiences. I cannot wait to welcome all the fans back to the show!" Jatin Varma, founder of Comic Con India, said in a statement. Various zones set up by Warner Bros India and Marvel Studios will offer film enthusiasts exhilarating experiences of their favourite DC and Marvel movies, including "Black Adam", "Shazam!", "Justice League", "Ant Man & The Wasp". The Delhi Comic Con will also feature nearly 100 gaming stations and will organise daily tournaments for "Mortal Kombat 11", "Brawlhalla" and "FIFA 23" with a prize pool of Rs 25,000. The extravaganza will conclude on December 11. (PTI)

University Laws (Amendment) Bill introduced in Kerala Assembly

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DEC 7 /--/ The Left government in Kerala on Wednesday tabled the contentious University Laws (Amendment) Bill in the Assembly to replace the Governor as Chancellor of universities in the state and appoint eminent academicians in the top post.

Law Minister P Rajeev introduced the bill in the House amidst continuing tussle between Governor Arif Mohammed Khan and the Pinarayi Vijayan government over various issues including in the appointment of vice chancellors in varsities. According to the Bill, the government shall appoint an academican of high repute or a person of eminence in any of the fields of science including agriculture and veterinary science, technology, medicine, social science, humanities, literature, art,

culture, law or public administration as the Chancellor of the University. It also said the Chancellor shall hold office for a term of five years from the date on which he enters upon his office.

However, the opposition Congress-UDF members raised a handful of objections against it saying it would face legal issues if passed in the present form. Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly V D Satheesan charged that the Bill was prepared in haste without much contemplation and has several ambiguities. Noting that the Bill comprised aspects violating UGC guidelines, he said a new law won't stand if it is introduced under the State Act against that of the directives of the apex higher education body. He also said the Bill could not be presented in the House as the Financial Memo-

randum was incomplete. "There is no mention about the age limit and the minimum educational qualification of the Chancellor in the Bill.

That means, the government can appoint anyone according to their mind in the top post. It will destroy the autonomous stature of the universities and turn them into mere government departments," Satheesan alleged. The opposition wanted the government to withdraw the present Bill and come out with a fresh one after rectifying the mistakes and making enough consultation including with the opposition.

Senior Congress leader Ramesh Chennithala, P C Vishnunath, T Siddique, Mathew Kuzhalnadan were among those opposition legislators who raised objections against the presentation of the Bill. (PTI)

Kerala gold smuggling: ED seizes Rs 2.51 cr worth gold of Malappuram jewellery house owner

NEW DELHI, DEC 7 /--/ The ED said on Wednesday that it has seized gold worth Rs 2.51 crore from a "secret" chamber at the premises of a Malappuram-based jewellery house promoter, who is an alleged beneficiary of the Kerala 'gold smuggling through diplomatic bag' case.

The federal agency said in a statement that the action has been taken against Aboobaker Pazhedath, the promoter of Malabar Jewellery and Fine Gold Jewellery, both based in Malappuram in Kerala and one of the shareholders of Atlas Gold Super Markets Pvt. Ltd., Kozhikode. The Enforcement Directorate (ED), NIA and Customs department are conducting separate investigations into the racket that was unearthed with the seizure of gold worth Rs 15 crore from the diplomatic baggage of the UAE Consulate at Thiruvananthapuram airport on July 5, 2020. Probe found, the ED said, that "Aboobaker Pazhedath of Malappuram is part of the gold smuggling syndicate headed by Sarith P S, Swapna Suresh and Sandeep Nair, under the patronage of IAS officer M Sivasankar (former principal secretary to the Kerala chief minister) and was one of the beneficiaries."

"Out of the smuggled gold seized by the Customs on 05.07.2020, 3 kgs of gold belonged to Aboobaker Pazhedath," it claimed.

The agency said Pazedath had "admitted" that 3 kgs of gold seized by Customs belonged to him and apart from that, he had also admitted that he had smuggled 6 kgs gold in similar manner in the past through diplomatic baggage of the UAE consulate. "The amount for buying the said smuggled gold was raised from his business firms (Malabar Jewellery, Fine Gold & Atlas Gold Super Markets Pvt. Ltd.). Discreet enquiries have found that Aboobaker Pazhedath was still indulging in gold smuggling related activities through his firms," the ED alleged. Searches were conducted at the said firms as well as the residential premises of Pazhedath that resulted in the recovery and

seizure of 5.058 kg of gold worth Rs 2.51 crore "secreted" in a chamber along with Indian currency of Rs 3.79 lakh. Sarith and Suresh (ex-employees at UAE consulate in Kerala) apart from Nair and IAS officer Sivasankar were arrested by the ED in the case earlier and a charge sheet was filed against them under the criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) followed by a supplementary prosecution complaint (charge sheet). The ED few months back had approached the Supreme Court seeking transfer of the trial in the case from Kerala to Karnataka, saying a "free and fair trial" of the case is not possible in the former state. (PTI)

Notice Inviting e-Tenders	
No. 130-DB/RCD/e-tender/2022-23/3972	Wimberly Gunj Dt. 06/12/2022
The Executive Engineer, Road Construction Division, A.P.W.D., Wimberly Gunj invites on behalf of President of India online Item rate tender/ bid from the approved and eligible contractors of the Andaman PWD or all contractors irrespective of their enlistment in APWD or any other Govt. Department subject to the condition that they have experience on executing the relevant magnitude of work as per CPWD works manual and with other GOI Organizations in these Island and do not have any adverse remarks: -	
1. NIT No. 84/EE/RCD/APWD/WG/22-23 (Tender ID: 2022_APWD_8358_1). Construction of Deep Burial Pit and Bunker for Bio-Medical waste (BMW) management at Health & Wellness centre, Wimberly Gunj under RCD, APWD, Wimberly Gunj. Estimate Cost:- ₹. 3,66,323/- EMD :- ₹. 7,326/- Time of completion:- 02 (Two) Months.	
2. NIT No. 85/EE/RCD/APWD/WG/22-23 (Tender ID: 2022_APWD_8360_1). Construction of Security Type compound wall around filter bed area at Namunaghar. Estimate Cost:- ₹. 47,92,435/- EMD :- ₹. 95,849/- Time of completion:- 12 (Twelve) Months.	
3. NIT No. 87/EE/RCD/APWD/WG/22-23 (Tender ID: 2022_APWD_8359_1). Construction of retaining wall to protect the raised embankments at culvert Junction on SH-10 at Kadakachang. Estimate Cost:- ₹. 43,28,594/- EMD :- ₹. 86,572/- Time of completion:- 05 (Five) Months.	
4. NIT No. 92/EE/RCD/APWD/WG/22-23 (Tender ID: 2022_APWD_8361_1). Construction of permanent Shed for 125 KVA Generator Set at CHC Bambooflat under Bambooflat Sub Division, RCD, Wimberly Gunj. Estimate Cost:- ₹. 9,25,021/- EMD :- ₹. 18,500/- Time of completion:- 02 (Two) Months.	
5. NIT No. 93/EE/RCD/APWD/WG/22-23 (Tender ID: 2022_APWD_8362_1). Providing PPR pipe distribution line along Sona Pahad dam/ Mazar road from Aniket Junction for supply of treated water under RCD, APWD, Wimberly Gunj in lieu of A/R & M/O water supply under AE, Ferrargunj during 2022-23. Estimate Cost:- ₹. 13,25,867/- EMD :- ₹. 26,517/- Time of completion:- 02 (Two) Months.	
Last date of Submission: 27/12/2022 at 3.00 PM and Opening date : 29/12/2022 at 10.00 AM.	
The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the website - https://eprocure.andaman.gov.in/nicgep/app .	
9400/22	

AAP wrests
MCD, ends
15-year
BJP rule

NEW DELHI, DEC 7 /--/ The Aam Aadmi Party on Wednesday won the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) elections with 134 seats, ending the 15-year rule of the BJP in the civic body, an outcome that will further impact the ongoing power tussle between the two parties in the national capital. The BJP bagged 104 seats while the Congress was reduced to

DELHI MCD
250 WARDS

AAP : 134
BJP : 104
CONG : 09

nine in the 250-member municipal corporation. In his first address after the victory, an elated Arvind Kejriwal thanked the Delhiites and vowed to improve civic amenities in the national capital. He sought the "blessings" of the Centre and Prime Minister Narendra Modi to achieve that. In a closer-than-expected contest, the BJP, which bucked the trend

predicted by exit polls, put up a spirited fight, winning 104 municipal wards, while the Congress managed to win just nine seats, down from 30 in the previous civic poll. Three independents also won. The BJP also managed to increase its vote share by three per cent as compared to the polls in 2017. It received 39.09 per cent of the total votes polled while AAP's share also soared from 21.09

per cent to 42.05 per cent, according to the State Election Commission data. In his address to party workers at the AAP office, the chief minister said the civic body will be rid of "corruption and bribery". His deputy Manish Sisodia thanked the voters of Delhi and said it was their mandate that helped the AAP defeat the "world's biggest and most negative party". . (PTI)



Agriculture Insurance Company of India Limited

Registered Office:- Plate B & C, 5th Floor, Block 1, East Kidwai Nagar, New Delhi-110023

Registration No. 126 & Date of Registration with IRDAI: October 30, 2003 | CIN: U74999DL2002PLC118123 | Toll Free No.: 1800-116-515

LIMITED REVIEW OF FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE HALF YEAR ENDED ON 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022

REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE HALF YEAR ENDED ON 30 TH SEPTEMBER, 2022					
Sl. No.	Particulars	Schedule	Half Year Ended (Unaudited)	Corresponding Previous Half Year Ended (Unaudited)	Previous Year Ended (Audited)
			30.09.2022	30.09.2021	31.03.2022
			(Rs. '000)	(Rs. '000)	(Rs. '000)
1	Premium Earned (Net)	1	41405910	32943181	68464290
2	Profit/Loss on Sale/Redemption of Investments		184985	164405	(204506)
3	Others:-				
	a) Accretion of Discount on Investments		78550	39082	127132
	b) Income from administration of outgoing Co-insurance Business		(32278)	88808	633749
4	Interest, Dividend & Rent -Gross		3393433	3697484	7122387
	TOTAL (A)		45030600	36932960	76143052
1	Claims Incurred (Net)	2	39796779	33969911	66007517
2	Commission	3	(467718)	(1435880)	(2032564)
3	Operating Expenses related to Insurance Business	4	2002484	2049006	4092279
4	Premium Deficiency		(630000)	(410000)	780000
5	Bank Interest		0	0	0
6	Expenses related to Investments:				
	a) Amortization of Premium on Investments		66295	77442	164648
	b) Bank Charges		9	0	0
	c) Stock Holding Charges		2472	1356	4371
	d) Other Expenses		0	0	0
	TOTAL (B)		40770321	34251835	69016251
	Operating Profit/(Loss) from Crop Insurance Business C=(A-B)		4260279	2681125	7126801
	APPROPRIATIONS				
	Transfer to Shareholders' Account		4260279	2681125	7126801
	Transfer to Catastrophe Reserve		0	0	0
	Transfer to Other Reserves		0	0	0
	TOTAL		4260279	2681125	7126801

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 TH SEPTEMBER, 2022					
Sl. No.	Particulars	Schedule	Half Year Ended (Unaudited)	Corresponding Previous Half Year Ended (Unaudited)	Previous Year Ended (Audited)
			30.09.2022	30.09.2021	31.03.2022
			(Rs. '000)	(Rs. '000)	(Rs. '000)
A	SOURCES OF FUNDS				
1	Share Capital	5	2000000	2000000	2000000
2	Reserves & Surplus	6	55255855	47082437	51722958
3	Fair Value Change Account				
	(a) Fair Value Change Account (Shareholders)		36654	65989	37148
	(b) Fair Value Change Account (Policyholders)		136830	235053	115292
4	Deferred Tax Liability (Net)		0	0	0
5	Borrowings	7	0	0	0
	TOTAL		57429339	49383479	53875398
B	APPLICATION OF FUNDS				
1	Investments				
	(a) Investments (Shareholders)	8	31482000	36002367	29629405
	(b) Investments (Policyholders)	8A	117522694	128241004	91957690
2	Loans	9	142752	146694	148080
3	Fixed Assets	10	1867716	2082755	1784805
4	Deferred Tax Asset (Net)		159236	97637	201236
5	Current Assets:				
	(a) Cash & Bank Balances	11	24469269	40749809	69578020
	(b) Advances & Other Assets	12	121130058	100755365	116722620
	Sub- Total (A)		145599327	141505174	186300640
6	Current Liabilities	13	230839486	246042065	246649349
7	Provisions	14	8504900	12650087	9497109
	Sub-Total (B)		239344386	258692152	256146458
	Net Current Assets (C) = (A) - (B)		(93745059)	(117186978)	(69845818)
8	Miscellaneous Expenditure (to the extent not written off or adjusted)	15	0	0	0
9	Debit Balance in Profit and Loss Account		0	0	0
	TOTAL		57429339	49383479	53875398

KEY ACCOUNTING RATIOS			
Sl. No.	PARTICULARS	Sep-22 (Percentage/ Ratio)	Sep-21 (Percentage/ Ratio)
1	Gross Direct Premium Growth Rate	11.85%	10.27%
2	Gross Direct Premium to Net Worth Ratio	1.56	1.62
3	Growth Rate of Net Worth	16.65%	17.87%
4	Net Retention Ratio	45.82%	47.76%
5	Net Commission Ratio	-1.15%	-3.78%
6	Expenses of Management to Gross Direct Premium Ratio	2.70%	2.75%
7	Expense of Management to Net Written Premium Ratio	5.90%	5.76%
8	Net Incurred Claims to Net Earned Premium	96.11%	103.12%
9	Combined Ratio	99.88%	104.73%
10	Technical Reserves to Net Premium Ratio	2.77	2.81
11	Underwriting Balance Ratio	0.02	(0.03)
12	Operating Profit Ratio	10.29%	8.14%
13	Liquid Assets to Liabilities Ratio	0.30	0.30
14	Net Earnings Ratio	9.64%	7.21%
15	Return on Net Worth Ratio	6.87%	5.59%
16	Available Solvency Margin Ratio to Required Solvency Margin Ratio	2.34	1.88
17	NPA Ratio		
	Gross NPA Ratio	0.37%	0.33%
	Net NPA Ratio	0.00%	0.00%

PROFIT & LOSS ACCOUNT FOR THE HALF YEAR ENDED ON 30 TH SEPTEMBER, 2022					
Sl. No.	Particulars	Schedule	Half Year Ended (Unaudited)	Corresponding Previous Half Year Ended (Unaudited)	Previous Year Ended (Audited)
			30.09.2022	30.09.2021	31.03.2022
			(Rs. '000)	(Rs. '000)	(Rs. '000)
1.	OPERATING PROFIT/(LOSS)		4260279	2681125	7126801
2.	Crop Insurance Business				
	INCOME FROM INVESTMENTS				
	a) Interest, Dividend & Rent-Gross		909033	1037792	2130555
	b) Profit on Sale of Investments		49554	46144	262820
	Less: Loss on Sale of Investments		0	0	(164385)
	c) Accretion of Discount on Investments		21042	10969	40963
3.	OTHER INCOME				
	a) Miscellaneous Receipts		5397	4491	13188
	b) Profit on Sale of Assets		0	0	0
	c) Prior Period Income		0	0	0
	TOTAL (A)		5245305	3780522	9409942
4.	PROVISIONS (other than Taxation)				
	a) For diminution in the value of Investments (Net)		0	0	0
	b) Provision for Matured Investment		0	0	0
	c) Provision for Non-Performing Investments		0	0	0
	d) Provision for doubtful debts		0	0	(2000000)
	e) Provision for Premium Defalcation		0	0	0
5.	OTHER EXPENSES				
	a) Expenses other than those related to insurance business:				
	i) Amortisation of Premium on Investments		17759	21736	53051
	ii) Stock Holding Charges		662	381	1408
	iii) Bank Charges- Investment		2	0	0
	iv) Other Expenses related to investment		0	0	0
	b) Bad Debts written off		0	0	2000000
	c) Others:				
	i) Loss on Sale of Assets		43	68	2091
	ii) Prior Period Expenses		0	0	0
	iii) Corporate Social Responsibility		31942	20431	110022
	TOTAL (B)		50408	42616	166572
	PROFIT BEFORE TAX (C=A-B)		5194897	3737906	9243370
	PROVISION FOR TAXATION				
	a) Income Tax (Current Year)		1220000	1001385	2060000
	b) Income Tax (Earlier years)		0	(0)	(90073)
	c) Deferred Tax		42000	(5981)	(109580)
	TOTAL (D)		1262000	995404	1860347
	PROFIT/(LOSS) AFTER TAX (E=C-D)		3932897	2742502	7383023
	APPROPRIATIONS				
	a) Interim Dividend paid during the year		0	0	0
	b) Final Dividend Paid		400000	0	0
	c) Dividend Distribution Tax		0	0	0
	d) Transfer to General Reserve		0	0	7383023
	TOTAL		400000	0	7383023
	PROFIT/(LOSS) AFTER TAX & APPROPRIATIONS		3532897	2742502	0
	Add: Balance of Profit/(Loss) brought forward from last year		0	0	0
	BALANCE CARRIED FORWARD TO BALANCE SHEET		3532897	2742502	0
	Basic Earning per Share (in Rs.)		17.66	13.71	36.92
	Diluted Earning per Share (in Rs.)		17.66	13.71	36.92
	Number of Equity Shares (in thousands)		200000	200000	200000
	Nominal Value per Share (in Rs.)		10	10	10

Note : This public disclosure is made in accordance with IRDA Circular No. IRDAI/F&A/CIR/MISC/256/09/2021 date: 30.09.2021

Place: New Delhi
Date: 28.11.2022

For and on behalf of the Board

GIRIJA SUBRAMANIAN
Chairman Cum Managing Director

"Insurance is the subject matter of solicitation"

For Grievance Redressal, kindly login to http://www.aicolindia.com/AICEng/Pages/Grievance_Home.aspx

20 Years
in the
Service of
Farmers

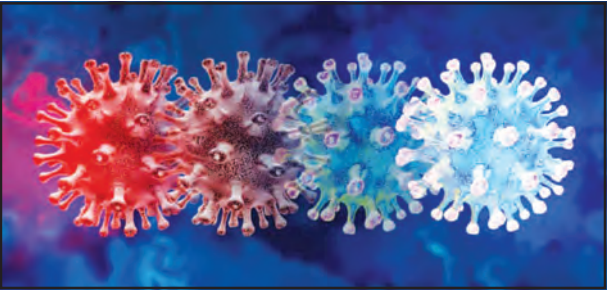


CBC 01115/12/0095/2223

सम्पन्न भारत की पहचान। बीमित फसल खुशहाल किसान।।

China eases covid restrictions after protests: Moves closer to scrapping zero-Covid policy

BEIJING, DEC 7 /--/ After widespread protests, China on Wednesday rolled back major Covid-19 restrictions, moving a step closer to scrapping its dreaded zero-Covid policy, which drastically slowed down the economy and the movement of people across the country. In light of the changing situation and the weakened virulence of the Omicron variant, the State Council or China's cabinet released the new measures to further optimise the response to Covid-19, an official announcement here said. The new measures limit the lockdown to individual apartment floors



and buildings, rather than entire districts and neighbourhoods. The lockdowns enforced by officials in hazmat suits have become a symbol of repression and confinement of millions of people to their flats and apartment blocks in Chinese cities, including Shanghai and Beijing. The sudden relaxation of the rules also sparked concerns that the daily virus cases which were averaging around 30,000 a day could increase rapidly as more people are expected to step out. China is currently in the thick of its winter season with temperatures dropping to below zero. The relaxation of rigid measures under the zero-Covid policy comes in the backdrop of last month-end protests in many cities opposing the policy. Some protestors even called for President Xi Jinping and the ruling Communist Party to step down.

Acknowledging the protests, Xi in talks with EU President Charles Michel early this month said that the demonstrations were carried by "mainly students" who are "frustrated" after three years of the pandemic. Xi also reported to have said that the dominant Omicron strain is less lethal', but expressed concern about vaccinating the elderly, according to media reports. In China, only 68.7 per cent of people over 60 have had three doses of a Covid-19 vaccine, official figures show. For those aged 80 and over, only 40.4 per cent have had a booster dose. China so far used locally produced vaccines and has not pushed hard for vaccinating the elders, which experts say is due to a lack of confidence, while the world over elders have been vaccinated first for covid. The nearly three years zero-Covid policy, which has gained ground since coronavirus first surfaced in Wuhan, has been strengthened periodically, isolating China from the rest of the world and restricting people's moments within the country, which had slowed the world's second-largest economy. The new rules permit people who test covid positive to isolate at home rather than in overcrowded and unsanitary field hospitals, and schools. Other major measures include reducing the frequency of nucleic acid testing, scrapping negative nucleic acid results and health code requirements for entering public places except for designated locations such as nursing homes, medical institutions and schools, as well as lifting Covid testing and health code requirements for domestic cross-regional travellers, it said. The new measures detail that infected individuals with mild or no symptoms who meet requirements will be allowed to quarantine at home or choose collective quarantine, which has nation-wide resentment as people were dumped in makeshift hospitals with poor conditions. Outside of designated locations which include nursing homes, welfare homes, medical institutions, childcare facilities, and primary and secondary schools, negative nucleic acid test results will no longer be required, and health codes will not be checked, the announcement published in the official media here said. (PTI)

Nawaz Sharif would return to Pak next month: PML-N leader

ISLAMABAD, DEC 7 /--/ Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo and former prime minister Nawaz Sharif would return to the country next month from London where he has been living since last three years, a senior party leader has said. The 72-year-old former three-time premier had left for London in November 2019 after the Lahore High Court granted him four-week permission allowing him to go abroad for his treatment. But he never came back to Pakistan where he was convicted for corruption and jailed. His party is under pressure without him and PML-N leaders are frequently asked about the return of their leader. Minister for Economic Affairs Ayaz Sadiq was asked during the Geo TV talk show on Tuesday night when Sharif would come back and he said the party was looking forward to his homecoming. "He (Sharif) is expected to come back in January (2023)," Sadiq said, adding that he would also allocate tickets to the candidates for the next general elections. The minister also said that the next polls would be held in the country after August 2023 as he rejected a demand by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leaders to hold general elections by March next year. Sharif was convicted by an accountability court in 2018 which sentenced him seven years in prison in the Al-Azizia Steel Mills case, while he was sentenced to a total of 11 years in prison and slapped an 8 million fine in the Avenfield properties case. (PTI)

S Korea sees easing disruption as truckers' strike extends

SEOUL, DEC 7 /--/ Officials say South Korea's economy is recovering from the initial shock of a nationwide walkout staged by thousands of cargo truckers, even as their strike reached its 14th day on Wednesday amid a stalemate with the government over freight fare issues. The conservative government of President Yoon Suk Yeol has taken aggressive steps to defuse the impact of the strike, issuing contentious back-to-work orders to more than 2,000 drivers of cement trucks among broader groups of truckers participating in the walkout. Officials have also mobilised around 200 military vehicles, including container and fuel trucks, to ease the delays in industrial shipments. Yoon's office has warned of stronger steps, such as expanding the so-called "work

start" orders to other groups of truckers, including those transporting fuel and steel, blaming the strikers for costing the economy more than 3.5 trillion won (USD 2.6 billion) in a moment of global uncertainty. The additional orders could come as early as after a Cabinet meeting scheduled for Thursday. The strike's impact has so far been mostly limited to domestic industries, such as construction, and there have been no immediate signs of meaningful disruption in major export businesses such as semiconductors. Container traffic at the country's major ports is essentially back to normal and reached 126 per cent of pre-strike levels during the busier evening hours from 7 pm to midnight Tuesday, according to data from the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport.

Shipments of cement were also reaching 88 per cent of normal levels, easing the disruption at construction sites. The ministry said around 4,700 truckers were actively participating in the strike on Wednesday, down from 8,000 to 10,000 workers who participated during the early days of the strike, which began on November 24. Government officials and police have sent teams nationwide to check whether cement truckers were abiding by the back-to-work orders after receiving them in writing and confirmed that so far at least 475 of them had returned to their jobs, the ministry said. Police are investigating one strike participant accused of assaulting a non-union trucker and throwing eggs at his vehicle at a port in the city of Busan as they clamp down on unionists who

threaten or disrupt colleagues who choose to work. The strikers, represented by the Cargo Truckers Solidarity union, are demanding the government to make permanent a minimum freight rate system that is to expire at the end of 2022, which they say is crucial for safety and financial stability in the face of rising fuel costs and interest rates. While the minimum fares currently apply only to shipping containers and cement, the strikers are also calling for the benefits to be expanded to other cargo, including oil and chemical tankers, steel and automobile carriers and package delivery trucks. Yoon's government had offered to expand the current scheme for another three years but has so far rejected calls to widen the scope of minimum rates. (AP)

India is home to great diversity of faiths; will continue to encourage it to uphold religious freedom for all: US

WASHINGTON, DEC 7 /--/ India is home to a great diversity of faiths and the Biden administration will continue to encourage it to uphold its commitments to protect religious freedom for all, a top US official has said, days after America designated 12 countries, including China and Pakistan, as "countries of particular concern". US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on Friday designated 12 countries, including China, Pakistan and Myanmar, as "countries of particular concern" for the current status of religious freedom in these nations. He said around the world, governments and non-state actors harass, threaten, jail, and even kill individuals on account of their beliefs. Responding to a question on why India was not designated by the US government as a Country of Particular Concern on the issue of human rights, State

Department Spokesperson Ned Price said that India was the world's largest democracy and home to a great diversity of faiths. "Our annual report on international religious freedom outlines some of the concerns we've taken note of when it comes to India. We continue to carefully monitor the religious freedom situation in all countries and that includes India," Price told reporters here on Tuesday. The Biden administration will continue to encourage the Indian government to uphold its commitments to protect religious freedom for all, he said. "We engage officials regularly on steps they can take to advance religious freedom. As the world's two largest democracies, the United States and India, are also committed to an enduring project," he said. This is the project that Secretary Blinken spoke to previously. The project

that as our founders put it, of striving to form a more perfect union. This is a project for both of our countries, Price said. "We have worked together, and we can work together to show that our democracies can meet our peoples' needs. We must continue to hold ourselves to our core values including respect for human rights like freedom of religion and freedom of belief or expression," he said in response to a question. "That, in turn, makes our respective democracies even stronger. Secretary Blinken, given the totality of the facts and the circumstances, determined that religious freedom concerns in India do not warrant a country of particular concern designation or placement on the special watch list. But, these are conversations that we continue to have with our Indian partners and with partners around the world," Price said.

India has previously rejected criticism by foreign governments and human rights groups on allegations that civil liberties have eroded in the country. The Indian government has asserted that India has well-established democratic practices and robust institutions to safeguard the rights of all. The government has emphasised that the Indian Constitution provides for adequate safeguards under various statutes for ensuring the protection of human rights. Ahead of the announcement of the annual designation by the State Department, there were massive lobbying efforts by groups like Indian American Muslim Council and pressures from organisations like the US Commission for International Religious Freedom to designate India as a Country of Concern. In the US State Department 2021 Report on International Religious

Freedom, the India section of the report mentioned incidents of attacks on religious minorities. India in June this year rejected its criticism in the US State Department report on religious freedom, saying it is unfortunate that "vote bank politics is being practised in international relations". External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said the observation on India in the report is based on "motivated inputs and biased views". "We have noted the release of the US State Department 2021 Report on International Religious Freedom, and ill-informed comments by senior US officials," Bagchi said. "It is unfortunate that vote bank politics is being practised in international relations. We would urge that assessments based on motivated inputs and biased views be avoided," he had said. (PTI)

Suicide bomber hits Indonesian Police station, killing 1



Police officers stand guard near the police station hit by a suicide bombing in Bandung, Indonesia

BANDUNG, DEC 7 /--/ A Muslim militant and convicted bomb-maker who was released from prison last year blew himself up on Wednesday at a police station on Indonesia's main island of Java, killing an officer and wounding 11 people, officials said.

The attacker entered the Astana Anyar police station with a motorcycle and detonated one of two bombs he was carrying as police were lining up for a morning assembly, said Bandung city Police Chief Aswin Sipayung. The other explosive was defused. A video that circulated on social media showed body parts near the damaged lobby of the police station, which was engulfed in white smoke as people ran out of the building. Food vendor Herdi Hardiansyah said he was preparing meals behind the station when a loud bang shocked him. He saw a police officer whom he recognised as one of his customers covered in blood, being carried on a motorcycle by two other officers to a hospital. He said police identified the man as Agus Sujatno, also known by his alias Abu Muslim. He was released from the Nusakambangan prison island last year after completing a four-year sentence on charges of terrorist funding and making explosives that were used in a 2017 attack on a municipal building also in Bandung, the capital of West Java province.

JAD was designated a terrorist organisation by the US in 2017. Sujatno was still on police "red" lists of militant convicts after being freed from prison because of his rejection of the government's deradicalisation program, Prabowo said. "He was still difficult to talk to, and tended to avoid the (deradicalisation) process," Prabowo said. Prabowo said he ordered police task force units and the counterterrorism squad to investigate the

attack and find other possible culprits. West Java Police Chief Suntana, who uses one name, said a paper taped to the perpetrator's motorbike was recovered with the words, "Criminal code is the law of infidels, let's fight the satanic law enforcers." Indonesia's Parliament on Tuesday passed a new criminal code that bans sex outside of marriage and insulting the president and state institutions.

The current penal code is a Dutch colonial legacy. A revised code was poised for passage in 2019, but President Joko Widodo urged lawmakers to delay a vote amid mounting public criticism that led to nationwide protests as opponents said it contained articles that discriminated against minorities and that the legislative process lacked transparency. Indonesia has battled militants since bombings on the resort island of Bali in 2002 killed 202 people, mostly foreign tourists. Attacks aimed at foreigners have largely been replaced in recent years with smaller, less deadly strikes targeting the government, police and anti-terrorism forces and people who militants consider infidels.

In 2019, a suicide bomber blew himself up at a busy police station in Medan, Indonesia's third-largest city, wounding at least six people. In May 2018, two families carried out a series of suicide bombings on churches in the city of Surabaya, killing a dozen people including two young girls whose parents had involved them in one of the attacks. Police said the father was the leader of a local affiliate of Indonesian terrorist group Jemaah Anshorut Daulah. Last year, two attackers believed to be members of JAD blew themselves up outside a packed Roman Catholic cathedral during a Palm Sunday Mass on Indonesia's Sulawesi island, killing the two attackers and wounding at least 20 people. (AP)

King Charles inaugurates new Guru Nanak Gurdwara in eastern England

LONDON, DEC 7 /--/ Britain's King Charles III has officially inaugurated the new Guru Nanak Gurdwara and interacted with the volunteers who prepare the 'langar' and work within the local community during his first tour as monarch of Luton in Bedfordshire, eastern England.

The 74-year-old King toured the gurdwara's kitchen on Tuesday and was shown where hot vegetarian meals are prepared daily and was also briefed on the work coordinated with a pop-up COVID vaccine clinic during the pandemic. He also sat together with community leaders in the Diwaan Hall of the gurdwara to hear the 'kirtan' (devotional song) and 'hukamnama' from the Guru Granth Sahib. "At the newly built Guru Nanak Gurdwara, His Majesty met volunteers who run the Luton Sikh Soup Kitchen Stand. The kitchen provides vegetarian hot meals seven days a week, 365 days a year at the Gurdwara," Buckingham Palace said. "During the pandemic, the Gurdwara ran a pop-up Covid vaccine clinic, which was one of the first of its kind in the UK. The Gurdwara also encouraged other places of worship to tackle misinformation regarding vaccine hesitancy," it said. Indian-origin Professor Gurch Randhawa, a member of the local Sikh congregation and Director of the Institute for Health Research at the University of Bedfordshire who greeted the King at the gurdwara, described the visit as "hugely auspicious". "His Majesty the King

Charles III, respecting Sikhism, entered and exited Diwaan Hall with kirtan playing live, sat down and listened to the hukamnama from Guru Granth Sahib Ji," said



Randhawa. "He met our humble volunteers who cook 500 meals per day during the week, and 1,000 meals per day during weekends, our healthcare volunteers who ran pop up Covid vaccine clinics, our Luton Sikh Soup Kitchen volunteers who serve 150 meals outside Luton Town Hall every Sunday all of these services are accessed by all faith and ethnic communities. "The king also met children who are learning kirtan and heard them play a Shabad. All in all, a joyous occasion which I was honoured to host," he said.

While on the royal tour of Luton, the King also took a ride on the city's Direct Air-Rail Transit (DART) service. "The DART is an energy-efficient, electric cable car that will transport train arrivals at Luton Parkway to the airport, reducing carbon emissions by 70 per cent...the King met staff and apprentices who work on the DART, before taking the short four-minute ride to the airport," Buckingham Palace said. There was also an egg throwing incident in the area at the start of the royal tour when Charles was on a walkabout of Luton town centre. The monarch was briefly steered away from crowds by his security staff before continuing the tour. Bedfordshire Police said a man in his 20s has since been detained and is in custody. (PTI)

Germany: 25 arrested on suspicion of planning armed coup

BERLIN, DEC 7 /--/ Thousands of police officers carried out raids across much of Germany on Wednesday against suspected far-right extremists who allegedly sought to overthrow the government in an armed coup.

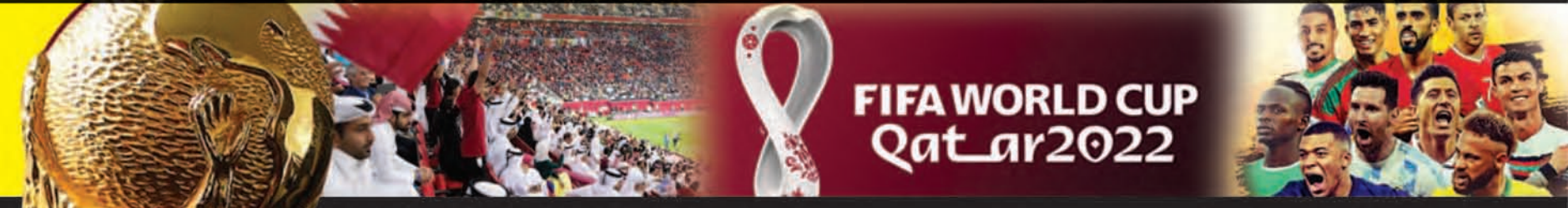
Officials said 25 people were detained. Federal prosecutors said some 3,000 officers conducted searches at 130 sites in 11 of Germany's 16 states. While police raids against the far right are not uncommon in the country still sensitive to its grim Nazi past the scale of the operation was unusual. Justice Minister Marco Buschmann described the raids as an "anti-terrorism operation," adding that the suspects may have planned an armed attack on institutions of the state. Germany's top security official said the group was "driven by violent coup fantasies and conspiracy ideologies." Prosecutors said the suspects were linked to the so-called Reich Citizens movement, whose adherents reject Germany's postwar constitution and have called for bringing down the government. Officers detained 22 German citizens on suspicion of "membership in a terrorist organisation," prosecutors said. Three other people, including a Russian citizen, were held on suspicion of supporting the organisation,

they said. Another 27 people were under investigation. German media outlet Der Spiegel reported the searched locations included the barracks of Germany's special forces unit KSK in the southwestern town of Calw. The unit received scrutiny in the past over alleged far-right involvement by some soldiers. Federal prosecutors declined to



confirm or deny that the barracks was searched. Along with detentions in Germany, prosecutors said one person was detained in the Austrian town of Kitzbuehel and another in the Italian city of Perugia. Prosecutors said those detained are alleged to have last year formed a "terrorist organisation with the goal of overturning the existing state order in Germany and replace it with their own form of state, which was already in the course of being founded." The suspects were aware their aim could only be achieved by military means and with force, prosecutors said. Some of the group's members had made "concrete preparations" to storm Germany's federal parliament with a small

armed group, according to prosecutors. "The details (of this plan) still need to be investigated" to determine whether any of the suspects can be charged with treason, they said. The group is alleged to have believed in a "conglomerate of conspiracy theories consisting of narratives from the so-called Reich Citizens as well as QAnon ideology," according to the statement. Prosecutors added that members of the group also believe Germany is ruled by a so-called "deep state;" similar baseless claims about the United States were made by former President Donald Trump. Prosecutors identified the suspected ringleaders as Heinrich XIII P.R. and Ruediger v.P., in line with German privacy rules. Der Spiegel reported that the former was a well-known 71-year-old member of a minor German noble family, while the latter was a 69-year-old former paratrooper. Federal prosecutors said Heinrich XIII P.R., whom the group planned to install as Germany's new leader, had contacted Russian officials with the aim of negotiating a new order in the country once the German government was overthrown. He was allegedly assisted in this by a Russian woman, Vitalia B. "According to current investigations there is no indication however that the persons contacted responded positively to his request," prosecutors said. (AP)



Goncalo Ramos bags hat-trick as Portugal crush Switzerland 6-1 to reach quarterfinals



DOHA, DEC 7 /--/ Goncalo Ramos justified the shock decision to drop Cristiano Ronaldo by scoring a hat-trick on his full debut as Portugal demolished Switzerland 6-1 on Tuesday to power into the World Cup quarter-finals. The 21-year-old Ramos, who started instead of Ronaldo, became

the youngest player to strike three times in a World Cup knockout match since Pele in 1958. Pepe, Raphael Guerreiro and Rafael Leao were also on target for a rampant Portugal, who booked a showdown with Morocco on Saturday for a place in the last four in Qatar. "I think

not even in my wildest dreams had I thought about being part of the starting XI for the knockout phase," said Ramos, who only made his Portugal debut in a pre-tournament friendly last month. Switzerland, who had been hoping to reach a first quarter-final since hosting the 1954 World Cup,

exited in the last 16 for the third time in a row. "Defeat is painful. We are sad about how we played, about the result. We wanted to make our country happy but we didn't manage to achieve that," said Switzerland coach Murat Yakin. Ronaldo, 37 and now without a club after his departure from Manchester United, has hogged the headlines during the tournament while looking a shadow of his former self. The only man to score at five World Cups, Ronaldo was left out by coach Fernando Santos against the Swiss following his angry response to being substituted in the last group game. Santos later said the decision to bench the Portugal star had been "strategic and nothing more", unrelated to his substitution against South Korea. "I said that it was closed and it was closed," Santos said. It was a bold call to omit a player with a record 118 international goals in favour of giving a full debut to Ramos, the

Benfica striker who had played just 33 minutes across three previous appearances. But it took just 17 minutes for Ramos to reward Santos' faith, and to achieve something Ronaldo has never done—score in a World Cup knockout game. Joao Felix clipped delicately into the feet of Ramos, who quickly swivelled past Fabian Schaer and rifled into the roof of the net past a stunned Yann Sommer. Otavio, who returned to the Portugal midfield after injury in their opening match, shot straight at Sommer before Ramos did likewise moments later. Xherdan Shaqiri drew a fingertip stop from Diogo Costa with a dipping free-kick from distance, but Portugal soon had their second. Bruno Fernandes whipped in a corner and the 39-year-old Pepe towered above the Swiss defence to powerfully head home. Diogo Dalot hacked Remo Freuler's header off the line after Diogo Costa failed to properly deal with a cross,

but the Swiss simply had no answers against an irresistible Portugal. Ramos turned in his second from close range six minutes into the second half from Dalot's cross down the right. He then turned provider by playing in Guerreiro to lash in another just four minutes later as the Swiss defence was ruthlessly ripped apart. It was also Ramos who inadvertently glanced a corner towards Manuel Akanji at the far post as the Manchester City centre-back pulled one back for Switzerland. Ramos completed his treble after more outstanding work from Felix, nonchalantly dinking over Sommer with one of his final touches before making way for Ronaldo. The five-time Ballon d'Or winner's introduction elicited the biggest roar of the night. Ronaldo did have the ball in the back of the net but it was ruled out for a clear offside. Leao capped off a sensational Portugal performance with a terrific curling strike in stoppage time. (AFP)

Rohit Sharma among 3 Indian Players ruled out of 3rd ODI, coach Rahul Dravid confirms

Bangladesh clinch 2nd successive ODI series vs India at home

DHAKA, DEC 7 /--/ India's shoddy batting display and the inability to land the killer blow contributed to their second successive series loss in Bangladesh after the diminutive Mehidy Hasan Miraz led the hosts to a five-run win in the second ODI with a memorable hundred here on Wednesday. Miraz tormented the Indian bowlers on way to his maiden century as Bangladesh staged a remarkable recovery to reach 271 for seven. India's challenge looked all over at 207 for seven but skipper Rohit Sharma's (51 not out off 28 balls) valiant effort went in-vain as he nearly took his team home while batting with a split left webbing. India needed a six off the final ball of the game but Mustafizur did well to perfect the yorker under pressure after bowling a slew of slow leg-breaks in the 48th over forcing Mohammed Siraj to play out a maiden. Bangladesh had also won their last ODI series against at home back in 2015 when Mashrafe Mortaza's men got the better of M S Dhoni and Co. The series loss also forces India to go back to the drawing board with the World Cup less than 12 months away. At 65 for four, India were in dire straits in the run chase before a spirited 101-ball 107-run between Shreyas Iyer (82 off 102) and Axar Patel (56 off 56) brought them back into the contest. Captain Rohit did not come out to open after hurting his elbow while fielding in Bangladesh's innings. It was only after the fall of seventh wicket, he decided to walk into the middle but clearly looked in discomfort. It was a courageous call to come out with a heavily taped left thumb and Rohit did provide a ray of hope by collecting couple of sixes and four from Ebadot Hussain in the 46th over. The Indian cricket team suffered a big blow in the third ODI against Bangladesh when skipper Rohit Sharma and pacer Deepak Chahar sustained injuries. Though the two came out to bat late in the game, neither of them will be available for the 3rd ODI, according to head coach Rahul Dravid. Kuldeep Sen, who also missed out in the 2nd ODI due to an injury, has also been ruled out of the third and final ODI of the series. Dravid, in the press conference, after the match, confirmed that the trio is out of the ODI series. He also revealed that Rohit will fly back to Mumbai to consult his injury with an expert. Only after a thorough analysis is done would the Hitman's participation in the forthcoming Test series against Bangladesh will be confirmed. "We are struggling with a few injuries as well which is not ideal and not easy for us. I think Deepak (Chahar) and Rohit (Sharma) will certainly miss the next match. Kuldeep is also out of the series. Rohit will fly back to Bombay, consult with an expert to see how it is, and confirm whether he can come back for the Test series or not. It is too early to say anything but he will be out for the next match for sure," he said in the post-match press conference. (PTI) Bangladesh 271 for 7 (Mehidy 100*, Mahmudullah 77, Washington 3-37) beat India 266 for 9 (Iyer 82, Axar 56, Rohit 51*, Ebadot 3-45, Shakib 2-39, Mehidy 2-46) by five runs



Paulo Dybala, the Serie A standout not needed by Argentina

DOHA, DEC 7 /--/ Paulo Dybala posted a photo of himself on Instagram laughing along with his Argentina teammate Lionel Messi, with the accompanying words: "We carry on with a smile! Let's go." Argentina might be getting ever closer to a place in the World Cup final but, on a purely personal level, the tournament has been nothing much to laugh about for Dybala. The Roma playmaker hasn't played a minute in Qatar,

despite the injuries afflicting Argentina on its turbulent run to the quarterfinals and the declining form of forward Lautaro Martinez. So what's the deal with Dybala, a player affectionately known as La Joya (or "The Jewel") and a standout in Italian soccer at his best? His biggest impediment is Lionel Messi himself. Dybala's preferred position is in the No. 10 position or the roving role off the striker-- which happens to be where Argentina's superstar

is best deployed. Given there's no way a healthy Messi is getting dropped, Dybala has to be moved into another position that doesn't necessarily suit his game. Then there's the thigh injury that almost cost him a place in Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni's squad for the World Cup. It was sustained when he converted a late, winning penalty for Roma in early October which led to him missing eight games for his club. way. (AP)



कृषि और किसान कल्याण मंत्रालय
भारत सरकार

75
आज़ादी का
अमृत महोत्सव



प्रधानमंत्री फसल बीमा योजना

रबी फसलों का बीमा जरूर कराएँ

कम प्रीमियम में सम्पूर्ण सुरक्षा पाएँ

सुरक्षित फसल, निश्चित किसान फसल बीमा ही समाधान

योजना से जुड़ने के लिए आज ही फसल बीमा पोर्टल www.pmfby.gov.in पर जाएँ या अपनी नज़दीकी बैंक शाखा/कृषि ऋण समिति/अधिकृत बीमा कम्पनी या जनसेवा केंद्र से सम्पर्क करें।

कृषि रक्षक

बीमा भागीदार

pmfby PMFasalBimaYojana pmfasalbimayojana

BEA | Alliance | ICICI | Future Generali | SBI | Universal Sompo

QR कोड स्कैन करें

“ प्रधानमंत्री फसल बीमा योजना मौसम की अनिश्चितता से जुड़े जोखिम को कम कर मेहनती किसान भाई बहनों के आर्थिक हितों की रक्षा करने में लगातार अहम भूमिका निभा रही है। किसान हितैषी बीमा योजना का लाभ आज करोड़ों किसान ले रहे हैं। ”

– नरेन्द्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री

योजना के 7 साल, बन रही नई मिसाल

दावे का भुगतान सीधे किसान के बैंक खाते में

1.25 लाख करोड़ रुपये से अधिक का बीमा दावा भुगतान

5.5 करोड़ से अधिक किसान हर वर्ष इस योजना से जुड़ रहे हैं

आधुनिक तकनीक से उपज का बेहतर अनुमान