

FREE AYANAR TRADERS
Opening
BEST PRICE

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)
SAFETY MEASURES

Thought for today

The Intellect is the vessel that holds the knowledge of God. It is different from Mind.

Atal Pension Yojana has reached 3.68 cr so far: Govt

The scheme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015 with an objective of providing old age income security particularly to the citizens in the unorganised sectors. Finance Ministry said, over 65 lakh have been enrolled in Atal Pension Yojana in the current financial year so far. Apart from enrolments, male to female subscription ratio of 56:44 is improving and asset under management is around 20 thousand crore rupees. The Ministry said, Atal Pension Yojana can be subscribed by any Indian citizen in the age group of 18 to 40 years having a bank account.

EXPRESS-IMPACT

Vaccination of teens begin in Schools a positive move, says parent

Port Blair, Jan 05: In a very positive move, the administration has started vaccinating the children in the 15-18 age group at their schools itself. Teams of staff and officials from the vaccination centers have now started visiting different schools to vaccinate the children. Taking lesson from the chaos and hiccups in the vaccination centre at JNRM on Tuesday, wherein hundreds of students had to wait for long hours to get their jobs and acting on news report published in this newspaper, teams from the health department have started visiting schools from today to vaccinate the students in their respective schools without giving pain to the students to visit the JNRM vaccination centre and stand in long queue. Confusion and delayed vaccination at the JNRM Vaccination Center has left students, teachers and parents of many students' grumbling. According to reports, health staff today visited some of the schools in the city and vaccinated the children in the schools themselves. This is really a welcome move by the administration, which will not only benefit the children, but expedite the vaccination process. The worry of the parents to send their children to already crowded vaccination centers, fearing infection will also be done away. Parents were demanding vaccination in schools, so that children don't have to come in contact with a large gathering of people at the vaccination center and risk infection. Since schools are already sanitized and less crowded, they can be vaccinated in a risk free environment. The staff and officials of the vaccination teams can visit the schools, by preparing a schedule and vaccinating the children in a perfectly organized manner. Besides, vaccination in schools will also be an easy take for the staff and officials on the vaccination duties as gathering of students at place will help them do their task fast. This move will also ease the tension of the parents as their fear of taking care of their children can be well taken care of by the school's teachers. As it will also be the responsibility of the schools to ensure that the children in the 15-18 age group feel safe and healthy after vaccination.

MP demand extra buses on busy routes, during 'before office' and 'after office' hours

Port Blair, Jan 05: The Member of Parliament, Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma has requested the Chief Secretary to operate a couple of extra buses in busy routes, during 'before office' and 'after office' hours so that government servants, office goers and other staff of private institutions can report to the duty on time and go back home without any hardship. In a letter addressed to the Chief Secretary, the Member of Parliament requested to continue the service of these extra buses till the restrictions on passenger capacity on buses are in place. He noted in his letter that considering the recent surge in Covid-19 cases, the Andaman Nicobar Administration has taken some preventive steps to contain the spread of Covid-19 virus and Omicron variant in Andaman Nicobar Islands, which is highly appreciated. Infact the timely action of Andaman Nicobar Administration will save thousands of people from Covid-19 infection, he said. He pointed out that among many such measures, the Transport Department has allowed public transport buses to operate with only 70% of the capacity. In this regard, the MP noted that some government servants and staff of various private institutions and shops are facing inconvenience to reach their respective workplaces, especially those who are living away from Port Blair city, like Tushnabad, Ograbraj, Choudhary, Sippigat, Chidiyatapu, Calicut etc. He said that in the morning hours due to restriction in the capacity of buses, many buses are not taking excess passengers and because of this many office going people are unable to reach their workplace. A large number of government servants are finding themselves totally helpless. Pointing out that absence of government servants or private staff from duty will certainly leave a negative impact on the overall performance of Andaman and Nicobar Administration and business organizations, the Member of Parliament demanded extra buses on busy routes, during 'before office' and 'after office' hours.

29 yrs man dies in fire accident at Prem Nagar

Port Blair, Jan 05: A man was burned to death after his rented house caught fire opposite the PBM C Biganat Ward No-6, Prem Nagar, at about 3.00 pm in the afternoon on Wednesday. According to sources, the house caught fire, and he died as the intensity of the fire was very high. The locals, who couldn't enter the house to rescue him, informed the Fire dept. Immediately fire tenders and fire personnel from Fire Station (HQ), Aberdeen Bazaar and Chatham, Marine rushed to the spot and put the fire blaze under control. The person who died in the fire is identified as 29 yrs old Anul Pandey, S/o Alagar. Locals say he returned back to his rented house today itself after getting discharged from the Mental Ward of the G.B. Pant Hospital. Since the time he returned back, he was behaving unfriendly with his neighbours and locals, even threatening to harm them. In the afternoon, he locked himself from the inside and set his house on fire leaving him dead. 5-6 rooms of the house, including the room he was occupying, were completely gutted. Mr. RK Raj, a Congress leader and resident of Prem Nagar informed.



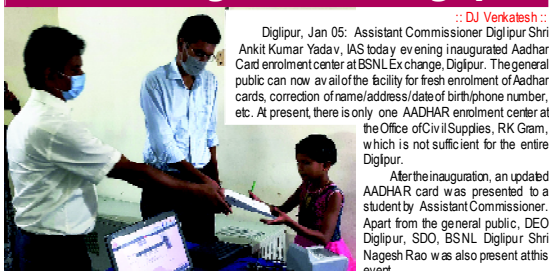
TAKE PROACTIVE MEASURES:

Reduce flight frequency, cap tourism activities to check flow of Covid-19

Port Blair, Jan 05: In view of the rising Covid cases, including Omicron variant in the islands, demands for reducing the flight frequency have been gaining momentum. Citizens blame an enhanced number of flights as the main source of flow of the coronavirus in the islands. According to official reports, in a single day on Tuesday 38 persons were reported Covid-19 positive, of which over 20 were passengers. The official figure provided to the media is a clear indicator that the surge in the Covid cases in the islands is only because of the tourists entering the islands from the mainland. According to sources, as many as 14 flights with over 2400 passengers are landing at Port Blair on a daily basis, the biggest source of flow of the coronavirus into the islands. No RT-PCR test is being conducted on passengers who have already received both their doses and RT-PCR tests are conducted only on those passengers who have not received both the doses or have received only one dose. The first two waves of the Covid-19 pandemic have already claimed the lives of several islanders and the third wave is at the door. Fortunately, no islander had died in the 3rd wave so far. But the administration should take proactive preventive measures. One such measure will be reducing the frequency of flight services to the islands. The only and the best way to check the flow of Covid-19 cases in the islands, is operation of limited flights. All sorts of tourism activities should be capped for a few weeks, or till such time, there is a dip in the Covid-19 cases in the islands. High time, the administration should act and act fast by reducing the flight frequency and restricting all tourism activities for a few weeks.

AADHAR Card enrolment center inaugurated at Diglipur

Diglipur, Jan 05: Assistant Commissioner Diglipur Shri Ankit Kumar Yadav, IAS today evening inaugurated Aadhar Card enrolment center at BSNL Ex change, Diglipur. The general public can now avail of the facility for fresh enrolment of Aadhar cards, correction of name/address/date of birth/phone number, etc. At present, there is only one Aadhar enrolment center at the Office of Civil Supplies, RK Gram, which is not sufficient for the entire Diglipur. After the inauguration, an updated Aadhar card was presented to a student by Assistant Commissioner. Apart from the general public, DEO Diglipur, SDO, BSNL Diglipur Shri Nagesh Rao was also present at this event.



Vaccination drive continuing smoothly in Isles

Port Blair, Jan 05: The vaccination drive is continuing smoothly in A&N Islands. As per data available, a total of 5,98,638 beneficiaries have been vaccinated so far in A&N Islands. A total of 3641 people were vaccinated yesterday. 2615 beneficiaries were vaccinated in South Andaman District, out of which 2079 beneficiaries were in the age group of 15-18 years while 139 beneficiaries were in the age group of 18-44 years. Similarly, 814 beneficiaries were vaccinated in North & Middle Andaman District out of which 787 beneficiaries were in the age group of 15-18 years while 4 beneficiaries were in the age group of 18-44 years. 212 beneficiaries in the age group of 15-18 years were vaccinated in Nicobar District. Meanwhile, during the RT-PCR test conducted on 397 passengers who arrived here Monday, 12 positive cases have been detected. Yesterday, 2132 passengers arrived by flight, out of which, 1726 were vaccinated with both doses while the RT-PCR test was conducted on 406 passengers and the reports are awaited. About 25 positive cases were found during the test conducted Monday. During RAT conducted on 83 passengers bound for North & Middle Andaman at Ferrargunj, all were found negative. At Mohanpura Bus Terminus, test was conducted on 47 passengers and all were found negative. At Phoenix Bay Jetty, 72 passengers were tested with RAT and all were found negative. At Helipad, 10 passengers were tested with RAT and all were found negative. See...Page 02

UJALA completes 7 years; Over 36 crore 70 lakh LEDs distributed across the country so far

Launched on 5th January, 2015, Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) programme has completed 7 years. The programme has evolved to be the world's largest zero-subsidy domestic lighting programme that addresses concerns like high electrification cost and high emissions that result from inefficient lighting. AIR correspondent reports, UJALA program through its innovative approach has resulted in significant benefits. More than 36 crore 70 lakh LEDs have been distributed across the country so far. Over 47 thousand Million Kilo-watt-hour per annum energy has been saved, 9 thousand 565 megawatts of peak demand has been avoided. There has been substantial reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. It has reduced annual household electricity bills. With UJALA, the retail price of LED bulbs has also come down significantly. The program encourages Make in India. Domestic manufacturing of LED bulbs has increased from 1 lakh per month to 4 crore per month. Garnering attention from management schools, the programme is Leadership case study in IIM, Ahmedabad. It is also under consideration for being included in the curriculum of Harvard Business School.

UPSC to conduct Civil Services (Main) Exam 2021 as per schedule

The Union Public Service Commission has decided to conduct the Civil Services (Main) Examination 2021 as per schedule. The exam is scheduled to be held from 7th to 16th of this month. The decision has been taken by the Commission after carefully reviewing the situation prevailing due to COVID-19 pandemic. The See...Page 02

Student's council elected in DBRAIT

Port Blair, 5th Jan, 2022: To empower and involve students in the decision making of the institutes, in carrying out various students related activities, a student's council is elected through elections. The student's council election of DBRAIT for academic year 2021-22, was held on 4th Jan through e-mode as per the Lingdoh committee guidelines. Elected members of the Council are: Mr. Makina Priyavir - Mech III- President, B. Rajesh - Elect III- Vice President, Jyothi - ECE-III- Secretary (Cultural), T. Mohd. Sahil- Civil III- Secretary (Academic Grievances), Aarif Mohd.- B.Tech CSE II- Secretary (Literary), Hritika Roy- B.Tech CSE II- Secretary (Campus Development) and R. Surya-IT III- Secretary (Sports).



BJP State Executive Meeting held

Port Blair, Jan 05: The State Executive meeting of Bharatiya Janata Party was called at the Syama Prasad Mookerjee Bhavan, Middle Point. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Dilip Sakia, MP, Mangalot Assam National General Secretary BJP & Election Incharge for A & N Islands, Mr. Y Salya Kumar, National Secretary BJP & Prabhari A&N Islands, Mr. Ashish Sood, Senior Leader & Election Incharge A&N Islands, Mr. Agnimitra Paul, MLA Asansol South, West Bengal, State General Secretary. BJP West Bengal & Election Co Incharge, Mr. Ajoy Bairagi, State President BJP A&N Islands, Mr. Vishal Jolly, Former State President & National Executive Member BJP, Mr. Bishnu Pada Ray, Former MP A & N Islands and Core Committee Member, Mr. Thalia Venkatesh Yadav, National Executive Member BJP OBC Morcha & Prabhari OBC Morcha A & N Islands, and Mr. Pooja Raju, National Executive Member BJP OBC Morcha and Up Prabhari OBC Morcha A & N Islands. In the Presidential address, Mr. Ajoy Bairagi Ji, explained the Organization work happening in the islands. Mr. Ashish Sood Ji addressed the meeting on the most efficient way on Election Campaigning. He also emphasized working in a positive and constructive way. Further addressing the meeting Mr. Agnimitra Paul explained the ease of politics in Andaman Islands as compared to West Bengal. She even explained that all central Govt See...Page 02

Smart Cities Mission launches "Smart cities and Academia Towards Action & Research (SAAR)" program

Smart Cities Mission has launched "Smart cities and Academia Towards Action & Research (SAAR)" program. It is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, National Institute of Urban Affairs and leading Indian academic institutions of the country. Under the program, 15 premier architecture & planning institutes of the country will be working with Smart Cities to document landmark projects undertaken by the Smart Cities Mission. The documents will capture learnings from best practices. It will provide opportunities to students for engagement on urban development projects and enable real-time information flow between urban practitioners and academia. The first activity envisaged under SAAR

SAAR
SMART CITIES AND ACADEMIA TOWARDS ACTION AND RESEARCH

Congress launches Two day Organization Training programme for party leaders

Port Blair, Jan 05: The Andaman & Nicobar Territorial Congress Committee launched an extensive 2-day campaign to train its senior party leaders under the "Orientation Programme for Organization Training" on Wednesday at Gandhi Bhawan. The programme commenced with lighting of lamp by ANTC President Shri. Rangalal Halder, ANTC Vice-President Smt. Shanta Laxman Singh, DCC President Shri. V.K Abdul Aziz, Mahila Congress South Andaman Coordinator Smt. Zubada Begum and Senior Congress leader Shri. Manickam. On the first day, party has trained about 35 senior leaders of the organization who will later conduct trainings in District, City and Block levels. The topics that were discussed include local issues, booth management, better utilization of official media, focus on Congress ideology and exposing the true face of BJP-RSS. The leaders who spoke on the occasion were Shri. Rangalal Halder, Smt. Shanta Laxman Singh, Shri. V.K Abdul Aziz, Smt. Zubada Begum, Shri. Tamil Selvam and Shri. Sebastian



EDITORIAL

The Andaman EXPRESS

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PM on scientists

A national entrepreneurship development board will be set up to check unemployment among scientists and technologists, Indra Gandhi announced in Mysore. Addressing the 69th annual session of the Indian Science Congress at the Mysore University campus, she said that all vacancies in the field of science and technology would be filled. She said the national science and technology entrepreneurship board would be constituted to link life science and technology manpower with under-utilised institutional facilities. The PM said the government was launching a three-pronged programme, which would take care of the inappropriate employment of such qualified persons.

No war pact
India has an "open mind" on a no-war pact with Pakistan, External Affairs Minister said in an interview to PTI. He said that the government's response on the issue had been "positive and correct". The minister was answering questions on the hectic diplomatic activity between the two countries. Rao recalled his statement in Parliament that Pakistan had "conveniently" rejected India's repeated offers of a no-war pact, first made in 1949. Still, this country had responded in a positive manner.

Sikh-Hindu unity
Militant Sikh leader Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale said in New Delhi that Hindu-Sikh unity was an article of faith with him. Addressing a huge congregation at Gurdwara Rakabgari, organised to end the mourning period for Jathedar Santokh Singh, Bhindranwale said the press had wrongly depicted him as a Hindu baiter. The Sikh leader said he wanted Hindus and Sikhs to live peacefully. He said Hindus and even Muslims, who did not smoke, should be honoured at Sikh platforms and presented with "sirapats". He said he was surprised that Hindu leaders were not reciprocating the call for "Sikh-Hindu unity".

BJP State Executive..

Schemes have been implemented very nicely across Islands. Mr Y Salya Kumar started with appreciating karyakats for their hard work on field. He guided the karyakats in strengthening the Organizational work. Later Mr Dilip Saikia said that he was mesmerized to see the work done by the Modi led Government in Islands, whether it is the bridge, OFC, New upcoming airport terminal and many more. He even said that the Central Government is very serious on the holistic development of Islands. Ending the

meeting Mr. Vishal Jolly also highlighted the Karyakats on teamwork and positive approach, he also stressed on working together and constructively for the development of Islands and leaders. The meeting was attended by all the State Office bearers, Mocha Presidents and General Secretaries, District President and General Secretaries. The inspirational address has motivated the karyakats to work hard and together in a constructive manner in upcoming Local Body elections.

Vaccination drive ..

negative. Apart from this, RTPCR test was conducted on 9 crew members of MV Rajahans and the reports are awaited. Till 3 pm, 356 doses of vaccines were

administered to beneficiaries, out of which, 310 Covaxin doses were administered to children between the age group of 15-18 years.

UPSC to conduct Civil ..

Commission has requested the State Governments to ensure hassle-free movement of candidates as restrictions and curbs have been imposed by State Governments to contain the spread of Covid-19. The

State Governments have been requested to ensure the optimum operationalization of public transport to ensure smooth movement of candidates during the examination period.

Smart Cities Mission ..

is to prepare a compendium of 75 landmark urban projects in India under the Smart Cities Mission. These 75 urban projects are innovative, multi-sectoral, and have been implemented across

geographies. The program marks the 75th anniversary of India's independence. Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs has said that the compendium of 75 urban projects would be launched by June this year.

COVID-19: Health Ministry issues revised guidelines for home isolation of mild and asymptomatic patients

New Delhi, 5th Jan, 2022: Patients will not be required to go for testing after the home isolation period is over. According to the new guidelines, patient under home isolation will stand discharged and end isolation after at least 7 days have passed from testing positive and have no fever for 3 successive days. Also, patients will not be required to go for testing after the home isolation period is over. Union Home Ministry further informed. The guidelines lay detailed conditions for the eligibility of home isolation. Patients aged 60 and above with co-morbid conditions such as Hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, chronic lung, liver, kidney disease, etc. will be allowed home isolation only after proper evaluation by the treating medical officer.

Patients suffering from immune compromised status such

as HIV, Transplant recipients, cancer therapy are not recommended for home isolation and will be allowed to do so only upon proper evaluation by the treating medical officer.

While patients are allowed home isolation, family members and other close contacts in the house should follow home quarantine guidelines on Ministry of Health's website. Meanwhile, India has logged 58,097 new COVID cases in the last 24 hours, and the daily positivity rate is at 4.18 per cent the Union Health Ministry informed on Wednesday.

The active caseload of COVID cases in the country now stands at 2,14,004. As per the Ministry, 2,135 cases of the Omicron variant have been detected in India, of which 828 have recovered.

COVID VACCINE DOES NOT INCREASE PRETERM BIRTH RISK: STUDY

Covid-19 vaccination during pregnancy is not associated with complications such as preterm birth or smaller than normal weight of babies, according to a study.

The researchers at the Yale

University in the US noted that pregnant people who contract Covid-19 have an increased risk of disease severity and death.

One barrier to vaccine acceptance is the concern that

vaccination might disrupt pregnancy, they said.

The findings, published on Tuesday in a report by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is based on more than 40,000

pregnant individuals.

It shows that Covid-19 vaccination during pregnancy was not associated with preterm birth or smaller-for-gestational-age (SGA) when comparing vaccinated with unvaccinated pregnant people.

The trimester when the vaccination was received and the number of Covid-19 vaccine doses received were also not associated with increased risk of preterm birth or SGA, the researchers found.

"Getting vaccinated against Covid-19 is important for preventing severe illness in pregnant people," said Heather Lipkind, associate professor at the Yale School of Medicine and lead author of the study.

Preterm birth—where babies are delivered earlier than 37 weeks—and SGA, in which babies are delivered smaller in size than normal for the gestational age, have been associated with a higher risk for infant death and disability.

The researchers used data from eight health care organisations to

investigate the risk for preterm birth or SGA among vaccinated and unvaccinated pregnant women aged 16 to 49 years.

Among those included in the study, 10,064 individuals, or nearly 22 percent, received at least one Covid-19 vaccine dose during pregnancy, researchers said.

As many as 98.3 per cent received vaccination during their second or third trimester while rest received it during their first trimester of pregnancy.

Almost 96 per cent of those vaccinated received an mRNA vaccine developed by Pfizer or Moderna.

The new findings add to the evidence that Covid-19 vaccination is safe during pregnancy, the researchers said. Research into the drivers behind low vaccine acceptance among pregnant people has found that the most common concerns have been a lack of information about Covid-19 vaccine safety in pregnant people and potential harm to the foetus, they added.

'Fix responsibility': Fuming Centre roasts Punjab Govt. for breach in PM security

New Delhi, 5th Jan, 2022: Moments after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first rally in poll-bound Punjab was cancelled on Wednesday, the Centre said this was on account of a major breach in his security.

In a statement detailing the sequence of events, the Press Information Bureau (PIB) said "Today morning, the Prime Minister landed at Bathinda from where he was to go to the National Martyrs Memorial at Hussainiwalla by helicopter. Due to rain and poor visibility, the PM waited for about 20 minutes for the weather to clear out."

"When the weather did not improve, it was decided that he would visit the National Martyrs Memorial via road, which would take more than two hours. He proceeded to travel by road after necessary confirmation of necessary security arrangements by the DGP (director general of police) Punjab Police," it added.

The statement went on to say that "around 30km away from the National Martyrs Memorial in Hussainiwalla, when the PM's convoy reached a flyover, it was found that the road was blocked by some protesters", resulting in the convoy being stuck there for 15-20 minutes, which was a major lapse in his security.

Modi was scheduled to address a rally in Ferozepur and lay the foundation stone of multiple development projects worth more than ₹42,750 crore.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president JP Nadda accused the Congress government in Punjab of using "all tricks to scuttle" PM Modi's programmes, including the Ferozepur rally.

He said in a series of tweets that

Modi's rally was called off and another programme disrupted as protesters blocked his route breaching the security protocol. He termed the security lapse as "extremely worrisome" incident.

"Protesters were given access to the Prime Minister's route while the Punjab CS (chief secretary) and DGP gave assurances to SPC (Special Protection Group) that the route is clear. To make matters worse, C.M. (Charanjit Singh) Channi refused to get on the phone to either address the matter or solve it. The tactics used by the Congress government in Punjab would pain any one who believes in democratic principles," Nadda said in a tweet.

The BJP president alleged the state police as instructed to prevent people from attending Modi's rally and a large number of abuses were stranded because of the high-handedness of the police in connivance with the protesters.

"In doing so, they did not bother that the prime minister was to pay tributes to Bhagat Singh and other freedom fighters, and lay the foundation stone for key development works," the BJP president said.

"By their cheap antics, the Congress government in Punjab has shown that they are anti-development and have no respect for freedom fighters too" he added, alleging that it was done as the ruling party in the state fears a resounding defeat in the upcoming assembly polls.

Elections in Punjab are likely to be announced shortly.

"It is sad that the PM's visit to launch

development projects worth thousands of crores for Punjab was disrupted. But we will not let such cheap mentality hinder progress of Punjab and will continue the effort for the development of Punjab," Nadda tweeted.

Senior Congress spokesperson Randeep Singh Surjewala hit back at Nadda for his comments in a series of tweets. He wrote, "Stop losing cool and all sense of propriety. Please remember... 10,000 security personnel were deployed for the PM's rally. All arrangements were made in tandem with SPG and other agencies. The route was carved even for all buses of BJP workers from Haryana and Rajasthan."

Detailing the protocol between the Special Protection Group (SPG) and Punjab police, the PIB statement said the PM's schedule and travel plan was communicated well in advance to the Punjab government. "As per procedure, they have to make necessary arrangements for logistics, security as well as keep a contingency plan ready. Also, in view of the contingency plan, the Punjab Government has to deploy additional security to secure any movement by road, which was clearly not deployed."

It said after the security lapse, it was decided to head back to Bathinda airport. Taking cognizance of what it termed as a "serious" security lapse, the ministry of home affairs has sought a detailed report from the state government. The state government has also been asked to fix responsibility for this lapse and take strict action, the statement added.

India records first death due to Omicron variant of Covid-19

India on Wednesday recorded the first death linked to the Omicron variant of Covid-19 after the samples of a man in Rajasthan's Udaipur, who died last week, showed the presence of the variant.

Confirming the development, Luv Aggarwal, Joint Secretary of Health Ministry, said: "Technically it is Omicron related death (on the Rajasthan case). He was an elderly person. The person is reported to have comorbidities, like diabetes among others."

The 73-year-old man, who was found infected with Omicron in genome sequencing and who had tested negative for the infection twice, died in a Udaipur hospital on December 31, according to a report in news agency PTI.

He died due to post-Covid pneumonia coupled with comorbidities—diabetes mellitus, hypertension and hypothyroidism—Udaipur Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Dinesh Khara had said.

The genome sequencing result received on December 25 revealed that the man was infected with the Omicron variant.

On Wednesday, India's active caseload crossed the 2-lakh mark, with a single-day spike of 58,097 Covid-19 cases. According to the head of the Covid working group of National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI), Dr N K Arora, India is already witnessing the third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The rise in cases has been spurred by the Omicron variant of the coronavirus—of which India currently has 2,135 cases, according to the Union Ministry of Health.

Stating that Maharashtra, West Bengal, Delhi, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Jharkhand and Gujarat have emerged as states of concern due to a surge in Covid-19 cases, the Union health ministry added that 28 districts in the country have been reporting more than 10% weekly positivity, while 43 districts have reported weekly positivity between 5-10%.



Omicron surge points at third COVID-19 wave, but with different characteristics

Port Blair, 5th Jan, 2022: Fears of a third COVID-19 wave are taking over India seem to be coming true just days into 2022.

The total number of COVID-19 cases rose by 58,097 in the last 24 hours, as per a government update on January 5. While this is not even a fifth of the record daily high posted in the midst of the second wave in early May 2021, the number is not to be sneezed at.

For one, it is the highest daily rise in new cases in six-and-a-half months. Second, the increase of over 55 per cent from the previous 24 hours is the highest since the first week of April 2020, when new cases numbered in a few hundred.

Third, the country has now experienced double-digit percentage increases in new daily cases in eight of the last nine days, with the average daily increase being 27.3 percent.

Such numbers were not seen even in the deadly second wave. Between early April 2021, when new daily cases first crossed the 1-lakh mark, and May 7, 2021, when the second wave was at its peak, the average daily increase in new cases was a mere 4.2 percent. But the experience so far in Delhi, and globally, offers hope.

In South Africa, which first reported a case of Omicron, the surge in cases caused by the new

variant seems to have lasted a single month. On December 30, the South African government said all indicators suggested the peak of the wave was likely over.

Assuming a similar cycle for India, could the current surge in cases peak in January itself? Forecasters seem to think so, at least as far as the US is concerned. On January 3, the US posted a record 10.83 lakh new cases. However, The Washington Post reported on January 4 that several infectious-disease experts see the current wave peaking as early as this weekend to perhaps later this month.

The key, though, might lie in

the number of persons being admitted in hospitals. In the US, total hospitalisations on January 3 crossed the 1-lakh mark for the first time since September. But they remain below the peak of 1.42 lakh hit in January 2021. The severity of Omicron, or lack thereof, is crucial.

While only 2,135 cases of Omicron have been recorded so far in India, the new variant has been detected in 84 percent of samples from the capital, the state's minister of health Satyendra Jain said on January 4. And although there are no doubts about Omicron's transmissibility, its milder symptoms perhaps make it more relevant and

potentially more relevant and than at hospitalisations. In Delhi, the number of new COVID-19 cases reported shot up to 5,481 on January 4 from 290 on December 25. At the same time, the bed occupancy rate at hospitals and dedicated COVID care and health centres increased to 6.2 percent from 1.7 percent.

Contrast these numbers with those from early in the second COVID-19 wave. From 368 on

March 15, 2021, the number of daily new cases in Delhi rose fewer than five times to 1,819 on March 31, 2021. Despite the number of daily new cases remaining below the 2,000 mark, the bed occupancy rate nearly tripled in a fortnight to 15.9% on March 31, 2021. Like Delhi, only a fraction of new cases in Mumbai are severe in this time around.

During January 2-4, Mumbai saw 27,005 new COVID-19 cases. Of these, 7 percent required hospitalisation. Further, of those who were hospitalised, just over 9 percent have required oxygen support. As such, only 0.66 percent of fresh cases in Mumbai between January 2 and January 4 have required the aid of oxygen.

Overall, the bed occupancy rate in Mumbai stood at 14.7 percent on January 4, up from 7.8 percent on December 31.

A change in focus from the COVID-19 case load to hospitalisations has already been discussed elsewhere. CNN reported in mid-December 2021 that US President Joe Biden's advisers

were encouraging the administration to shift "public attention away from the total number of infections and toward serious cases only".

But perhaps it is too early to talk of hospitalisations as the key metric. After all, symptoms can become severe even after a week or so. With the surge in cases in India being rather recent, the amount of data available is far from sufficient.

The key, however, remains vaccination. According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, COVID-19-associated hospitalisation rate was as eight times higher for unvaccinated adults in January-November 2021. As Anthony Fauci, President Biden's chief medical adviser and one of the leading faces from the scientific community in the fight against COVID-19, told ABC News on January 2: "The real bottom line that you want to be concerned about is, are we getting protected by the vaccines from severe disease leading to hospitalisation?"

PRESS NOTE

Applications are invited from eligible candidates for filling up posts of 04 Block Level Facilitator on contract basis under the Scheme: Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakam (PMJKV) in the Department of Social Welfare, A & N Administration.

The functions of Block Level Facilitator:

- To function as a bridge between the Government institutions and the minority community to ensure that the benefits of the programme reach them properly.
- To give necessary support to a Block Level Committee in scrutinizing the plan proposal for its recommendations to District Level Committee and monitoring the implementation of the projects.
- The facilitator would prepare the progress report and other required reports for the programme.
- The facilitator would also render necessary support to Social Audit Committee at the Block Level.
- To facilitate geo-tagging of assets to be taken up/taken under the karyakaram.
- To facilitate getting PMJKV details and its updates under the DISHA framework.
- To assist the baseline-survey in MCAs.

Interested candidates are advised to submit their detailed resume in the prescribed format along with supporting documents with a covering letter addressed to Director (Social Welfare), Directorate of Social Welfare, Goalghar, Port Blair or mail to: directorsw4@gmail.com latest by **5.00 pm on 13th January, 2022** for scrutiny of the applications.

Interview for the eligible candidates will held on 17th January, 2022 at 10.00 AM at Directorate of Social Welfare, Goalghar. The list of eligible candidates for interview will also be displayed in the Notice Board of the Directorate of Social Welfare, Goalghar.

- Applications received after due date will not be accepted.
- The candidates who do not fulfill any criteria shall not be invited for interview.

District	Block	No of post	Qualification Experience & Monthly emoluments
North Middle Andaman	Mayabunder	01	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any Graduate with preferably two years experience of working in social sector. Good Knowledge in English & local Languages. Knowledge about Govt. Schemes for Minority Communities. Computer Skill in typing data entry, uploading of reports, online verification, etc. Rs 15,000/- to Rs 5000/- TA/DA
North Middle Andaman	Rangat	01	
Nicobar	Nancowry	01	
South Andaman	Ferrargunj	01	

Terms and conditions:-

- The appointment will be purely on contract basis as a BLF and no other regular service benefits will be admissible. The candidates will not have any right to claim for regular employment.
- No TA/DA will be paid for attending the interview.
- The selected candidate shall be responsible for the implementation of PMJKV Scheme, functioning under Directorate of Social Welfare.
- The candidates shall strictly observe all COVID-19 protocols at the time of appearing for the interview.

Director (Social Welfare)

PROFORMA

APPLICATION FOR THE POST OF _____

 Affix
Recent
Size
Photograph

1	Name of Candidate (IN BLOCK LETTERS)
2	Name of Father/Husband
3	Date of Birth (Proof to be enclosed)
4	Nationality
5	Permanent Address with Phone No. & Email ID
6	Educational Qualifications along with experience details (Proof to be enclosed)

DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that the information given above is true, complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that in the event of any information stated above being false or incorrect or my ineligibility being detected after the test/ appointment, my candidature/appointment is liable to be cancelled/ terminated.

 Place:
Date:

Signature of the applicant

 IP/8378/21
2021/MediaRelease/9

 No. 16/19/2021-M-1
Government of India
Ministry of Culture

Applications are invited from eligible officers for appointment to one post of Director (Exhibition & Public Relations), Group-'A', Gazetted, Non-Ministerial in Pay Scale of Rs. 12000-375-16500 (Pre-revised) [6th CPC-PB-3, Rs. 15600-39100/- plus Grade Pay Rs. 7600] (7th CPC-Level-12 of Pay Matrix) by transfer on deputation (including short term contract)/transfer in the National Museum, New Delhi, a Sub-Ordinate Office under Ministry of Culture. Applications in the prescribed format should reach to Shri Arun Kumar, Under Secretary, Ministry of Culture, Room No. 210, D Wing, 2nd Floor, Shastri Bhawan, Dr. Rajendra Prasad Road, New Delhi-110001 so as to reach him within a period of sixty days from the date of publication of this advertisement in Employment News. Complete details regarding eligibility conditions, educational qualifications and experience, application form, RRs etc. attached to the post are available on the website of this Ministry at www.indiaculture.gov.in. The post has already been advertised in the Employment News on 18th December 2021.

davn 09101/11/0031/2122

BSF Recruitment 2021, Apply 195 Group A, B & C vacancies @ bsf.gov.in

 BSF Recruitment 2021 | Constable, HC & ASI Posts | 72 Vacancies | Last Date: Within 45 Days | BSF Bharat Notification @ bsf.gov.in

BSF Recruitment 2021: Border Security Force (BSF) invites online application from capable persons to fill up ASI, HC & Constable posts. They are announced 72 vacancies for these Group-C Combed posts in Engineering set up of BSF. Applicants who are seeking for Central Government jobs may apply for this BSF jobs. Before applying for these advertised vacancies, candidates should read the notification to check the eligibility. Interested candidates need to submit the application through online mode. Aspirants must register themselves within 45 days from the date of publication of the advertisement.

BSF recruitment 2021 notification & apply online for BSF Group C Recruitment 2021 @ www.recruitment.bsf.gov.in. Candidates who had completed Class 10th/ITI/Diploma may use this chance to start & develop careers at BSF. Applicants should be an Indian national to apply for these BSF Group C posts. BSF expects both male & female eligible candidates to fill the vacant positions. Number of vacancies may change as per requirement. Experience in relevant field is essential to apply for this BSF jobs. More details of BSF Constable recruitment 2021, selection list, merit list, results & upcoming job advertisements are uploaded at official website.

Steps to Apply Online for BSF Recruitment 2021 Notification
Go to official website recruitment.bsf.gov.in.
Find & click on appropriate notification.
Read the notification thoroughly.
Fill the online application form.
Submit & take a copy of filled form.
Please visit www.bsf.gov.in to know details of BSF job opportunity. Here we have prescribed educational qualification, age limit, selection process, apply mode & steps to apply. Looking forward with www.dailyrecruitment.in to know latest job updates.

CORONAVIRUS MUST KNOW FACTS

What Is 2019-nCoV?
A new strain of the coronavirus that causes the common cold, severe acute respiratory tract illnesses.

Who Is At Risk?
Common in people with pre-existing respiratory illnesses, weakened immunity, infants, and older adults.

What Are The Symptoms?
Fever, Cough, Breathing difficulty, Sore Throat, Runny nose, Headache and General Debility.

What Are The Preventive Measures?

- Wash hands regularly using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water.
- Cover mouth and nose with tissue paper while sneezing.
- Avoid touching face, nose or mouth with dirty hands.
- Wear protective masks to avoid spreading virus.
- Stay at home if sick.
- Disinfecting and cleaning surfaces that you frequently touch.

LOST

I, Manisankar Das, S/o Indrajit Das, R/o LAXMIPUR, Digipur lost my Islander Identity card bearing No 10102300051604, Aadhar Card bearing No 531685983489, and Driving licence AN012020000397 for 2/3 wheeler at Laxmipur area. Finder please contact on 9932081321.

End of an era: BlackBerry stops service for iconic smartphone



BlackBerry is stopping service for its business smartphones from today, bringing an end to the tale of the popular device of the 2000s.

The company, BlackBerry Ltd, said that handheld running its in-house software would no longer be expected to "reliably function", a move that it had announced in 2020.

BlackBerry will be shutting off all its key services—data, SMS and phone calls, meaning users cannot pin any cellular or WiFi networks. Once the go-to device for business executives and those working on-the-go, BlackBerry's hold on the market declined with the introduction of the iPhone and Android touch screens with better features.

The Canadian company stopped production of the phone in 2016, shifting its focus to software development. TCL Communication took over the licensing of BlackBerry products and continued to release devices until 2020, powered by Android OS.

It was the BlackBerry that pioneered push email and famously had a QWERTY keyboard that made it convenient to type.

In recent years, the company turned its attention to cybersecurity software and operating system for cars.

Despite losing relevance as the touchscreen era progressed, BlackBerry continued to have a loyal fanbase—to this day—and many of them took to social media to express their sadness on witnessing the death of the iconic gadget.

Some, though, are still hoping for a revival of physical keyboard devices.

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IN CONVERSATION

WHY SHIFT TO SHORTER ISOLATION, QUARANTINE PERIODS? CDC EXPLAINS RATIONALE

The US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has explained the scientific rationale for shortening its COVID-19 isolation and quarantine recommendations, among which had garnered criticism from some quarters. The agency had announced changes last week, halving the isolation time for Americans who catch the coronavirus and have no symptoms or only brief illnesses. Isolation should only end if a person has been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and if other symptoms are resolving, the CDC added. It similarly shortened the time that close contacts need to quarantine, from 10 days to five.

In laying out the scientific basis for the revisions, the agency said more than 100 studies from 17 countries indicate that most transmission happens early in an infection. The CDC acknowledged the data come from research done when Delta and other pre-Omicron variants were causing the most infections. But the agency also pointed to limited, early data from the US and South Korea that suggests the time between exposure and the appearance of symptoms may be shorter for Omicron than for earlier variants. The CDC also took up the question of why it didn't call for a negative test before people emerge

from isolation. The agency said lab tests can show positive results long after someone stops being contagious, and that a negative at-home test may not necessarily indicate there is no threat. That is why, the agency said, it was recommending that people wear masks everywhere for the five days after isolation ends.

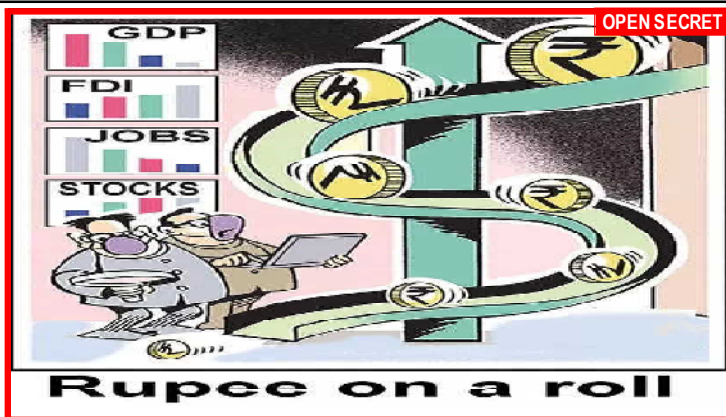
CDC officials previously said the changes were in keeping with evidence

that people with the coronavirus are most infectious in the two days before and three days after symptoms develop.

Some experts have questioned how the new recommendations were crafted and why they were changed amid a spike in cases driven largely by the highly contagious Omicron variant. Some also expressed dismay that the guidelines allowed people to leave isolation without getting tested to see if they were still infectious.

The CDC had earlier stated that the Omicron variant accounted for 95 per cent of new coronavirus infections last week, according to US health officials' latest estimates. The latest estimates suggest a dramatic swing—in just one month—in which version of the coronavirus is most abundant. Beginning in late June, the Delta variant was the main version causing US infections. The CDC said more than 99.5 per cent of coronavirus cases were Delta as recently as the end of November.

The CDC's estimates are based on coronavirus specimens collected each week through university and commercial laboratories and state and local health departments. Scientists analyse their genetic sequences to determine which versions of the COVID-19 viruses are most abundant.



RAT for athletes on arrival at camps and training centres: SAI's fresh SOPs amid spike in Covid cases

NEW DELHI: Athletes will be required to undergo Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) upon arrival at national camps and training centres, the Sports Authority of India (SAI) said on Wednesday as it came up with a slew of measures to combat the renewed threat posed by Covid-19.

Unlike the latest guidelines, the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that SAI has issued before the Tokyo Olympics last year, required an athlete to take an RT-PCR test within 72 hours before arrival at camp with a negative report.

The SAI has issued the fresh SOPs to deal with the drastic rise in the positive cases, mostly owing to the Omicron variant, across the country.

These measures will be strictly implemented at the various National Centres of Excellence (NCOE) as well as the ongoing

national coaching camps.

Upon arrival at the training centres, all athletes will undergo mandatory Rapid Antigen Test (RAT).

"If the test comes negative, they will train and dine separately until the sixth day of joining. A repeat of the RAT will take place on the fifth day," SAI stated in a press release.

"Those who get a positive result would undergo a RT-PCR test and be treated in isolation, while the athletes testing negative would continue normal training," it added.

The SAI has also recommended that athletes would be participating in only those competitions recommended by the respective National Sports Federations (NSFs) and the SAIHO officials, "the nodal sports body said in a release. For

Proper isolation facilities are being earmarked for Covid positive or symptomatic athletes across the camps and the facilities would be sanitised twice a day.

There will also be a micro-bubble, where the athletes will be divided into small groups for training and dining. The athletes have also been strictly asked to avoid interacting with other groups.

Besides, random testing of athletes, coaches, support staff and non-residential staff in the NCOE will be carried out once every 15 days.

It has also been recommended that athletes would be participating in only those competitions recommended by the respective National Sports Federations (NSFs) and the SAIHO officials, "the nodal sports body said in a release. For

tournaments and non-Olympic qualifying events, recommendations would be made by the respective Regional Directors (RDs) of the NCOEs."

It is also to be noted that guidelines from the respective state governments will supersede these SOPs in those particular states, SAI stated.

Last year, few national camps were disrupted owing to breakouts of Covid cases, including boxing in Patiala and New Delhi, and camps in Bhopal and Bengaluru, where the hockey teams were training.

A stricter SOP was announced after as many as 24 sports persons and 12 support staff members tested positive for the virus at the SAI's Bhopal centre. Before that, in 2020, several men's freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestlers had tested positive for the virus after reporting to a national camp at the SAI Sonapat centre.



Precautionary dose of COVID-19 vaccine to be same as first two doses: Govt

The precautionary dose of COVID-19 vaccine will be the same as the first and second doses, the government said on Wednesday while rolling out vaccine mixing for the booster dose. India will start giving the booster dose to frontline healthcare workers and those above 60 with co-morbidities from January 10. "Those who've received Covaxin will receive Covaxin, those who have received primary two doses of Covishield will receive Covishield," Dr VK Paul, Member Health, NITI Aayog said. According to the health ministry, India reported over 6.3 times rise in Covid cases in the last eight days—a sharp rise in case positivity from 0.79 per cent on December 29 to 5.03 per cent on January 5. Twenty-eight districts reported over 10 per cent weekly positivity rate while 43 districts reported a weekly positivity rate between 5-10 per cent. The government observed that Maharashtra, West Bengal, Delhi, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Jharkhand and Gujarat were

emerging states of concern due to the surge in COVID-19 cases. The health ministry, however, noted that as surge in COVID-19 cases is visible across the globe. Around 25.2 lakh cases were recorded globally on January 4, the highest ever since onset of pandemic. Talking at the press meet, Dr Balmir Bhargava, Director General of Indian Council of Medical Research informed that an Omicron detecting RT-PCR kit has been developed in partnership between Tata MDand ICMR and it has been approved by Drugs Controller General of India. This kit will give test results in four hours, he said. Dr Bhargava said the new coronavirus variant, Omicron, is the predominant circulating strain in India. "Omicron is the predominant circulating strain in cities in the country. Mass gatherings should be avoided to lower the speed of this spread," he said. As per the health ministry, 2,135 cases of Omicron have been reported in the country with Maharashtra registering the maximum cases followed by Delhi.

Tharupurick seven wickets to restrict the hosts' first innings for Sharda Thakur. Best figures by an Indian against South Africa, thoroughly deserved his seven wickets for persistence and intelligence. Has single-handedly brought India back into the second Test. Over to the batters now. #SAVIND, tweeted Laxman.

Taking to Twitter, Tendulkar wrote, "Congratulations to @imShard on picking up 7 wickets with his steady bowling and variations. Good support by the others."

On being asked by bowling coach Paras Mhambrey about how he felt after reading the tweet, Sharda said that the praises from Sachin are always a 'morale booster' for him.

"It's my pleasure that the 'God' himself has tweeted about me. Being a Mumbaier, I have played a few games with him. He has always supported me as a

youngster and it's always good to hear from him, it is a morale booster," Sharda told Mhambrey.

Apart from Sachin, former India batter VVS Laxman also congratulated Thakur for his 'lion-hearted display'.

"Lion-hearted display by Sharda Thakur. Best figures by an Indian against South Africa, thoroughly deserved his seven wickets for persistence and intelligence. Has single-handedly brought India back into the second Test. Over to the batters now. #SAVIND, tweeted Laxman.

At Stumps on Day 2, India's scorecard read 85/2, with Cheteshwar Pujara (35*) and Ajinkya Rahane (11*) on the crease. Just like the opening day, 11 wickets fell on the second day as Thakur dominated proceedings.

In the second innings, India got off to a bad start as stand-in skipper KL Rahul was dismissed in the seventh over. India's problems further increased when Mayank Agarwal offered no shot

'It's a morale booster': Sharda Thakur on receiving praise from Sachin Tendulkar

JOHANNESBURG: India's bowling all-rounder Sharda Thakur expressed his happiness after being praised by the legend Sachin Tendulkar for his heroics with the ball in the second Test against South Africa.

Tharupurick seven wickets to restrict the hosts' first innings for Sharda Thakur. Best figures by an Indian against South Africa, thoroughly deserved his seven wickets for persistence and intelligence. Has single-handedly brought India back into the second Test. Over to the batters now. #SAVIND, tweeted Laxman.

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SUPER SHARDUL LEADS FIGHTBACK
Shardul Thakur roared to a 7-wicket haul, but South Africa reached 229, taking a 27-run first innings lead. India started steadily in the second innings, reaching 85/2 at stumps on Day 2 at Johannesburg.
Shardul Thakur took 7/61, his first 5-wicket haul in Tests. His previous best was 4/61 against Australia at Brisbane in January 2021.
Shardul is the sixth Indian bowler to record a five-wicket haul in Tests at Johannesburg.
Joining Anil Kumble, Ravajal Singh, Sreesanth, Mohd Shami and Jasprit Bumrah.
He is the sixth visiting pacer to take 7 wickets in an innings in SA in the past 100 years, joining Andy Caddick, Matthew Hoggard, Mitchell Johnson, George Gentry & Franklin Rose.

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Symptoms:
fever, runny nose, cough and sore throat. If severe, it can be more severe leading to pneumonia or breathing difficulties. Symptoms may develop within 14 days after exposure.

Protect yourself from getting COVID-19
wearing your mask. Regularly wash your hands and avoid use of an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
Avoiding touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
Avoiding close contact with people who have fever and coughing.
When coughing and sneezing cover your mouth/nose with a folded elbow or tissue.
If you suspect you may have COVID-19, contact 1800-200-0777 (Toll-free English, Hindi and Gujarati).

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10 TIPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS DO NOT RISK YOUR LIFE

1. Avoid going to crowded places and public transport.
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