

REVERBERATION

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

Hon'ble Minister of State for I&B, Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying holds press conference

Port Blair, Dec.25

The Central Government is committed towards the welfare of the people of A&N Islands and focusing more on development and employment opportunities, said the Hon'ble Minister of State for Information & Broadcasting and Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, GoI, Dr. L. Murugan while interacting with the media persons at a press conference held at BJP Bhavan here.

Addressing the scribes, the Minister stated that the Prime Minister's Flagship schemes aims at uplifting the socio-economic status of the last mile beneficiary by bringing them under the fold of such welfare schemes.

contd. page-5



Hon'ble Minister of State for Information & Broadcasting and Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, GoI, Dr. L. Murugan who is currently on visit to Isles, held meeting with the Chief Secretary, A&N Administration, Shri Keshav Chandra, IAS and other senior officers of the Administration in the conference hall of Secretariat on 25.12.2022.

Hon'ble Lt. Governor to offer floral tributes at Tsunami Memorial to pay homage to the departed soul

Port Blair, Dec 26:

The 18th Anniversary of devastating Tsunami of 2004 will be observed by the Administration on 26th December 2022 at the Tsunami Memorial, Andaman Water Sports Complex, Aberdeen.

The Hon'ble Lt. Governor,

Andaman & Nicobar Islands will offer floral tributes followed by other dignitaries at the Memorial to pay homage to the departed soul. All Religion Prayer Meeting (Sarva Dharma Prarthana Sabha) shall be organized at the Memorial on this occasion.

General public, PRIs, Head of Departments/Offices, Officers/Officials of the Andaman & Nicobar Administration are requested to join the main function at the Memorial by 07:45 am in paying homage to the departed souls.

ANIKVIB to organize 'Rozgar evam Swarojgar Mela' at Diglipur on Dec. 28

Opportunity for job seekers to set up livelihood ventures

Port Blair, Dec 26:

The A&N Islands Khadi & Village Industries Board jointly with the Industries Department & Employment Exchange and Rural Development, A&N Administration will be organizing a 'Rozgar evam Swarojgar Mela' in association with like-minded agencies implementing Govt. sponsored schemes for providing career guidance. The programme will be held on Dec. 28, 2022 in the Multipurpose Hall of Subash Gram, Diglipur, North Andaman from 10 am to

4pm.

The main objective of the Rozgar mela is to provide a platform between the self-employment implementing Departments, private employers, and job seekers to set up their livelihood venture duly availing benefits of Govt. sponsored schemes or placement in private sector.

During the programme, information kiosks separately for each participating Department and Banks will be setup to disseminate information to the interested beneficiaries on the

formalities / procedure for application submission and benefits of the various schemes being implemented by the respective Departments. As a part of the programme, the Employment Exchange will organizing a placement drive for the job seekers in the private sector firms on the spot.

Unemployed youth have been requested to attend the programme and make optimum utilization of the services being provided by the Govt. Departments.

Message

On the 16th Anniversary of the devastating Tsunami, which ravaged our Islands and killed thousands of people in A & N Islands and many other parts of the world, I pay my heartfelt tribute to all dear Islanders who lost their precious lives in the tragedy. Also I pray to God to grant courage to the bereaved family to bear the losses.

On this occasion, I pray to the almighty to save and protect all Islanders from any kind of natural disasters in future.

This is the time to remember and pay tribute to all victims of Tsunami and also to take a pledge to remain fully prepared to face any kind of disasters unitedly as a strong community.

Kuldeep Rai Sharma,
Member of Parliament,
A & N Islands.

Seminar marks National Consumer Rights Day observance in Isles

Port Blair, Dec 26:

As part of National Consumer Rights Day, the Directorate of Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, A&N Administration organized a seminar in the Conference hall of ALHW here to sensitize the people about their rights as consumer.


Smti. Ranjana Deswal, Secretary, CS&CA graced the occasion as chief guest. The function was also attended by Shri Madhan Kumar Gupta, Member State Consumer Commission, Port Blair, Shri Rajesh Kumar, Dy. Director, CS&CA

contd. page-6

Supreme Court Judge to be on visit to Isles from Dec. 25

Port Blair, Dec. 23

Hon'ble Justice Ajay Rastogi, Judge Supreme Court of India will be arriving on a 6-day visit to these Islands on Dec. 25, 2022. During his stay here, the Hon'ble Justice Ajay Rastogi will be visiting places of tourist as well as historical importance in Isles. On completion of tour, the Judge Supreme Court of India will leave for mainland on Dec. 31.



EDITORIAL

SEBI must move fast with pending reforms

Capital markets regulator Sebi brought sweeping changes to the share buyback regime early this week. The rules were first set in 1998, and now Sebi has proposed a major overhaul to eliminate the loopholes and improve efficiency. Currently, listed entities buy back their own shares from the open market or through a tender route. Based on the Keki Mistry committee recommendations, Sebi is phasing out the open-market purchases as it is prone to misuse. Importantly, it liberalised the tender process, reducing the timelines. Right now, companies can't revise the maximum buyback price once their boards approve. Now, Sebi permits upward price revision until one working day before the record date. Likewise, it reduced the timeline for completion of the buyback by 18 days by eliminating the mandatory filing of a draft letter of offer with Sebi and instead getting the go-ahead from merchant bankers. In a nutshell, these regulatory tweaks are long-pending and offer convenience to listed entities without compromising stakeholder interests.

The markets watchdog also announced a slew of key changes, such as streamlining operations of Portfolio Management Services (PMS) and doing away with its soft-touch regulation. Until now, portfolio managers are not required to disclose portfolio returns or their performance, and this lack of transparency is what Sebi is trying to correct. Similar to mutual funds, the proposed guidelines for benchmark comparisons and performance statements will likely alter the course of the PMS business. Lastly, to improve the weak governance structures of exchanges, Sebi bucketed the functions of all market infrastructure institutions into three verticals, to ensure transparency and accountability.

While these are welcome changes, reforms on other major aspects, including the legal framework for simplification and strengthening the takeover regulations in line with global practices, cybersecurity framework, tighter insider trading regulations, steps to boost the corporate bond market and development of the green bond market to attract FII and FPIs and make India a preferred investment destination, is still on the drawing board. Efforts must be made to initiate these next-generation reforms at least next year to strengthen our capital market ecosystem. Reforms are a continuous process and essential to convert savings into investment and make India a financial hub of Southeast Asia.

Streamlining vehicular traffic in vehicle ferry vessels operating between Chatham & Bambooflat

Port Blair, Dec. 23

In view of the manifold increase in the vehicular traffic in the route between Chatham and Bambooflat, the Directorate of Shipping Services has decided to impose restriction on the movement/ transportation of commercial vehicles, through

the vehicle ferry vessels operating in the above route, during the peak hours i.e. between 7.30 am to 9.45 am and from 5 pm to 6.45 pmon all working days except Holidays.

Similarly, movement/ transportation of non commercial four wheeler vehicles, has also been

Applications invited from interested entrepreneurs/firms/ individuals for allotment of stalls during ITF-2022-23

Port Blair, Dec. 23

Applications have been invited from interested entrepreneurs/firms/ individuals for allotment of Food/General stalls during Island Tourism Festival-2022-23 which is likely to be held from 14 to 23 January, 2023 for 10 days at ITF Ground. The stall will be allotted to the selected applicants on lottery system as per the terms and condition laid down in the application form.

The application form along with the terms and conditions for allotment of stalls may be obtained from the Sr. Investigator, Planning Section of the Directorate of IP&T on payment of Rs.100/-. Any query with regard to the same, one may contact Shri Mohammad Saheed, SI, Planning, DIPT, 7063958686, Shri Farooq Ahmed, Receptionist, 9474209236 & Shri Chander Rao, HK Asst. Manager. 9434282324 during office hours.

The details of the schedule are as under:-

Sl.No.	Programme	Tentative dates
1	Distribution of application form Rs.100/-	
2	Last date of submission of filled application form to the Tourism department (Operational Unit)	29/12/2022
3	Allotment of stall by the committee	02/01/2023
4	Issue of allotment letter	03/01/2023

Mathura: Counsel for Shahi Masjid Idgah says they will file objection to survey order

PTI, MATHURA, Dec 26:

The counsel for Shahi Masjid Idgah on Sunday said they will file their objection on January 20 to the district court order on the submission of a survey report of Idgah.

Civil judge senior division (III) Sonika Verma, who is hearing the suit Bal Krishna and others Vs Intezamia committee and others, had earlier directed a revenue department official to submit a survey report of the Shahi Idgah mosque complex on January 20.

The petitioners had filed the suit seeking shifting of Shahi Masjid Idgah, constructed on a part of the 13.37 acre land of Sri Krishna Janmabhoomi Trust allegedly after the demolition of Katra Keshav Dev temple by Mughal emperor Aurangzeb.

The petitioners claim it is the birthplace of Lord Krishna.

“We will file an objection against the order on January 20,” Tanveer Ahmad, secretary and counsel for Shahi Masjid Idgah, said on Sunday.

The hearing in the case could not take place on December 22 as the judge was on leave on that day. The court has now fixed January 20, 2023 as the next date of hearing, when the survey report is to be filed.

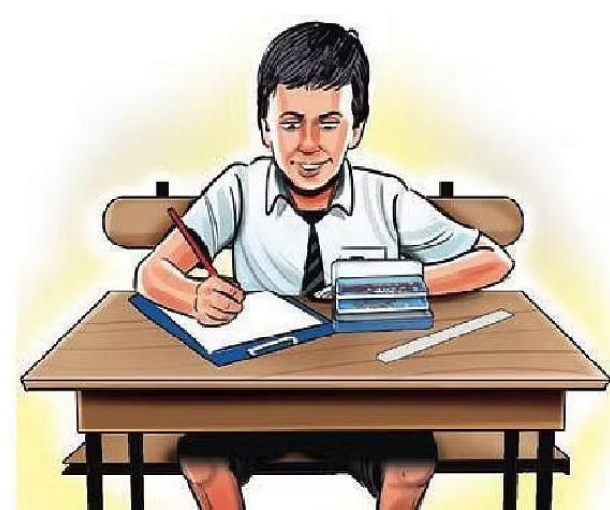
“The learned judge had ordered Amin (a term used to refer to a revenue department official) on December 8 to inform both the parties and submit a survey report on the next hearing,” the petitioners’ counsel Shailesh Dubey had said on Saturday.

New assessment, evaluation scheme in J-K to take effect from next academic session

PTI, JAMMU, Dec 27:

The Jammu and Kashmir administration has decided to implement the Student Assessment and Evaluation Scheme (SAES), under which uniform question papers will be formulated for all government and government-recognised schools, from the upcoming academic session.

An official spokesperson said on Saturday that the decision represents a significant change that will put an end to the traditional examination system.



According to the NEP-2020 examination reforms, the purpose of assessment will change from one that is summative and primarily tests rote memorisation skills to one that is more regular and formative, is more competency-based, supports the students’ learning and development, and tests higher-order skills like analysis, critical thinking and conceptual clarity.

The students would receive a multi-dimensional report card or a holistic progress card in place of a grade sheet, which would reflect each learner’s individuality and progress in detail, the spokesperson said.

He said a software assisted by artificial intelligence would create a 360-degree perspective of a student’s progress and help him choose the best career.

Art, literature, culture are collective wealth of society, says PM Modi



ANI, NEW DELHI, Dec 25: Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his last Mann Ki Baat address of the year 2022 on Sunday said it is society's responsibility to take forward its collective wealth comprising art, literature, and culture.

"Art, literature and culture are the collective wealth of society; it is society's responsibility to take them forward," PM Modi said in the 96th edition of Mann Ki Baat.

In Mann Ki Baat, the Prime Minister also talked about various startups of the countrypersons which have contributed to the Central government's 'Vocal for Local' campaign.

Having said above, PM Modi in his address mentioned the recently recognised record from the Kalari Club of Dubai. "The Guinness Book of World Records recently recognised a record from the Kalari Club of Dubai. The record is about the ancient martial art from India, Kalaripayattu. This record was for the highest-ever number of people performing Kalaripayattu in one place," PM Modi said and clarified the connection of a Dubai-based club with India.

"This record is related to Kalaripayattu, the ancient martial art of India. This record is for the performance of Kalari by the maximum number of people simultaneously. Kalari club Dubai, together with Dubai Police, planned this and displayed it on the National Day of UAE. In this event,

people ranging from 4 years old children to 60 years old showed their best ability of Kalari. This is a wonderful example of how different generations are carrying forward an ancient tradition, with full inner enthusiasm," he added.

On similar lines, next, he mentioned a club on Kalpeni Island, Lakshwadeep called the Kummel Brothers Challengers Club where the local youths are being trained in the arts of Kolkali, Parichakli, Kilipaata and traditional songs.

Informing about the 'Quemshree', he said that this Gadak district resident of Karnataka has created a platform called 'Kala Chetna' for organising several programmes for Karnataka's artists.

"He has been engaged in the mission of reviving the art culture of Karnataka for the last 25 years. Earlier he was associated with the profession of Hotel Management. But, his attachment to his culture and tradition was so deep that he made it his mission," PM Modi said. He further said that the enthusiasm of the country persons towards art and culture is a manifestation of the feeling of 'pride in our heritage'.

Further talking about the products made from Bamboo, PM Modi said: "There are skilled bamboo artisans, skilled artists, especially in tribal areas. Ever since the country changed the British-era laws related to bamboo, a huge market has developed for it. Even in areas like Palghar in Maharashtra, tribal

people make many beautiful products from bamboo. Things like boxes, chairs, teapots, baskets, and trays made of bamboo are becoming very popular. Not only this, but these people also make beautiful clothes and decorations from bamboo grass. This is also providing employment to tribal women and their talent is also getting recognition."

He also talked about a Karnataka-based couple indulged in making products from betelnut fibre and exporting it to the international market.

"This is a couple from Shivamogga in Karnataka—Shriman Suresh and his wife Shrimati Maithili, they are making many decorative things ranging from trays, plates and handbags from the betelnut fibre. Chappals made of this fibre are admired a lot," he said adding that their products are being sold in London and other markets in Europe.

He further encouraged everyone to use indigenous and local products and also suggested gifting them to others as well as will strengthen our identity, strengthen the local economy, and, in large numbers, brighten the future of the people, he said.

Concluding his address, PM Modi urged the citizens to share their ideas and opinions for making the 100th episode of Mann Ki Baat more engaging.

"Next time we will meet in the year 2023. I wish you all the best for the year 2023. May this year also be special for the country, may the country keep touching new heights, and together we have to take a resolution as well as make it come true," PM Modi said emphasising the need to stay aware and cautious regarding the global surge of Coronavirus infection while celebrating the festive and holidays season.

"The current festive period is a season of holidays. I will request you all to take all necessary Covid safety precautions while outside. The threat of Coronavirus COVID-19 is approaching again. Together we will remove all such threats by following necessary safety precautions for the welfare of our families and country. If we are careful, then we will also be safe and there will be no hindrance in our enjoyment," he said further.

Better to close down dozen offices than losing a single human life: Union Min on Pandits terror threat



PTI, JAMMU, Dec 25:

Indicating a thaw in the government's stance on relocation of under-threat Kashmiri Pandit employees from the valley, Union Minister Jitendra Singh on Saturday said it is better to save a human life even if it means closing down a dozen offices.

He also hit out at the opposition parties accusing them of following the policy of appeasement to the extent of being "inhuman".

He alleged that these parties not only discriminated between people but also went to the extent of discriminating between Line of Control and International Border purely for vote considerations.

"This should be addressed amicably and with sensitivity. My personal opinion is that nothing can be more valuable than a human life," the minister told reporters in Kathua.

"If there is a threat even to one life, it is better to save that life even if it means closing down a dozen offices," Singh was in Kathua to lay the foundation stone of central PMGSY road from Bakhta to Magloor in Jalota area.

Addressing a public rally after the ceremony, Singh said the previous governments headed by opposition parties crossed all limits of ethics and propriety when they allowed reservation for people living along LoC but denied the same benefits to the people living along the IB.

"They did so because their MLAs were elected from the areas along the LoC, some of whom also became the ministers. They denied the same benefit to the people living along IB or on the Pakistan border, mostly in Kathua and Samba districts, because the people here did not vote for them," the Union minister said.

He said this discrepancy was corrected only after the Modi government came to power when the people living near the IB were given justice with the grant of four per cent reservation, the same as people living along LoC.

Singh also said the government was making efforts to set up a satellite hospital and Tata Cancer Centre in Kathua.

"This will provide the latest hi-tech facility for cancer patients from J&K, Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh."

On Keedian Gandyal bridge, he said it was not constructed over the last 70 years because it would have benefitted mere 2,000 people, but "we had the courage and conviction to construct a bridge for these people at a cost of over Rs 150 Crore".

Along the route of the holy Machil Yatra before 2014 there were neither toilets, nor mobile connectivity, nor electricity because these people did not figure in their list of the vote bank, he said.

"It is this government which set up toilets and mobile towers there and recently sanctioned one exclusive solar power plant for the village," he added.

Referring to one of the first Industrial Biotech Parks which has been set up in Kathua, Singh said people will realise its worth over a period of time.

He said that due to the Modi government the Shahpur Kandi project was revived after 40 years, and the Ujh multipurpose irrigation project, which was conceived for the first-time during Maharaja's rule, is also scheduled to take off very soon.

Emergency Contact Nos.

- a) State Control Room - 03192-234287, 238880, 241026, 1070
- b) Emergency Response Support System- 112
- c) Emergency Operation Cetnres (EOCs) –
P/B -03192238881, 1077 M/bunder – 03192262960
C/N- 03193265241 Kamorta – 03193263222
C/Bay-03193 264020 L/Andaman - 03193284014
- d) Police - 232100, 100
- e) Fire - 232101, 101
- f) Health – 232102, 102
- g) MRCC – 1554

CS chairs meeting to review current status of COVID-19 in A&N Islands

Port Blair, Dec. 22

The Chief Secretary, A&N Administration, Shri Keshav Chandra, IAS held a comprehensive meeting today to review the current status of COVID-19 in A&N Islands and future threat perception. The meeting was attended by Shri Neeraj Thakur, IPS, DGP, ANP, Shri Kamal Datta, IFS, PCCF, Shri Nikhil Kumar, IAS, Commissioner-cum-Secretary (Health), Secretaries, Deputy Commissioners of all three Districts, Officers of A&N Administration and representatives from Andaman Nicobar Command.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary urged the people of the Islands to follow all the COVID Appropriate Behavior in order to prevent the outbreak of infection in these Islands. He advised the people to wear mask, maintain social distancing, especially in crowded places and not to

panic.

The Chief Secretary further directed the concerned authorities to review the logistic supplies and place fresh orders for procurement, if needed. He also directed the Health Department to augment the process of manpower hiring and purchase of logistics, if needed, to tackle the situation. The Chief Secretary directed the District Magistrates to review the stocks of medical supplies, beds and oxygen in their respective jurisdiction and take necessary action accordingly. Further, he directed to follow the guidelines and advisories issued by MoHFW, New Delhi and act accordingly. He said, samples of all positive cases must be sent for genome sequencing to the designated INSACOG Laboratories. He also directed all concerned to activate the surveillance at the Port of Entry as well as in all the Health Institutions across the Islands. ILI/SARI cases across

the Islands should be reported daily and a media team be constituted to brief the media on daily basis, the Chief Secretary said.

The Chief Secretary directed the Health Department to issue an advisory on Do's & Don'ts pertaining to COVID-19 for the general public. He also mentioned that in case of any untoward situation, Andaman & Nicobar Administration is fully prepared to tackle the situation.

Earlier, the Commissioner-cum-Secretary (Health) briefed about the present situation of COVID-19. This was followed by detailed presentation about the current status of COVID-19 globally, in the country as well as in the Islands. He also informed about the status of medical supplies including oxygen, status of vaccination in the Islands and also future threat and strategies to tackle any unforeseen situation, a press release from Nodal Officer, COVID-19 said.



Executive Director & State Head West Bengal State Office, Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Kolkata, Shri Lalit Kumar Singh Chauhan along with other senior officials of IOCL met the Chief Secretary, A&N Administration, Shri Keshav Chandra, IAS at Secretariat on 22.12.2022.

Health Advisory for COVID-19

A new variant of COVID-19 is spreading in some countries. While the UT of A&N Islands has taken many measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 and there is no need to panic. The people can join hands to prevent the transmission of disease in the UT by taking the following measures:

DO's

1. Do not panic.
2. Don't pay heed to rumors.
3. Wear mask in all crowded places including schools, colleges, hospitals, markets, cinema etc.
4. Wash your hands and face at regular intervals with soap and water or use alcohol based sanitizer for cleaning hands.
5. Sneeze and cough either into your elbow or into tissue paper / handkerchief. After coughing or sneezing dispose of the tissue paper/ wash your handkerchief.
6. Ensure proper nutrition including fresh fruits, vegetables & plenty of fluids and exercises to boost immunity.
7. Clean the frequently touched surfaces with disinfectant regularly.
8. Those who have symptoms of fever, bodyache, sore throat, abdominal discomfort or any other untoward symptoms, isolate yourself at home for about 7 days and seek medical advice. They must initiate symptomatic treatment at the earliest to prevent any complications.

DON'Ts

1. Do not cough or sneeze into your bare hands or without covering your face.
2. Don't go near your contacts if you are suffering from fever and cough.
3. Don't touch your eyes, face, nose and tongue.
4. Don't go near affected/ sick people.
5. Don't self-medicate.
6. Don't go to crowded places like parks, markets and religious places.
7. Don't go out unless it is absolutely essential.

A&N Administration is fully prepared to tackle any untoward situation. No need to panic.

Illegal earth cutting & transportation reported at Diglipur; N&M District Administration takes swift action



Diglipur, Dec. 23

An incident of illegal earth cutting and transportation was reported in Subhasgram village of Diglipur Tehsil where

an estimated quantum of 2125 cbm of earth material has been extracted from hilly land bearing survey no 49/P and was then transported to and dumped over

land Sy. No 292/1/3/2 by R Rajashekharan.

District Administration took a swift action initiating a revenue case against the reported violation under Andaman and Nicobar Islands Minor Minerals Rules, 2012 and penalty as deemed fit according to law will be levied against the violator.

District Administration of North and Middle Andaman has adopted a zero tolerance policy against violation of such kind. A robust mechanism has been created to check illegal earth cutting operations across district. All such incidents in the future will also be dealt with firm hand.

SAD chief asks Punjab governor to probe AAP's 'advertisement scam'

PTI, CHANDIGARH, Dec 25: SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal on Saturday urged the Punjab Governor to order a probe into the AAP's alleged use of Rs 300 crore of public funds on advertisements to fulfil its "political goals".

In a letter to Governor Banwarilal Purohit, the Shiromani Akali Dal chief said the Aam Aadmi Party had earmarked Rs 750 crore for gov-



ernment advertisements in the current financial year and has

already spent a majority of this amount. *contd. page-5*

Pondicherry University grants additional chances to DBRAIT students to appear for exam

Port Blair, Dec. 23

As per Pondicherry University communication, the exam registration for 2018-19 series & previous batches and 27 to 14T series students have been accorded additional chances to appear for examination in Dec 2022 / Jan 2023 only of ECE, Civil and CSE branches

is being carried out by respective Department and shall be completed by 28/12/2022.

As regard the exam registration for other students such as Regular and Lateral Entry for 2nd to 4th year students, it will be intimated on communication from Pondicherry University.

Raising judges' retirement age could extend service of non-performers: Justice dept to Par Panel



PTI, NEW DELHI, Dec 25:

Increasing the retirement age of Supreme Court and High Court judges could extend the years of service of non-performing judges and might have a cascading effect with government employees raising similar demands, the Department of Justice told a parliamentary panel.

It also said increasing the retirement age of judges would be considered along with measures to ensure transparency and accountability in appointments to the higher judiciary.

In July, Law Minister Kiren Rijju had informed Parliament that there is no proposal to increase the retirement age of Supreme Court and High Court judges.

The Department of Justice made a presentation before the

parliamentary panel on Personnel, Law, and Justice that is chaired by BJP MP and former Bihar deputy chief minister Sushil Modi.

The department in the Ministry of Law and Justice made the presentation that comprised details of judicial processes and reforms, including the possibility of increasing the retirement age of High Court and Supreme Court judges.

"Enhancing the age of retirement might extend benefits in terms of extended years of service in certain non-deserving cases and lead to non-performing and under-performing judges to continue," the department said in its presentation.

It also suggested that raising the retirement age of judges should be considered along with bringing down pending cases and bringing transparency to the judiciary.

"It would be inappropriate if the increase in retirement age is considered along with other measures to ensure transparency, accountability in the appointments to the higher judiciary, effort to fill up existing

vacancies in the district and subordinate judiciary and bringing down arrears of cases pending in courts," the department said in its presentation.

The department said increasing the retirement age may deprive tribunals of having retired judges as presiding officers or judicial members.

It also cautioned that retirement age may have a cascading effect.

"Enhancement of the retirement age of judges will have a cascading effect as government employees at Centre and state level, PSUs, commissions, etc, may raise similar demand. Therefore, this issue needs to be examined in totality," the department said.

Supreme Court judges retire at the age of 65 years, and judges of the 25 high courts in the country retire at 62 years. The Constitution, 114th Amendment Bill was introduced in 2010 to increase the retirement age of high court judges to 65 years.

However, it was not taken up for consideration in Parliament and lapsed with the dissolution of the 15th Lok Sabha.

Hon'ble Minister..... from page 1

The Minister mentioned that under Jal Jeevan Mission, the UT of A&N Islands have achieved 100 percent coverage by providing 62,000 tap connections. Under the PM Awas Yojana (Grameen), 1338 houses needs to be constructed and so far, 90 percent work has been completed.

For development of Amrit Sarovars, 40 to 45 percent work has been completed which is being done through MNREGA, the Minister said. He further said, 8596 Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) have been provided to the beneficiaries of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries and they are availing the benefits of KCC. He said, 15,500 beneficiaries are getting benefits under Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana in A &N Islands while 12925 beneficiaries have been provided LPG connection under Ujjwala Yojana.

The Minister further stated that Prime Minister has launched Garib Kalyan Yojana in which the AAY ration card holders are being given 5 kgs of rice and 1 kg dal free of cost. This scheme has been further extended upto Dec. 2022, the Minister said. The Minister pointed out that the flagship programme of the Central Gov-

ernment is being effectively implemented in A & N Islands providing benefits to the Islanders.

The Minister also informed that on the occasion of the Birth Anniversary of late former Prime Minister Bharat

Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, he paid floral tributes at the portrait during a function held at Mayabunder.

The Minister said that for good connectivity between South and North Andaman, Azad Hind Fauj Setu has

been inaugurated and the work for another bridge connecting Middle Strait and Baratang is underway.

Earlier, the State President, BJP, Shri Ajoy Bairagi presented a report on the visit of the Minister to these Islands.

Meanwhile, during his visit to Mayabunder, the Union Minister interacted with the fisherfolks at Danapur village today and listed out the various welfare schemes being implemented by the Union Government for the welfare of fishermen. He also listened to the Prime Minister's 'Mann Ki Baat' live programme along with the fishermen.

World Cup hangover a factor as Premier League returns to action on Boxing Day

FIANS, LONDON: The Premier League returns to action on Monday (December 26) for the traditional Boxing Day fixtures, just eight days after the FIFA World Cup final in Qatar, and that will affect the team selection of several coaches in the coming days.

Arsenal's game at home to West Ham is the standout fixture, and all eyes will be on whether Mikel Arteta's exciting side can continue the form that took them into the World Cup break with a five-point lead over Manchester City.

The big worry for Arteta is the knee injury suffered by striker Gabriel Jesus in the World Cup, which will keep him out for a significant period of time. Meanwhile, defender William Saliba is a doubt after forming part of the France squad that participated in the World Cup final on December 18.

The World Cup is also a factor for Liverpool's visit to Aston Villa, with Villa's first-choice keeper Emiliano Martinez ruled out after his heroics for Ar-

gentina over the past month. The club hopes Martinez will be available for their next match, while Philippe Coutinho and Jacob Ramsey are also both doubtful for the game. Liverpool is likely to be without Ibrahima Konate after his World Cup exploits.

Brentford and Tottenham get the ball rolling on Monday, with the news that Brentford coach Thomas Frank has signed a new contract until 2027. The southwest London club is sweating to see if striker Ivan Toney could face a ban for breaking betting regulations. Tottenham will probably be without World Cup winner Cristian Romero, while Richarlison is also out with an injury he picked up in Qatar, and the club will wait to see how Croatian forward Ivan Perisic is after his month away, reports Xinhua.

Argentina's Alexis Mac Allister will miss out for Brighton for their south-coast derby against Southampton, who sits second from the bot-



tom with one point from the last four matches.

Everton coach Frank Lampard survived the World Cup break, but with his side 17th in the league after three defeats in five games, he needs a win over bottom side Wolves, who now has former Sevilla, Spain and Real Madrid coach Julen Lopetegui in their dugout.

Newcastle United and Leicester City were the two in-form sides going into the stoppage, with Newcastle winning their last five matches, while Leicester won four from five. A win for Newcastle would lift them up to second with Manchester City

contd. page-6

SAD chief asks..... from page-4

"Instead of spending this money to create awareness about government schemes in Punjab, the government had used the advertisements to promote AAP as well as its convener Arvind Kejriwal across the country," Badal alleged in a party statement.

"The government has thus not only violated the guidelines of the Supreme Court on usage of public funds for government advertisements but has also betrayed the trust of Punjabis," he said.

Badal said that since the Delhi Lieutenant Governor had already taken notice of similar "wrongdoing" in Delhi and or-

dered a recovery of Rs 97 crore, the Punjab governor too should order a probe into the entire advertising spend of the state government on political campaigns so that this money could be recovered.

He also alleged that the government had used public funds for political advertisements in Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat during the recent assembly elections in both states.

He said the entire process was "shrouded in secrecy" with the government refusing to even respond to an RTI query on its advertisement spend.

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Sharath, Manika overcome administrative crisis to light up table tennis scene



PTI, NEW DELHI, Dec 25:

The age-defying Achanta Sharath Kamal sizzled on and off the court while Manika Batra achieved another first for Indian table tennis despite the administrative crisis the sport had to endure over the past 12 months.

With three gold medals, including a singles title after 16 years, at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, the 40-year-old Sharath showed that age was just a number. He plans to hang up his boots only after the Paris Olympics but 2022 also saw him getting into sports administration.

He was elected as the vice-chair of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) athletes' commission before becoming the first Indian to be elected the joint chair of the players' body in the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF).

His role in the IOA may be limited but a seat on the executive council of the ITTF gives him authority to effect changes in the way the game is played.

Sharath finally gets his due

Some said it was probably 10 years too late but Sharath finally got his due from the government when he became the first table tennis player to receive the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna award, India's highest sporting honour.

Even the usually divided selection panel found it hard to disagree and he was the unanimous choice for the sporting honour.

The coveted award came after his sensational effort in the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham, where he overcame sleepless nights and a battered body to pocket three gold medals — singles, team and mixed with 24-year-old Sreeja Akula.

Manika overcomes CWG disappointment with Asia Cup bronze

Having bagged an unprecedented four medals in the 2018 CWG, expectations were expectedly high from Manika in Birmingham. She could not handle the weight of expectations and returned home empty-handed.

However, a performance of

a lifetime was to follow in the Asia Cup in Bangkok three months later.

The Delhi-based paddler raised her game to stun two top-10 players in a span of three days to secure a bronze, becoming the first Indian to win a medal in the tournament's rich history.

Legal battles galore

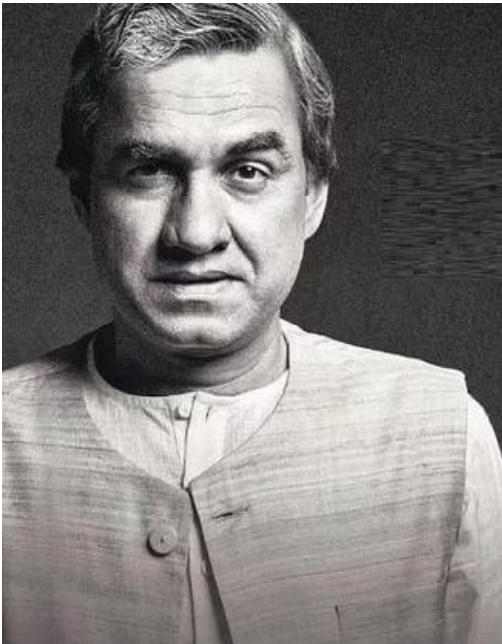
The start to the year was rather grim as the Delhi High Court suspended the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) after observing a "sorry" state of affairs in the governing body. There was fear among the players over the suspension impacting their preparation for international events, including the Commonwealth Games scheduled for July-August.

However, the court-appointed Committee of Administrators running the TTFI ensured the training of elite athletes remained largely unaffected.

A newly-elected set of office bearers took charge of the federation earlier this month and their first task will be to conduct the national events. While looking after the day-to-day functioning of the federation, the CoA too got locked in a host of legal hurdles.

As many as four players — Manush Shah, Swastika Ghosh, Archana Kamath and Diya Chitale — challenged their exclusion from the CWG squad, keeping the CoA more than busy. Only Chitale emerged as the winner from those battles and was included in the Birmingham-bound women's squad.

Pankaj Tripathi's first look from 'Main Atal Hoon' released



Mumbai: Actor Pankaj Tripathi seems to have shapeshifted for his next. His first look, as former prime minister, from the film 'Main Atal Hoon' was released on the late politico's birth anniversary on Christmas. Pankaj, with prosthetics on, looks uncannily similar to the politician. The film, directed by National Award winner Ravi Jadhav, will release in December next year.

Pankaj is seen in a dhoti-kurta and a jacket with prosthetics to resemble Atal Bihari Vajpayee. A video clip introduces him as a PM, poet, statesman and gentleman.

Sharing his first-look pictures from the film on Instagram, Pankaj Tripathi wrote

in Hindi, "I know that it is necessary for me to work on my personality with restraint in order to make 'Atal' ji's personality come true on screen. I have firm faith that I will be able to do justice to my new role with enthusiasm and morale.

He shared a video montage as well and

wrote in Hindi, "I have got this opportunity to portray this rare personality on screen. I am emotional and grateful." 'Main Atal Hoon' is presented by Bhanushali Studios Limited and Legend Studios. It is produced by Vinod Bhanushali, Sandeep Singh, Sam Khan and Kamlesh Bhanushali and co-produced by Zeeshan Ahmad and Shivv Sharma.

It is written by Utkarsh Naithani and has music by Salim Sulaiman, with lyrics by Sameer. Sonu Nigam has sung the songs for the film. When it comes to other projects, Pankaj will be seen next in Anurag Basu's Metro... In Dino.

Seminar marks National Consumer Rights.....

and Shri P.J.Sekhar, President Grain Dealers Association, students and others.

Speaking on the occasion, the Secretary, CS&CA highlighted on the theme, "Effective disposal of cases in Consumer Commissions" and rights of the consumers. She sensitized the gathering about e-daakhil, an initiative of Department of Consumer Affairs on the direction of Govt. of India. This facility plays a vital role on easy accessibility to overcome approach barrier by enjoying the comfort of their home. These initiatives removed all the barriers of locations which in turn encourage the consumers of remote areas to come forward and seek redressal of their grievances.

Earlier, the Deputy Director, CS&CA welcomed the gathering and briefed about the various redressal modes available in Consumer Fora to file complaints with the jurisdiction of the court based on the compensation claim by the litigant. He also highlighted the importance of National Consumer Right Day. Shri. Madan Kumar Gupta spoke on the Consumer Protection Act. The President Grain Dealers Association ensured their associations commitment towards various services offered to the consumers in a fair and transparent manner. He also stated that all necessary initiatives have been taken to keep a check on the price of essential commodities in the open market for the larger interest of the con-

sumers.

Meanwhile, as part of National Consumer Rights Day, the Department organized an inter school Painting Competition on December 20, 2022 in the auditorium of Govt. Girl's Sr.Sec.School, Port Blair in which around 160 students from 21 different schools of South Andaman actively participated.

In the competition, Ekansha Singh, student of Class XII, of Sagritara School bagged

from page 1

1st prize, K. Eekshita of Class X of NCS and V.K.Amreen Arif of Class XII of Vitala Sr.Sec.School jointly bagged 2nd prize and Shifa Khatun of Class VIII of Ummat Public School and Dishita Pal of Class VII of KV-2 bagged 3rd prize. Consolation prizes were also given to the deserving students by the chief guest and others.

Shri. Aneesh Chatterjee, Assistant Director proposed the vote of thanks.

Firing practice by CG Dornier

Port Blair, Dec. 22: Firing practice by CG Dornier will be carried out on Jan. 3, 6, 9, 17, 20, 23 and 31, 2023 from 1 pm to 3 pm. The safe flying height is 6000 feet AMSL. All concerned have been warned to keep themselves and their vessels/fishing boat away from the firing range during the above mentioned dates and time.

World.. from page-5

not playing until Wednesday, and Callum Wilson will lead their attack after returning in good shape from the World Cup.

There are two matches on Tuesday, with Chelsea at home to Bournemouth, who made Gary O'Neil their permanent boss during the World Cup break.

Tuesday also sees Manchester United, now without the departed Cristiano Ronaldo, at home to Nottingham Forest. Forest is recovering from a slow start to the season before the break and has two wins and two draws from their last five matches. The round of matches ends on Wednesday, with Manchester City making a short trip to play Leeds United at Elland Road.