

REVERBERATION

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06 page

A weekly echoing the mood of the people, comes to you on every Monday

Ashes of General Bipin Rawat, wife immersed in Ganga in Haridwar



General Bipin Rawat
1958-2021

PTI, DEHRADUN: The ashes of General Bipin Rawat and his wife Madhulika were immersed in the Ganga in Haridwar by their two daughters on Saturday.

The rituals were conducted by priests Aditya Vashisth and Parikshit Sikhola as the urns containing the ashes of General Rawat and

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Minister of State for I & B and Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying attends fishermen community interaction programme



Port Blair, Dec. 11

The Hon'ble Minister of State for Information & Broadcasting and Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, GoI, Dr. L. Murugan attended the fishermen community interaction programme organized by Fisheries Welfare Association, A&N Islands today at Durga Puja Pandal, Junglighat. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister stated that foreseeing high potential,

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MP introduces Private Member's Bill titled "The Compulsory Sports & Physical Education and Infrastructure Development in schools of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, 2019" in the Lok Sabha

Port Blair, Dec 09:

Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma in his capacity as a Member of Parliament has introduced a Private Member's Bill titled The Compulsory Sports & Physical Education and Infrastructure Development in schools of Andaman & Nicobar Islands Bill, 2019 in the Lok Sabha on 3rd

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New India believes in solving problems, not avoiding them: PM Modi



PTI, NEW DELHI: Taking a swipe at previous regimes, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that his government believes in solving problems and not avoiding them.

He said this while speaking at a function on the theme

"Depositors First: Guaranteed Time-bound Deposit Insurance Payment up to Rs 5 Lakh" here.

Observing that any country can save the problems from getting worse only by their timely resolution, the Prime

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Walkathon event focussing on safe, healthy & sustainable dietary habits organised by Food Safety Department



Port Blair, Dec 12:

The Food Safety Department, Andaman & Nicobar Administration today on 12th Dec, 2021 organized a Walkathon event to commemorate 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahostav' and as a part of "Eat Right India" initiative of

FSSAI. The Commissioner Food Safety/ Deputy Commissioner, South Andaman District flagged-off the walkathon from National Memorial Cellular Jail at 7:00 AM and it culminated at Netaji Stadium covering vantage points viz.

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EDITORIAL

Deepening UPI and ensuring parity in digital payment

The RBI will soon allow digital payments for feature phone users and without internet access. This is an intelligent move to further deepen UPI transactions, which is already the high king of digital payments. Since its launch in April 2016, UPI has emerged as the single-largest retail payments platform in terms of volume, led by small-ticket transactions of less than Rs 200. Extending UPI to feature phone users, who constitute a significant number, isn't surprising given its rising dominance with 14 crore transactions per day, closing in on the \$1 trillion mark in value.

Taking a logical step to increase digital penetration of financial services, RBI raised the cap for retail subscribers applying for G-secs and IPOs through UPI from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 5 lakh. Currently 50% of all retail IPO subscriptions happen through UPI. While the recent Retail Direct Scheme allowing customers to buy government bonds directly from the RBI is still in the natal ward, it is expected to pick up pace. However, analysts believe the increased cap may not be a gamechanger until SEBI norms capping retail subscriptions for IPOs at Rs 2 lakh currently are tweaked.

While the above measures are good, the underlying issue is charges on all digital transactions for which the central bank has proposed a discussion paper, which will be out next month. UPI falls under the government's zero merchant discount rate policy, where merchants aren't levied extra charges, and service providers earn no revenue. In contrast, credit card transactions incur a cost not for customers but merchants, who often refuse card payments to avoid the levies. Then there are prepaid payment instruments and wallet companies like Paytm who charge customers, and the costs are uneven. Clearly, we need parity to ensure that digital payment modes are reasonable and affordable but at the same time, remain 'economically remunerative' to service providers to avoid a revenue dent. But it's also essential to balance the interests of consumers, as charging UPI transactions will only disincentivise its usage.

IMO AWARD FOR EXCEPTIONAL BRAVERY AT SEA-2021

Port Blair, Dec 09:

In order to internationally recognize extraordinary seamanship skills and outstanding courage displayed by individuals at sea, International Maritime Organization (IMO) award for exceptional bravery at sea is conferred annually to individuals or groups who, at the risk to their own life, perform acts of exceptional bravery in attempting to save life at sea or in attempting to prevent or mitigate damage to the marine environment.

This year, IMO council awarded Certificate of Commendation to Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard and

Master alongwith crew members of tugboat Ocean Bliss for exceptional and courageous efforts towards rescue operation of M/T New Diamond, which caught fire and was drifting towards the coast, laden with inflammable cargo. The rescue team members of the Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard and the master and crew of tugboat Ocean Bliss, carried out sustained and effective fire-fighting operations and skillfully towed the vessel away from the coast, thereby preventing loss of life at sea and averted a serious marine pollution incident.

Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra to be developed on lines of Vatican City and Mecca: VHP Chief

PTI, NAGPUR: Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) president Rabindra Narain Singh on Sunday said the Ram Janmabhoomi teerth kshetra in Ayodhya would be developed on the lines of the Vatican City and the Mecca and would emerge as a symbol of Hindutva.

Singh was in Nagpur in Maharashtra on Sunday to attend the bhumipujan or groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of Vishwa Hindu Jankalyan Parishad's Vidarbha region office in the Dhantoli area.

"The Ram janmabhoomi teerth kshetra in Ayodhya would be developed on the lines of the Vatican City (the headquarters of the Roman Catholic church) and the Mecca (the holiest city of Islam). It would become a symbol of Hindutva," Singh said while addressing a gathering attended by seers and VHP office-bearers.

Speaking to reporters, he hailed the Narendra Modi government for tightening the noose on foreign funding aimed at reli-



gious conversion in India.

He appealed to the Muslim community to join Hindus in the service of the nation.

"Hindus think nothing will happen to them. We are facing challenges because of this mentality," Singh said.

He accused Christian missionaries of running hospitals and schools in tribal areas for carrying out the religious conversion.

"Missionaries are operating schools and hospitals in tribal areas with proper planning to uproot the Hindu dharma. Hindus need to become a united

strong force to protect Hindutva and themselves," he alleged, adding that Indians seem more concerned about GDP these days than inculcating 'sanskars' or virtues in their children.

He said the upcoming office of the Jankalyan Parishad would launch various welfare measures for Hindus across the Vidarbha region in east Maharashtra.

Earlier in the day, the VHP chief visited the Smriti Mandir memorial in the Reshimbagh area dedicated to K.B. Hedgewar and M.S. Golwalkar, who were the first two leaders of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), headquartered in Nagpur.

'Vision 75': CBI to take steps to enhance efficiency



NEW DELHI: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has initiated a comprehensive internal process of modernising, upgradation of capacities, setting higher benchmarks for investigation and preventive vigilance.

Sharing this at an event organised as part of 'Azadi Ka Amarat Mahotsava' to give medals amongst 48 CBI personnel and officials, CBI director Subodh Kumar Jaiswal, delving on 'Vision 75', said that a comprehensive internal process of modernisation, upgradation of capacities by setting higher

benchmarks for investigation and preventive vigilance was started for leveraging cut-

ting edge capabilities to combat new age crime.

"The CBI has identified 75 practices, which need to be discouraged so as to enhance efficiency of the organisations", he said while speaking at the investiture ceremony for excellence in duties. Jaiswal, referring to designation of CBI as authorised agency of Central government to investigate computer related crimes, said that the CBI has a well-functioning Cyber Crime Unit. He further added that the CBI has created a specialised cell for investigating into online sexual child abuse crimes also.

Detailing about the agency's works against crimes

through investigations, the CBI director said that the CBI conducted intelligence based nationwide operations in the last month against social media groups involved in online Child Sexual Abuse. He detailed that during the nationwide operations, the CBI

has identified more than 5000 individuals from over 80 locations in the country and from 100 countries across the globe.

He said that the CBI has been working to develop its further capabilities in the investigation on the Online Sexual Child Abuse. He admitted that investigations into corruption cases, economic offences and complex financial crimes pose a newer and multiple challenges.

"This requires acquisition of new capabilities by law enforcement agencies and also reviewing the existing Standard Operating Procedures. We have notices that problems of today can not be solved by using the skills and knowledge of yesterday", the CBI director said.

Students set record for assembling rocket models



PANAJI: The launch of Gaganyaan, India's manned space mission, has been postponed to 2023 due to Covid-19. Nonetheless, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is trying to keep the buzz going and motivate young minds by sponsoring 500 students to create a Guinness World Record for assembling Gaganyaan's functional rocket model at one place.

All these rockets assembled by 500 students following a two-hour exercise at the India International Science Festival (IISF) under the guidance of N Sudheer

Kumar (Director, Capacity Building Programme

Office, ISRO) were launched at Panaji Gymkhana ground. It was done under the super-vision of experts from the country's premier space agency. Around 496 students were part of record-making lot.

"Size of the rocket is 300-350 mm and it will have cartridge of solid propellant. It rocket will weigh around 250-300 gm and can go to a height of 250 metres," said Kumar.

He said it was an attempt to make a working model of GSLV

Mark III for human rated launch vehicle (HRLV) for Gaganyaan. Training the students is Diyanshu Poddar's start-up, Rocketeers. "We are not just attempting rocket assembly records but functional Gaganyaan model rockets which were launched at Panaji Gymkhana. Students from Class XI have been trained by 60 volunteers to assemble the rockets," said Poddar, who has launched over 1.5 lakh rockets.

He graduated from the Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology, Thiruvananthapuram (IIST), in 2012 and worked with the Chandrayaan 2 team as part of the Spacecraft Mechanism Group of ISRO.

The idea was to train students in understanding rocket science and generate interest by building and launching their models. These rockets, being small, don't go very high but involves skills to understand technology.

Trinamool Congress promises Rs 5000 per month to Goa women



KOLKATA: Following the model of 'Laxmir Bhandar', a scheme announced by Mamata Banerjee that offers Bengal's homemakers monthly dole, the Trinamool Congress on Saturday, December 11, 2021, promised to launch similar venture titled 'Griha Laxmi Card' to woo the women electorates of Goa in the upcoming Assembly elections.

As per the new scheme, Bengal's ruling party promises direct transfer of Rs 5,000 monthly assistance to the account of the female head of every household in Goa. "It is an assured monthly income support scheme promised to all 3.5 lakh families in Goa.

The scheme will cost the government approximately Rs 1,500-2,000 crore, which is 6-8% of the state budget," the TMC announced.

Eyeing the women, which forms almost half of the Bengal's total electorates, Banerjee had announced the 'Laxmir Bhandar' scheme ahead of the Assembly elections in the state. The scheme is believed to have drawn women in favour of the TMC. "The CM's pet project ensured us unexpected electoral dividend in the Assembly elections. Now we are eyeing the women electorates in Goa," said a TMC leader.

Indian Ocean witnesses great power rivalry: Navy

NEW DELHI: While the Indian Ocean Region has become vulnerable to new unconventional threats, basing facilities acquired by China in the region have further complicated the situation, says Indian Navy's Vice Chief.

"Indian Ocean Region is witnessing a great power rivalry and the situation has been complicated with China having been provided basing facilities at Djibouti, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Myanmar," said Vice Admiral SN Ghormade on Saturday.

The Vice Chief was speaking on 'Leveraging the Military Powers' at the first Indraprastha Grand Strategy Conference hosted by New Delhi-based think tank Indian Futures.

Adding to the vulnerabilities are piracy, gun running, drug trafficking, illegal immigration, pollution, port security, smuggling, international terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, added Vice Admiral Ghormade.

He pointed to the increased freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea. "Naval forces can be effectively utilised for political signalling and posturing. The increase in freedom of navigation operations in South China Sea by the



US Navy and its allies is an apt example."

There are various risks. "Non-adherence to rules based on international order and illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, maritime militia, quest for hydrocarbons, and competing EEZ Claims have a risk of manifesting into flashpoints and causing instability."

In the Indian Ocean Region, resources are likely to be

a primary driver for contested maritime claims that could lead to conflict. Pressures of population, regional interference, ethnic strife, scarce natural resources, border disputes and weak littoral governments are likely to contribute to instability in the region.

"Military power is not only leveraged for military crises but for various other contingencies," he said.

Ashes of General.....

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his wife were emptied into the holy river by their daughters, Tarini and Kritika, amid full military honours.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami met the two sisters at the VIP ghat. He said General Rawat will forever remain lodged in people's memory.

India's first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Rawat and his wife Madhulika were killed, along with 11 others, in a tragic helicopter crash near Coonoor in Tamil Nadu on December 8. General Rawat hailed from Saina village in Uttarakhand's Pauri district.

Omicron epicentre data gives reason for hope

NEW DELHI: Even as India steps up surveillance and preparation in anticipation of a Covid surge, the latest news from the epicentre of the Omicron wave in South Africa could offer some comfort.

The new analysis from the Gauteng province shows that its current Covid-19 wave may have peaked already, with the highest number of cases recorded on Friday.

The fatality rate was less than 0.5%. The world's first Omicron case was detected in the country less than three weeks ago.

The analysis is a model from the University of Johannesburg, based on the hospital data from the South Africa's National Institute of Communicable Disease, which was reported on Sunday.

The data showed clear signs that Omicron infections are milder than the ones caused by Delta, which led to a devastating wave of Covid-

19 in many countries this year.

Back home in India, where the Omicron tally now stands at 38, the Centre is continuing to pressure states on close surveillance, though there is no indication Omicron is triggering a surge in some districts.

In a letter to 10 states on Saturday, Union health secretary Rajesh Bhushan suggested measures like night curfews in districts that are witnessing high Covid positivity rates in the past two weeks.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organization said after a review of early data on Sunday that Omicron is more transmissible than Delta and reduces vaccine efficacy against infection and transmission.

It also causes less severe symptoms. As of December 9, Omicron has spread to about 63 countries and could outpace Delta, the WHO said.

MP demands to depute a team to conduct special camp at Little Andaman to issue Smart Island Card

Port Blair, Dec 10:

The Member of Parliament of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma has requested the Chief Secretary of Andaman and Nicobar Administration to depute a team of officials to Little Andaman for conducting a special camp for issuing Smart Islander Cards to people of Little Andaman.

In a letter addressed

to the Chief Secretary he pointed out that many Islanders of Little Andaman are facing difficulties in making smart Islander Cards in place of old Islander Cards.

He said that due to lockdowns and movement restrictions for nearly one and a half year residents of Little Andaman could not plan any visit to Port Blair to make Smart Islander Card and even after lockdowns due to lack of suffi-

cient sailing of vessels and other reasons it become too difficult for an ordinary Islander to visit Port Blair from Little Andaman, only to make Smart Islander Card, spending huge amount of money.

He said that he has been informed that there are many Islanders in Little Andaman who do not have a Smart Islander Card.

National Lok Adalat organized by DLSA; settles many cases including pre-litigation

Port Blair, Dec. 11

The District Legal Services Authority, Andaman & Nicobar Islands held National Lok Adalats in the District Court Building, Port Blair, ADR centre- 'PRAYAS', Port Blair and Sub-Divisional Court Complex at Mayabunder today by adopting all COVID SOPs issued by the MHA from time to time. The Judicial Officers were present to mark the commencement of the National Lok Adalat at Port Blair and Mayabunder.

Out of the total 502 pre-litigation cases including 96 pre-litigation BSNL recovery cases and 1872 cases pending in different courts at Port Blair were referred to the National Lok Adalat. Out of this, 162 pre-litigation bank recovery cases, 2 pre-litigation BSNL recovery cases and 1468 Criminal cases including 2 cases u/s 138 NI Act amounting to Rs. 5,25,000/- have been settled and finally disposed of by the National Lok Adalat at Port Blair. Disposing of 162 bank recovery cases, the involved amount of Rs. 17,50,26,641.67/- have been settled at Rs.12,11,22,000/-, thus paving a benefit of Rs. 5,39,04,641.67/- to the bank loan customers. A sum of Rs.9,82,100/- was realized on the spot. Setting up a landmark disposal, out of 162 bank recovery cases, Bench No. 1 disposed of a total of 144 pre-litigation cases with a settlement amount of Rs. 11,61,16,000/- benefiting the

bank borrowers at large. Disposing of 2 BSNL recovery cases, the involved amount of Rs. 2,56,262/- have been settled at Rs. 22000/- thus paving a benefit of Rs. 2,34,262/- to the customers. An amount of Rs. 12,000/- was realized on the spot. Disposing of 1468 Criminal cases a sum of Rs. 96,650/- was realized as fine amount.

At Mayabunder, one bench was constituted and 30 pre-litigation cases were taken up, out of which, 26 were disposed and settled at Rs. 55,77,500/- out of which Rs. 3,07,000/- was paid on the spot. 71 cases pending in different courts were taken up, out of which, 33 criminal compoundable cases were disposed of and a fine amount of Rs. 31,000/- was realized.

The District Legal Services Authority has constituted five benches at Port Blair and one Bench at Mayabunder. The Benches at Port Blair were presided over by Shri Raja Chatterjee, Additional District and Sessions Judge, Port Blair, Shri Prasanta Kumar Sil, Judge, Family Court, Port Blair, Shri. Pradip Kumar Adhikary, Joint Civil Judge (Sr. Division), Port Blair, Shri. Debabrata Biswas,

Judicial Magistrate First Class, 2nd Court, Port Blair and Shri. Indranil Ray, Judicial Magistrate First Class, Additional Court, Port Blair.

The bench at Mayabunder was presided over by Shri. Jimut Bahan Biswas, Additional District and Sessions Judge -cum- Chairman, Sub-Divisional District Legal Services Authority, North & Middle Andaman, Mayabunder. In the National Lok Adalat held at Port Blair, students of Andaman Law College were also present.

The entire programme was arranged by Shri. Ayan Majumder, Chief Judicial Magistrate-cum-Secretary, DLSA, Port Blair under the supervision and guidance of Shri. Subhash Kumar Kar, Chairman, DLSA -cum- District and Sessions Judge, A&N Islands.

The entire programme at Mayabunder was arranged under the supervision and guidance of Shri. Jimut Bahan Biswas, Additional District and Sessions Judge -cum- Chairman, Sub-divisional District Legal Services Authority, North & Middle Andaman, Mayabunder, a press release from DLSA said.

MP introduces..... from page-1

activities, as part of the learning process.

The provisions of the bill will be applicable to every school in Andaman & Nicobar Islands and will be a revolutionary step in creating a healthy and active lifestyle for children by promoting them to access sports facilities in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The Bill is also a right direction in providing holistic development of a child and giving him opportunities to excel through sports.



Director General Krishnaswamy Natarajan PVSM, PTM, TM, Indian Coast Guard currently on a farewell visit to the Islands called on Admiral D K Joshi, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, NM, VSM (Retd.), Hon'ble Lt. Governor, A&N Islands and Vice-Chairman, Islands Development Agency today at Raj Niwas. Perspective plans, force accretion & infrastructure development projects were discussed.

Minister of State.... from page 1

the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji has called for 'a revolution' in the fisheries sector and has named it as 'Blue Revolution'. He said, the objective of Blue Revolution is to increase the overall fish production in a responsible and sustainable manner for economic prosperity, modernize the fisheries sector with special focus on new technologies, to generate employment and export earnings and to ensure inclusive development and empower fishers and aquaculture farmers.

The Minister further stated that Government of India has created a dedicated fund i.e Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund (FIDF) for fisheries sector with a fund size of more than Rs 7522.48 crore. The Minister said, FIDF envisages creation of fisheries infrastructure facilities such as Fish Landing Centres, Fishing Harbours etc. which will not only augment the fish production but also provide different infrastructure facilities for the fishermen community at large. The Minister also informed about the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) launched by the Central Govt. to boost production and exports in the fisheries sector with the aim to double farmers' income. The PMMSY is a flagship scheme which focuses on sustainable development of fisheries sector

in the country with an estimated investment of Rs 20,050 crore for its implementation during 2020-21 to 2024-25 as part of Aatmanirbhar Bharat package. He also urged the fishermen community to avail the benefits under PMMSY and focus on increasing the production. He further urged the women fishers to form SHGs and take up sea weed cultivation for their economic prosperity. The Ex- Member of Parliament, Shri BP Ray, the National Council Member, BJP, Shri Vishal Jolly also addressed the gathering. Earlier, the General Secretary, FWA, Shri B. Hema Raju welcomed the Minister.

Thereafter, the Minister also visited 'Junglighat Fish Landing Jetty' and interacted with the fishermen there.

The Minister also interacted with the officers of Departments of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services at South Point Circuit House and enquired about the implementation of fishery and AH & VS schemes

in A&N Islands.

He also participated in the 'Jan Ashirwad' rally at Bathubasti in the evening. Earlier in the

morning, the Minister attended the 139th Birth Anniversary celebration of poet Subramania Bharathi organized by Andaman Tamizhar Sangham at its premises.

District Administration conducting camps & mobile vaccination drive in coordination with Health Deptt. and NGOs



Port Blair, Dec 11:

In order to ensure 100% COVID vaccination of the eligible target populace of South Andaman, the District Administration is conducting camps and mobile vaccination drive at evening at community level in coordination with Health department and NGOs.

Shri Suneel Anchipaka, Deputy Commissioner, South Andaman along with Additional District Magistrate visited COVID vaccination camp today at Netaji Club, Port Blair and urged the people to get themselves and their near & dears vaccinated with both doses to contain the corona virus. He said 100%

vaccination and obeisance of COVID protocol is the effective tool to keep our Islands safe from COVID pandemic.

The DC (SA)/Chairman, District Health Society, South Andaman also informed that "Har Ghar Dastak" home visit campaign is also being carried out by the ANMs & ASHA workers to identify the left out cases and the due cases of 2nd dose COVID vaccination are being vaccinated at their door step. A District Control Room is also set up to follow up and monitor the vaccination drive.

The Deputy Commissioner/ Chairman, District Health Society, South Andaman also informed that

special mobile COVID vaccination team is also visiting at village level during evening time for private workers, street vendors, labours and general public who have not yet taken the 2nd dose of COVID vaccine.

Further the DC(SA)/Chairman, DHS(SA) informed that the District Administration is going to conduct vaccination drive & TB active case finding survey on 12th Dec. 2021 at Bathubasthi between 6.00 am to 9.00 am & Marina Park (Flea market) between 5.00 pm to 9.00 pm.

He requested the general public who are yet to take the 2nd dose of covid vaccine to avail the opportunity and get themselves vaccinated and also those having fever, cough & night sweats can also get themselves screened on the spot.

The DC (SA) further urged the general public of South Andaman to cooperate with the field staff during "Har Ghar Dastak" home visit campaign and also directed all commercial establishments to ensure that their staff are fully vaccinated with the second dose.

New India believes.....

Minister said that for years there was a tendency to avoid problems.

“Today’s new India strives for solving problems, today India does not avoid problems,” he said.

There was a time when depositors would have to wait for their own money for ages from the stressed bank, he said, adding that the government by amending laws has made it mandatory for refund up to Rs 5 lakh of their deposits within 90 days of imposition of moratorium or restrictions.

Recalling his days as chief minister of Gujarat, Modi said, he had to deal with so many depositors but could not do much for them.

He said he had written many letters to the Government of India then about the plight of such hapless depositors and requested for raising deposit insurance cover to Rs 5 lakh from Rs 1 lakh.

However, the previous regime ignored it, Modi said, adding, “the then government did not listen to people so they changed the government and brought me as the Prime Minister.

I raised the deposit insurance cover in the interest of people”.

Deposit insurance up to Rs 5 lakh covers all deposits such as savings, fixed, current and recurring deposits in all commercial banks.

Deposits in state, central and primary cooperative banks, functioning in states and Union Territories are also covered.

With a deposit insurance coverage of Rs 5 lakh per depositor per bank, the number of fully protected accounts at the end of the previous financial year constituted 98.1 per cent of the total number of accounts as against the international benchmark of 80 per cent.

Last year, the government increased the insurance cover on deposits by five times to Rs 5 lakh.

The enhanced deposit insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh came into effect from February 4, 2020.

Every bank used to pay 10 paise as an insurance premium per Rs 100 of deposit.

It was raised to 12 paise per Rs 100 in 2020.

It cannot be more than 15 paise at any point in time per Rs 100 deposit.

It is to be noted that the enhanced deposit insurance cover of Rs 5 lakh is effective from February 4, 2020.

The increase was done af-

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ter a gap of 27 years as it has been static since 1993.

Observing that banks play a major role in the prosperity of the country, Modi said, for the prosperity of the banks, it is equally important for the depositors’ money to be safe.

“If we want to save the bank, then depositors have to be protected,” he said.

Over the years, by merging many small public sector banks with large banks, their capacity, capability and transparency have been strengthened in every way, Modi emphasised.

When RBI monitors co-operative banks, it increases the confidence of the common depositor in them, he said while talking about another legislation that brought cooperative banks under the control of the central bank.

The Prime Minister said the problem was not only about the bank account, but also about the delivery of banking services to the remotest villages in the past.

Today, in almost every village of the country, the facility of a bank branch or a banking correspondent has reached within a radius of 5 km, he said, adding, the common citizen of India is able to do even the smallest transactions digitally anytime, anywhere, 24 hours a day.

Stressing that there are many such reforms that have helped India’s banking system run smoothly even in the biggest calamity in 100 years, Modi said, “when even the developed countries of the world were struggling to provide help to their citizens, India provided direct help to almost every section of the country at a fast pace.”

He said that measures initiated in the last few years have taken the facilities like insurance, bank loans and financial empowerment to a large underserved segment of the poor, women, street vendors and small farmers.

Pointing that banking had not reached women of the country in a significant way earlier, the Prime Minister said this was taken as a priority by his government.

Of the crores of bank accounts opened under Jan Dhan Yojana, more than half belong to women, he said.

“The effect these bank accounts have on the economic empowerment of women, we have also seen in the recent National Family Health Survey.”

PBMC appeals to Residents and commercial establishments to clear dues by Dec. 31

Port Blair, Dec. 12

Residents and commercial establishments within Port Blair Municipal Council have been urged to clear all the dues of Property tax, Water charges, Market rent etc. by Dec.31, 2021, failing which

PBMC will take action as per A & N Islands (Municipal) Regulation and A & N Islands (Municipal) Bye-Laws.

Dues can be paid in the PBMC counter through Debit & Credit Card/ Demand Draft in favour of Secretary,

PBMC in ground floor of PBMC Office. The citizens can also pay the Property Tax/ Market rent/ Domestic / Commercial Water Charges online by visiting website <https://pbmc.gov.in> , a press release from PBMC said.

Walkathon event focussing on.....

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Clock Tower, Annapurna hotel, BSNL Office, IP&T junction, DC Bungalow, Fire Brigade(HQ), Vikas Bhawan.

A large number of college students, cadets of NCC, Officials from District Administration, Officials of FSSAI Eastern Region, Food Safety Department & General Public participated in the event. Various other events like painting & speech competition on ‘Safe & Healthy Food’ were also conducted for the college students

An “Eat Right Mela” was also organized in the evening at Marina Park on the same day which was inaugurated by the Commissioner Food Safety/

Deputy Commissioner, South Andaman District by enlightening the traditional lamp in presence of Joint Commissioner (Food Safety), Director FSSAI Eastern Region and Food Safety Officials. Various departments like Agriculture, Industry, KVIB, Health, Food Safety department, SHG, NGOs and Food Business Operators through their stalls exhibited their products and IEC materials for creating awareness among the visitors. A Cultural programme was also arranged for entertainment of visitors.

These events were conducted with an aim to bring large-scale social and behav-

ioral change by engaging consumers and educating them on eating right. It works on three major focus areas - Building Consumer Awareness, Addressing food Adulteration and enabling Healthy Choices. All the winners of various competitions held in connection with ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahostav’ were awarded with trophies and cash prizes.

The Commissioner Food Safety/Deputy Commissioner, South Andaman District greeted all participants on behalf of Food Safety Department and appealed to disseminate the message of Eat Right Initiatives of FSSAI among the general public.

Tough competition for Dhawan from Ruturaj Gaikwad; Venkatesh Iyer all set for SA ODIs



NEW DELHI: Shikhar Dhawan's poor run of form in the Vijay Hazare Trophy would keep the selectors worried but young Turks Ruturaj Gaikwad and Venkatesh Iyer seems to have all but booked their tickets for the upcoming away three-match ODI series against South Africa in January.

While BCCI has announced Rohit Sharma as the next captain of the ODI side, the squad for the series is yet to be finalised.

It remains to be seen how many rookies do selectors take for the 50-over competition keeping bubble-life and workload management in mind.

The two names who are in the midst of a stellar Vijay Hazare Trophy season are Gaikwad and Iyer, who have now hit three and two hundred respectively in the competition so far.

Iyer, on his part, has also taken some important wickets, making it amply clear that he is ready to push back Hardik Pandya for the time being as the team's premier all-rounder.

It is understood that once it was clear that Iyer, who is a

specialist opener will find it difficult to fit in at the top of the order in presence of KL Rahul and Rohit, he will have to improvise and perhaps bat at number five or six as a designated finisher.

Iyer has taken the role like a fish to water as he batted at number four against Kerala to score 112 off 84 balls and then pushed the envelope further scoring 71 off 49 balls batting at number five.

And on Sunday, he surpassed his earlier effort with a 151 off 113 balls that had no less than 10 sixes."Venkatesh is surely going to South Africa. He is bowling 9 or 10 overs in every game and with Hardik still recuperating, it is the best time to give him chance and get him battle-ready for the bigger events ahead," a BCCI source privy to selection committee discussion told PTI on Sunday.

"The new team management absolutely did the right thing in advising him to bat in the middle order. As of now, if he doesn't get injured, Venkatesh is a certainty for the South Africa one-dayers."

Dhawan vs Ruturaj could

be a tricky affair

Maharashtra captain Gaikwad has carried his IPL Orange Cap form into the Hazare Trophy with three back-to-back hundreds which will certainly put the selection committee under intense pressure to take him as the backup opener.

Gaikwad had played two T20 Internationals in Sri Lanka but didn't get a chance in the ODIs.

Even in the three-match T20 Internationals against New Zealand, he couldn't find a place with Rohit batting at the top and KL Rahul and Ishan Kishan being the two opening partners.

But now he has a string of big scores 136 versus MP, 154 not out vs Chattisgarh and 124 vs Kerala and will be difficult to ignore.

On the other hand, Dhawan's struggles have been pronounced with scores of 0, 12, 14, 18 and he hasn't ever looked in touch in any of the games. But if one looks at the trend of how Rahul Dravid is handling senior players, just like Ajinkya Rahane and Ishant Sharma are getting a chance for the South Africa Tests, Dhawan may get the nod in the ODIs.

"Technically, last time India played 50-over series, Dhawan was leading India and also had a match-winning knock in Sri Lanka."

"He has the ability to score runs just when he has back to the wall. So while Gaikwad should be there in the squad, I think selectors might give one last chance to Dhawan, maybe take him and give him a game or two," the source said.

India's Harnaaz Sandhu crowned Miss Universe 2021



JERUSALEM: Actor-model Harnaaz Sandhu made history on Monday as she was crowned Miss Universe 2021 - beating contestants from 80 countries -- 21 years after India last brought home the title.

Only two Indians before Sandhu have won the title of Miss Universe - actors Sushmita Sen in 1994 and Lara Dutta in 2000.

The 70th edition of the event was held in Eilat, Israel, where the 21-year-old bagged the coveted pageant.

The Chandigarh-based model, who is pursuing her master's degree in public administration, was crowned by her predecessor Andrea Meza of Mexico, who won the pageant in 2020.

While Paraguay's Nadia Ferreira, 22, finished second, South Africa's Lalela Mswane, 24, came third.

During the final question and answer round, Sandhu was asked what advice would she give to young women on how to deal with the pressure they face today.

"The biggest pressure the youth of today is facing is to believe in themselves, to know that you are unique and that's

what makes you beautiful. Stop comparing yourselves with others and let's talk about more important things that are happening worldwide. This is what you need to understand. Come out, speak for yourselves because you are the leader of your life, you are the voice of your own. I believed in myself and that's why I am standing here today," she said to thundering applause.

Sandhu started her journey in pageantry when she won Times Fresh Face in 2017, representing Chandigarh at the age of 17. She later won the LIVA Miss Diva Universe 2021 title.

Sandhu has also worked in a few Punjabi films, including "Yaara Diyan Poo Baran" and "Bai Ji Kuttange".

The ceremony was hosted by Steve Harvey and saw performances from American singer JoJo.

The selection committee included actor and Miss Universe India 2015 Urvasi Rautela, Adamari LÃ³pez, Adriana Lima, Cheslie Kryst, Iris Mittenaeere, Lori Harvey, Marian Rivera and Rena Sofer.

Kerala TT champ sets sights on winning Olympic gold

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Anokh G Nair, a Class X student of St Thomas Higher Secondary School, Mukkola here, has created history by winning the Under -17 State level table tennis(TT) championship for the third straight time. Now, his aim is to get into the Indian team and bring laurels for the country in the form of an Olympic gold medal.

When a young Anokh showed signs of hyperactivity, doctors at Thiruvananthapuram Medical College advised his parents, S Gopalakrishnan Nair, general manager with PTC group,

and T S Ambily to get him into sports. They were a bit apprehensive about a four-and-a-half-year-old Anokh pursuing outdoor sports. Instead, they steered him to a ping-pong court. The rest was history as Anokh took on a journey with breathtaking rallies under Jobin J Christy, coach at Kerala State Sports Council. By the time Anokh was 10, he was selected by Petroleum Sports Promotion Board, which saw him playing for them at Ajmer, Rajasthan, for two years. But a bout of hepatitis and a relapse forced his parents to return to the capital city.

"Anokh has been a consistent player and has always surprised us with his grit and passion for the sport. Despite my job compulsions, I make it a point to accompany Anokh to various championships across the country. He used to proudly say right from the time he was a young boy that his biggest ambition is to win an Olympic gold," Ambily, who works as a health inspector at Kudappanakunnu Chettivilakam Primary Health Centre told.

Currently, the duo is gearing up to leave for Dehradun on Monday to play in the All India Open National Ranking Tournament. A

national-level bronze medal winner in 2017, Anokh recently played in the Under -17 and Under 19 All India Open Ranking Championships held at Chandigarh. Anokh told TNIE that he has been on the lookout for good sponsors.

"We had to cough up Rs 60, 000 for our 10-day trip to Chandigarh. Every month, I am participating in various national championships to improve my game which requires a generous amount of funding from sponsors. Then, my pursuit of the dream of an Olympic gold can be attained," said Anokh, who loves to watch



India's Manav Thakkar, world number one in U-21.

Anokh is also good in academics and does not compromise on his studies. His elder brother, Amokh, a fourth year student of computer engineering, is also a state-level table tennis player.