

## PM Modi to name 21 unnamed Islands in ANI

**Also to unveil National Memorial dedicated to Netaji**

**PORT BLAIR, JAN 22/--/** The Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi will participate in a ceremony to name 21 unnamed Islands of Andaman & Nicobar Islands after 21 ParamVir Chakra awardees on 23rd January at 11 am via video conferencing. On the occasion, Mr. Modi will also unveil the

### AN EVENTFUL DAY IN INDIAN HISTORY

model of the National Memorial dedicated to Netaji to be built on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Dweep. Keeping in mind the historic significance of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands and to honour the memory of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Ross Island was renamed as Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Dweep

by the Prime Minister during his visit to the Island in 2018. Neil Island and Havelock Island were also renamed as Shaheed Dweep and Swaraj Dweep. The largest unnamed island will be named after the first ParamVir Chakra awardee; the second largest unnamed island will be named after the second ParamVir Chakra awardee, and so on. This step will be an everlasting tribute to our heroes, several of whom had made the ultimate sacrifice to protect the sovereignty and integrity of the nation. These Islands have been named after the 21 ParamVir Chakra awardees, viz. Major Somnath Sharma; Subedar and



Honorary Captain (then Lance Naik) Karam Singh, MM; 2nd Lt. Rama Raghoba Rane; Nayak Jadunath Singh; Company Havildar Major Piru Singh; Capt GS Salaria; Lieutenant Colonel (then Major) Dhan Singh Thapa; Subedar Joginder Singh; Major Shaitan Singh; CQMH. Abdul Hamid; Lt Col Ardeshir Burzorji Tarapore; Lance Naik Albert Ekka; Major Hoshier Singh; 2nd Lt. Arun Khetrpal; Flying Officer Nirmaljit Singh Sekhon; Major Ramaswamy Parameswaran; Naib Subedar Bana Singh; Captain Vikram Batra; Lt Manoj Kumar Pandey; Subedar Major (than Rifleman) Sanjay Kumar; and Subedar Major Retd (Hony Captain) Grenadier Yogendra Singh Yadav. (File picture)

## Velammal International School- A 'school of excellence'

**ROOPA LALL**



**PORT BLAIR, JAN 22/--/** The Velammal International School is the best residential school in Chennai, providing quality education with World class infrastructure facilities. Many students of Andaman & Nicobar Islands have studied in this School and have achieved highest success in their careers. Mr. G. Prabhakaran, Principal-cum-Executive Officer and Mr. Shanmugasundaram are currently camping in Port Blair in connection with the admission of students from these islands in Velammal International School. Speaking to EOI, Mr. G. Prabhakaran said Velammal International School has about 550 International students and 2350 residential students in both its campuses, including 27 students from Andaman & Nicobar Islands, studying in the School. The Velammal International School (TVIS) is a unique educational institution in Tamil Nadu, setting new standards of education in the country, using state-of-the-art technology, art and a futuristic vision.

(Contd. on page-6)

## Amit Shah arrives Port Blair to a rousing welcome

**Home Minister to attend mega-cultural prog at Netaji Stadium today**

**PORT BLAIR, JAN 22/--/** The Union Home Minister, Mr. Amit Shah arrived at Port Blair to a rousing welcome. The special flight of Mr. Shah touched the VSI airport at about 10.00 pm on Sunday. The Lt Governor, Member of Parliament, Chief Secretary, DGP and senior officers of the UT Administration received the Union Home Minister at the airport. The Union Home Minister, Mr. Amit Shah will be the chief guest of the mega cultural programme at Netaji Stadium at 5.00 pm on 23rd January 2023. Mr. Shah will participate in the function which Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi will name 21 unnamed Islands of



Andaman & Nicobar Islands after 21 ParamVir Chakra awardees and unveils the model of the National Memorial dedicated to Netaji to be built on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Island on 23rd January at 11 am via video conferencing in the auditorium of Dr. B R

Ambedkar Institute of Technology (DBRAIT). As per a BJP release, Mr. Amit Shah will chair 'Shakti Kendra Pramukh Bhaitak' and meeting of core committee members of Bharatiya Janata Party at 2.00 pm in the auditorium of Tagore College, Middle Point. The Union Home Minister, Mr. Amit Shah will be the chief guest of the mega cultural programme at Netaji Stadium at 5.00 pm on 23rd January 2023. Mr. Shah will participate in the function which Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi will name 21 unnamed Islands of Andaman & Nicobar Islands after 21 ParamVir Chakra awardees and unveils the model of the



National Memorial dedicated to Netaji to be built on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Island on 23rd January at 11 am via video conferencing in the auditorium of Dr. B R Ambedkar Institute of Technology (DBRAIT). As per a BJP release, Mr. Amit Shah will chair 'Shakti Kendra Pramukh Bhaitak' and meeting of core committee members of Bharatiya Janata Party at 2.00 pm in the auditorium of Tagore College, Middle Point. (File picture)

## MP inaugurates 'Bageecha', an initiative to bring people closer to nature

**PORT BLAIR, JAN 22/--/** The Member of Parliament, Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma on Sunday planted a sapling to inaugurate 'Bageecha' an initiative to bring people closer to nature at Brichgunj Chowk, Prothrapur, Port Blair. Bageecha is a concept by 'Andaman Chronicle' led by its Editor, Mr. Denis Giles. In the project 'Bageecha', Andaman Chronicle aims to inculcate the hobby of planting and adopting plants. With the help of experts in the field, 'Bageecha' also attempts to educate all about different varieties of plants, their uses and the care that is required to nurture your adopted plants.

(Contd. on page-6)



## SUDHANGSHUBALA FOUNDATION

(Sudhangshubala Foundation is a registered trust. Approval U/S 80G (5) (vi) of the Income Tax Act, 1961 has been granted on 30-05-2014)



### Greetings from Sudhangshubala Foundation

**Sudhangshubala Foundation**, a registered charitable trust, set up by Sri Bhabesh Majumder, in the sacred memory of his late mother **Sudhangshubala Majumder** has been rendering various welfare services in the field of education, health in particular and other social spheres in general. The foundation offers full financial assistance to 70 MBBS students of Nadia district, West Bengal and 12 MBBS students of A & N Islands.

From 2016 onwards on 23rd January the birthday anniversary of Shri Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose we were organizing quiz competition in A & N Islands with various schools and we have awarded different categories of prizes to students and best school. Due to the Covid -19 pandemic situation from 2020 this ceremony has been affected and this year too we could not organise the program due to unavoidable circumstances. We feel confident that next year we shall be in a position to host the celebration in a befitting manner on the same occasion

Sudhangshubala Foundation wishes a safe and healthy 2023.



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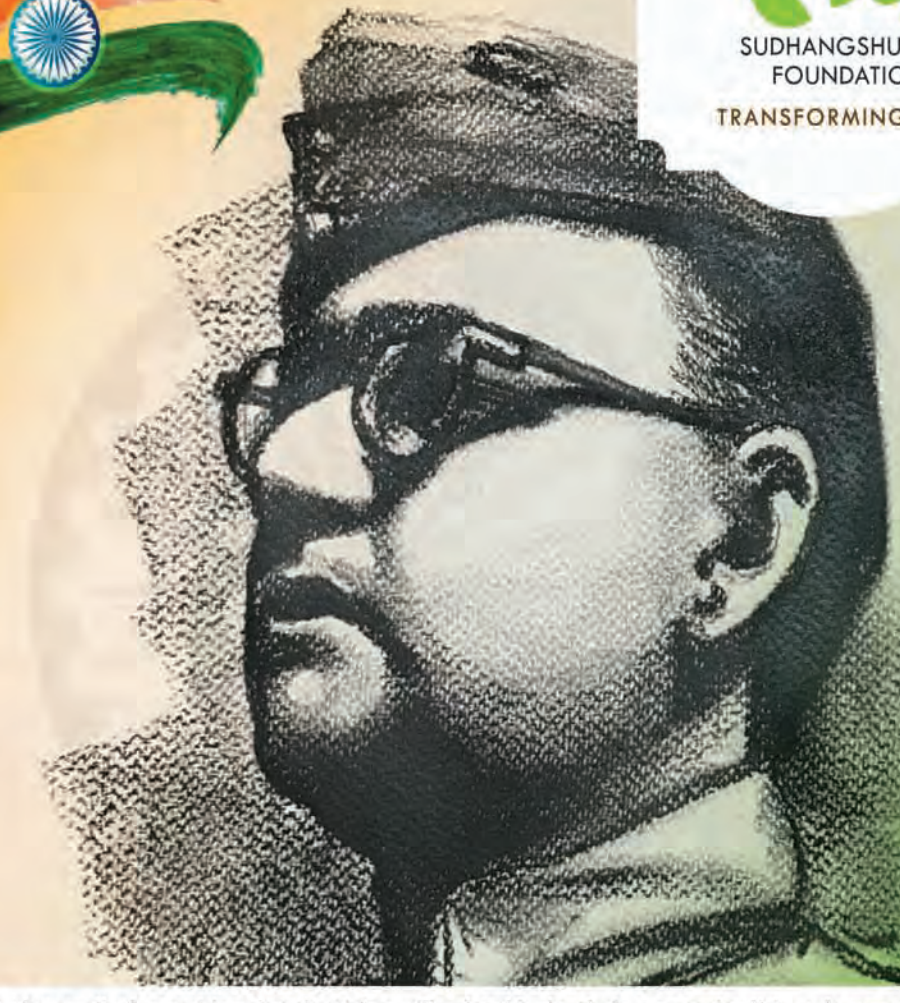
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"One individual may die for an idea, but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives."  
**Subhash Chandra Bose**

## Saluting the Hero on his 126th Birthday



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# Cong will not accept any compromise with Rahul's security: Ramesh in J&K

**SAMBA/JAMMU, JAN 22** /--/ A day after twin bomb blasts rocked a busy locality here leaving nine people injured, senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Sunday said there will be no compromise on the security of Rahul Gandhi who is leading the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Yatra entered Kathua district Thursday evening via Punjab. After a day's break on Saturday, the yatra, which commenced from Kanyakumari on September 7, resumed from Hiranagar on Sunday and will reach Jammu on January 23. According to party leaders, Rahul is likely to celebrate Republic Day with the people of Jammu and Kashmir at Banihal the gateway town to Kashmir along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway.

Talking about the security of the Gandhi scion, Ramesh said the party's stand is clear on terrorism and that there is no compromise in dealing with either the perpetrators or sponsors of terrorism. "There will be no compromise on the security of Gandhi. His security is our topmost priority and we are following the guidelines of security agencies in totality," the senior Congress leader told reporters at Chak Nanak in Samba, where the Yatra will stop for the night after covering a distance of 21 km from Hiranagar. J&K AICC in-charge Rajni Patil, J&K Congress chief Vikar Rasool Wani and party chief spokesperson Ravinder Sharma also addressed the press conference, asserting that the Yatra will conclude as per schedule. "Rahul

Gandhi is staying back in the Union territory and is likely to hoist the tricolour at Banihal along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway



Jairam Ramesh

on the Republic Day," Wani said. Two back-to-back explosions had rocked a busy locality on the outskirts of Jammu on Saturday, leaving nine people injured, officials had said, adding that IEDs were

Nagar area of Narwal. Condemning the attack, party spokesman Sharma said the last leg of the Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir was chalked out in consultation with the security agencies. "We are concerned

about the safety and security of our leader. The twin explosions at Narwal and another in Bajalta a day earlier raise a question mark on the security arrangements," he said. "We accept that the security agencies are fully alert and are doing their job satisfactorily, but claims of the government that terrorism has been finished falls flat in the wake of such incidents. On December 31 last, they (security agencies) claimed that terrorism had been eliminated and the next day there was an attack in Dhangri village of Rajouri, leaving seven people belonging to the minority community dead," he said. The party spokesman also said that there will be no change in the Yatra programme as its nitty-gritty have been planned in accordance with

the guidelines issued by the security agencies and the Lt Governor administration. Ramesh, the Congress general secretary and in-charge communication, alleged that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has imposed an 'undeclared' emergency in the country. "An undeclared emergency is more dangerous than a declared emergency... the BJP has ended the spirit of democracy in the country. Though elections are taking place but that does not mean we are democratic," he said. Asked about the party's stand on now abrogated Article 370 of the constitution, the Congress leader said: "It is a serious issue, but what is more serious right now is the restoration of democratic activities in Jammu and Kashmir." (PTI)

## BJP turning coastal Karnataka into Hindutva laboratory: Siddaramaiah

**MANGALURU, JAN 22** /--/ The ruling BJP is trying to turn coastal Karnataka into a laboratory of Hindutva for their political advantage, Opposition Leader in the state Assembly Siddaramaiah said on Sunday.

Addressing reporters in Udupi, Siddaramaiah said BJP leaders are more interested in speaking about 'love jihad' than development issues. BJP is spreading lies in the name of Hindutva to cause division in society, the Congress leader alleged. He said Hinduism and Hindutva are entirely different. The former chief minister, who was in Udupi as part of the 'Praja Dhvani' programme of Congress, said people have come to realise the mindset of the BJP.



Siddaramaiah

Congress believes in spreading love among the people regardless of their religion, he said.

The former Karnataka chief minister said terrorism of any nature should be condemned by all and those who work behind such activities should be severely punished. Siddaramaiah claimed that BJP cannot come back to power in Karnataka even if Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah visit the state several times.

Siddaramaiah said he has decided to contest from Kolar in the Assembly election, but the final decision is up to the party high command. The Congress leader expressed confidence that his party will win 130 seats in the forthcoming polls. There are 224 seats in the Karnataka Assembly. The party will considerably improve its position in the twin coastal districts of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi, he said. (PTI)



UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, BJP state president Chaudhary Bhupendra Singh and senior leaders of the party participating in Uttar Pradesh BJP Working Committee meeting in Lucknow on Sunday

## Modi mantra now resonates world over: Yogi

**LUCKNOW, JAN 22** /--/ Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday said 'Modi hai to mumkin hai' is not limited to India anymore but has spread globally, a proof of that is India's presidency of G20 group, as he exhorted the BJP workers to gear up for the 2024 general election. G20, an intergovernmental group, has 19 members, besides the European Union, and is chaired by each member nation for a year, rotationally. Brazil is slated to chair the group in 2023. "Wherever there is crisis in the world, everyone looks towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi with hope. The slogan that was raised in 2019: 'Modi hai to mumkin hai' - today is not only India's slogan, it has become a global mantra and India getting the presidency

of G-20 is an example of that," Adityanath said. "Modi has connected every Indian with the G20. There are 11 conferences related to G20 which will be held in Agra, Lucknow, Varanasi, and Gautambuddha Nagar," the UP chief minister said, addressing the daylong inaugural session of BJP's state executive meeting at Indira Gandhi Pratishthan.

Referring to the Global Investors Summit which will take place on February 10 and 12, he said that UP is emerging as a destination for new investments and every BJP worker needs to come forward. "We all move forward with the spirit of the victory. Many possibilities will come to us." Criticising the past UP governments, Adityanath said: "Yesterday you must have seen Mauni

Amavasya's bath in Prayagraj. More than 2 crore devotees had gone there. If the previous governments tried to understand this potential, then we would not have had to knock on others' doors."

Seven months into his second government, Adityanath said that for the first time under the leadership and guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a government was re-formed in UP with a two-thirds majority after completing five years in office. "This was the result of the zeal and enthusiasm of the workers of the world's largest political party like BJP," he said. The Chief Minister said that the party came to power in Azamgarh and Rampur Lok Sabha constituencies where by-elections were held, only because of Modi, who

destroyed forecasts of all the analysts. "762 municipal bodies are up for elections. And as soon as the report of the OBC commission comes, election will be announced, and with it BJP's victory flag should be seen waving like it did in 2014, 2017, 2019, 2022 and in the municipal elections," he said. BJP state president Bhupendra Singh Choudhary, who also addressed the meeting earlier, set the party a target of winning all 80 seats in the state in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. More than 700 party workers including deputy chief ministers Keshav Prasad Maurya and Brajesh Pathak, Union Ministers General VK Singh, Sanjeev Balyan, Kaushal Kishore, Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti, and Bhanu Pratap Verma attended the meeting. (PTI)

## BSF conducts 'Ops Alert' exercise to step up security on Indo-Pak border ahead of R-Day

**AHMEDABAD, JAN 22** /--/ The Border Security Force has started an "Ops Alert" exercise to enhance security along the India-Pakistan border in Kutch district of Gujarat and Barmer in Rajasthan in view of the upcoming Republic Day celebrations, the BSF said on Sunday. The exercise, which began from Saturday, was being carried out to "thwart any ill designs of anti-national elements" during the Republic Day celebrations, the BSF Gujarat Frontier said in a release. The 'Ops Alert' exercise commenced on January 21 and will continue till January 28 "all along the Indo-Pak international border from Sir Creek (marshy area) to the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat and Barmer district of Rajasthan," it said. The BSF will carry out special operations in forward and depth areas as well as creeks and 'Harami Nalla' as part of the exercise. It has also planned public outreach programmes as part of the exercise, the release said.

The Indo-Pak border along Kutch in Gujarat is sensitive in view of a number of Pakistani nationals having been apprehended in the past after entering the Indian waters while moving on boats to catch fish. According to official data, the BSF apprehended 22 Pakistani fishermen, seized 79 fishing boats and heroin worth Rs 250 crore and charas worth Rs 2.49 crore from this region of Gujarat in 2022. To enhance its security, "permanent vertical bunkers" of concrete are being constructed for the first time to station BSF troops right at the strategically significant Sir Creek and Harami Nalla marshy area, sources earlier said. The Union home ministry has sanctioned a Rs 50 crore fund for the construction of eight multi-storey bunkers cum observation posts in this area along the Bhuj sector in view of the "constant infiltration of Pakistani fishermen and fishing boats in the area," they said. (PTI)

## Anti-terror mock drill raises hackles over 'terrorists' shouting slogans of a particular community, sparks row

**CHANDRAPUR, JAN 22** /--/ A police mock drill in a temple in Chandrapur in Maharashtra landed in controversy after the personnel posing as terrorists were allegedly shouting slogans connected to a particular community. A group of lawyers has submitted a memorandum to the district police authorities on the issue, while superintendent of police Ravindrasingh Pardeshi on Sunday said all efforts would be taken to ensure such an error is not repeated. The mock drill, which was conducted on January 11 at the renowned Mahakali Temple here, enacted a scene in which a group of terrorists took over a place of worship and held devotees hostage before being apprehended by security forces. "Videos of the drill showing the personnel who played the part of terrorists in the mock drill shouting particular slogans. This portrays one community in a negative light and makes one believe all terrorists are from this community," said Farat Baig, part of lawyers' group here. "We have submitted a memorandum to the office of the district SP against such sloganeering and portrayal. This act of the police amounts to defaming a community. Obviously, the script of the mock drill must have been overseen by the SP and other senior officials," Baig said. When contacted, SP Ravindrasingh Pardeshi said his department will "take necessary steps to ensure such an error is not repeated". (PTI)

## Want Delhi govt schools to be world's best: Kejriwal

**NEW DELHI, JAN 22** /--/ Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday said he wants the city's government schools should be the best in the world so that students from abroad come here for education. Addressing teachers who had been to foreign countries for training, Kejriwal told them that he will keep sending them abroad and they have the support of the people of Delhi and the country. "Some people consider it expenditure, but it is investment. I feel that you can construct four bridges less and four roads less, but we should provide best exposure and training to our teachers. They will groom students who will build roads and bridges in the future," he said. Lamenting that some people are trying to defame them, the chief minister alleged that there is a tendency to bring down those who do good work.

"There are people who see our good work and feel jealous. They want to defame us. But I am not interested in party politics. If some BJP person or Congress person wants to improve the education system somewhere in the country, I will loan Manish Sisodia to them for a few days. We want to



improve the education system of the entire country," Kejriwal added. He said the objective of his government is to give the teachers the better learning experience. "We have to compete with international schools. There was a time when we wanted that government schools should be better than private schools. This has happened. Now we want that our schools become the world's best. We imagine about being the best," the chief minister said.

Noting that there is still scope for improvement, the chief minister said the endeavour is to provide exposure to teachers to the best practices in the world. "There is a saying 'miles to go before I sleep'. There is lots to achieve. Our critics also accept that there is a huge change coming in Delhi's education system. This has happened because of Delhi's two crore people," he said. Kejriwal said before 2015, schools were in an extremely bad state and hailing the teachers for the change. "Schools used to function in tents. All those schools functioning under tents have now become talent schools. Earlier, there were no desks, leakages from roof happened, and there was no security schools but we have done a lot in terms of infrastructure," he added.

Not only has the infrastructure become better, but even the atmosphere has changed with students praising teachers and a sea change coming in the results too, the chief minister said. Kejriwal said government school students have cleared JEE without coaching. "I also cleared engineering exams but had taken coaching for it," he said. The Delhi government and the Lt Governor office have been engaged in a war of words over the issue of teachers' training in Finland. Kejriwal had earlier said Delhi LG V K Saxena twice returned a file containing the proposal, asking if a cost-benefit analysis of the programme had been done. The Raj Niwas, in a series of tweets, then clarified that the Lt Governor had only advised the Delhi government to evaluate the proposal in totality and assess the effectiveness of such foreign training programmes undertaken in the past. (PTI)

## NDRF to station permanent teams in hills for high-altitude rescue operations

**NEW DELHI, JAN 22** /--/ The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) is mulling to permanently station specialised mountaineering teams in the higher reaches of the Himalayas so that they are ready and acclimatised to launch swift rescue operations during snow avalanches, landslides and glacial lake outburst floods among others, officials said.

The federal contingency force has initiated a slew of measures to prepare its saviours for tackling natural and man-made catastrophes in these fragile mountain ranges on India's north which, according to experts, may see a rise in accidents due to a variety of reasons, including climate change and human development. The force, that draws its complete manpower on deputation from paramilitary forces, proposes to keep multiple small teams of four-five mountaineering trained personnel at the border posts of various Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) like the ITBP. Apart from the China LAC guarding Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), the

Sashastra Seema Bal and the Border Security Force too have posts at high-altitude as part of their mandate to guard the Nepal, Bhutan and Pakistan borders.

NDRF director general (DG) Atul Karwal said the force is taking a number of steps to tackle disasters in the mountains as there is an "aggravated" threat of such incidents occurring in the future. He was speaking about the new initiatives being undertaken by them in this domain during a recent session on 'disaster response in mountains', held to mark the 18th Raising Day of the force on January 19 here. "The Himalayas are a young mountain range... the forces that made them are still at work and hence these ranges are not settled and stable... something is changing here and the reasons attributed to these by the experts are many like climate change, uncontrolled development and breach of load bearing capacity of these regions," Karwal said.

The DG recounted the 2013 flash floods in Uttarakhand, the February, 2021 glacial lake outburst

floods in the border town of Chamoli and the latest incident of land subsidence in Joshimath and nearby areas, as some of the disasters that took place in the mountainous areas in the recent past. "There is full possibility of such



disasters occurring much more than before and in an aggravated manner and hence the NDRF has to be prepared to meet these challenges..." Karwal said. "The mountain rescue skills and capabilities will not only help us in the hilly terrain of the north but also elsewhere.

These skills are useful everywhere as traversing through ropes is an expertise required for many other operations including high-rise rescue," he said.

Karwal said it is being thought and planned that specialised mountain rescue trained teams of the NDRF, with a strength of four-five personnel each, will be stationed for three-four months in rotation at high-altitude (above 10,000

feet) posts of CAPFs. This will help us in launching quick rescue operations in case of any disaster that strikes in the mountains as our teams will already be acclimatised for the heights as they are living there, he said. "If our personnel are not acclimatised they cannot respond to a mountain incident effectively... in fact we may suffer losses," he said. The NDRF chief was underlining the cardinal principle of getting physically accustomed to the environment in the mountains, before undertaking any task, as they have different climatic conditions from the plains like thin oxygen levels and sub-zero temperatures. The DG informed that the force has recently got about 125 personnel trained from specialist mountaineering institutes and it proposes to have such teams in each of its 16 battalions, especially the four responsible for mountainous regions.

The 12th NDRF battalion is based in Arunachal Pradesh with a jurisdiction to cover all hill regions on the eastern flank of the country, the 13th is located in Punjab's Ludhiana but its area of responsibility is entire Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh region while 14th and 15th battalions are located in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand respectively with their area of operations in each of the two states. Recently, the force had rushed a team to Joshimath from its regional response centre (RRC) located in state capital Dehradun, about 300 km from the border town. "We have also prepared a new

authorisation for the mountaineering gear we will use in the future... the specifications are being prepared currently with the help of domain experts," he said.

The specialised mountain rescue teams of the NDRF will have special equipments even as we are soon going to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with an expert institution which also helps the army for its mountaineering tasks, he said. The force, according to the DG, will make it a "regular feature" to undertake expeditions to various peaks in the country, beginning this year. "If we undertake regular mountain expeditions we will be better prepared during operations in the hills... we may not be very skilled in this domain at present but we will surely be as good as the best," he told his personnel during the event. The force, raised in 2006, has a total of 16 battalions and 28 RRCs, comprising around 18,000 personnel in total, located at various places across the length and breadth of the country at present. (PTI)



# When The Cure Suggested Is Worse Than The Disease

BHOPINDER SINGH

Governance is often about having to choose between two seemingly bad options, in the hope that the positives outweigh the negatives, in the ultimate choice made. Seasoned politicians who have been on top of their craft, versus many from the judicial realm who are putting forth their functional logics as a counterargument, are embroiled in the fight for supremacy and control of the domain. The situation is warranted by the undeniable concerns in the Indian Judiciary (as is the issue with all arms of governance) i.e., pendency of cases/undertrials, taints of corruption, accusations of opacity and nepotism within the collegium 'system' and even a sense of imperiousness. Similar concerns (or arguably far graver) could be made on other 'classes' of society e.g., Politicians, Industrialists or even the administrative staff etc. In Politics Of Renunciation Thankfully, unlike the other realms of governance who suffer from notions of perfection e.g politicians or administrative staff, there is consensus amongst all (including within the legal fraternity itself), that reforms and changes are essential. The moot question is, whether the said reforms will come by

more infusion of the political classes in the running of the judicial framework, or through an accelerated process of continuous self-reforms as initiated by the judicial fraternity? The absolute necessity of 'checks-and-balances' in a participative democracy had led to the explicit segregation and separation of functions between the legislature, executive and the judiciary. History is instructive on when the concentration and monopolisation of power (against the tenets of 'checks and balances') went in favour of the executive in 1975 and birthed 'committed judiciary'. The implied 'commitment' was to the decisions of the dispensation of the day i.e., an unequivocal case for partisanship. Her reign saw the phenomenon of a personalised cult which trampled on the independence of various 'institutions', including the judiciary. Indira Gandhi had her reasons for 'sorting out' the judiciary after her election was set aside by the Allahabad High Court amongst various other challenges to her decisions. She retaliated with a combination of supersessions and rewards towards those who partook or spurned the journey of 'committed judiciary'. Indian democracy and ultimately

the citizenry were to pay a terrible price for getting enthralled by the ostensible muscularity of Indira Gandhi's reign. It is a temptation that did not spare even the highest personification of Indian democracy i.e., Jawaharlal Nehru, who too commented, "If we go wrong here and there, it can be pointed out, but in the ultimate analysis, no judiciary can stand in judgement over the sovereign will of the entire community. Judges can correct the wrong here and there; they cannot arrogate to themselves the position of super-house of a parliament". Thankfully the post-Indira Gandhi era did not see brazen usurpers of democracy and by and large the dispensations of varied persuasions, respected the fine line of constitutionality. Unfortunately, the judiciary did not use this time and independence adequately for self-reforms and building the required scale to bring down backbreaking pendencies, amongst other malaises that accompanied the narrative. But for all accusations of corruption, delays, entitlements, and deep familial connections – the judiciary as an 'institution' is spared the vital allegation of partisanship or politicisation, that has sadly engulfed all other supposedly

independent 'institutions', without exception. Perhaps the relative 'independence' of the judiciary vis-à-vis during the Indira era, is the only change now, from then. Today, from the Vice President of India to the Law Minister of the Union Cabinet, everyone is making jarring and unsubtle pitches for political inclusion (read, interference) as a solution to the perceived inefficacy of the Indian judicial system. In an obviously sanctified and orchestrated manner, the Vice President stirred a hornet's nest by disagreeing with the Supreme Court's long-held view that the Parliament can amend but not change the fundamental structure of the Constitution, willy-nilly implying the superior wisdom onto the current set of ruling politicians as opposed to that of the founding fathers of the Constitution, the constitutional restraint of 'checks-and-balances', be damned! As someone who earned the 'distinction' of constant slugfest, public tantrums, and much posturing during his gubernatorial tenure with the equally combative and unrestrained Chief Minister, it was a bit posh to berate the

judiciary with his no holds barred comment, "one-upmanship and public posturing from judicial platforms is not good and these institutions must know how to conduct themselves". No such comment is ever forthcoming for Parliamentarians and even Ministers who make the most divisive, violent, and xenophobic comments, and get away unchecked. Importantly, many distinguished legal luminaries from his own partisan persuasion like Arun Jaitley (or even the Vice President's predecessor from the same party i.e., Venkaiah Naidu, who insisted on the supremacy of the Constitution) had held an avowedly different view, to what is now supplanted by the current Law Minister and Vice President. If anything, many forgotten and banished members of the current ruling party had suffered on account of deliberate

conflation of the executive and the judiciary in the 70s. But those wise men and women of constitutional sobriety are long forgotten too. As public memory is often selective and fleeting, even the Prime Minister who had valiantly defended the Constitution as the 'holy book'. Today even that 'holy book' is knowingly questioned and sought to be diminished with the suggestion that judiciary needs more governmental interference as opposed to independence (effectively burying yet another catchy slogan 'minimum government, maximum governance'). Now, it is also posited that the age-old tact ('stick') of possible supersessions to ensure 'committed' ranks has been flanked by the possibility ('carrot') of post-retirement opportunities to ensure undue praise and unhealthy bonhomie between the executive and the judiciary. At the same time, with 30 million cases backlogged, statistically undeniable preponderance of judge-

appointees from families of former judges, inapplicability of RTI and invisibility of procedural accountability, widespread concerns of corruption and unfair undertrial situation, something is terribly amiss with the judicial framework and in urgent need of a fix. In Chief Justice D. Y. Chandrachud, the judiciary has its best chance to redeem itself with the man known for his penchant for technology, transparency, and objectivity. The CJI had humbly and presciently invoked the existing systemic lacunas on taking over, "whether it be bringing technology, or the

reforms required in the registry of the Supreme Court or judicial reforms" – with the rare opportunity of having time on his side (unlike his predecessor who remained a CJI for 74 days), one hopes that he lives up to his reassuring promise, "actions, not just words". Finally, it is not about denying the existence of problems within the Indian judicial system, but about whom to trust more to overcome the same i.e., either by the promises of the eminent politicians or by promises by eminent judicial personnel, themselves.

—Contd. to Page-5

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Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves

Carl Jung

### Davos Summit: India shines bright at WEF

As the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting 2023 came to an end on Friday, its president Borge Brende said that despite many difficult issues facing the global community, progress had been made at the meeting, especially in tackling the most urgent crises of food, energy and climate. Global leaders agreed that speed, cooperation and resilience are a must to mend a fragmented world. Noted economists at the annual meeting of the WEF in Davos hailed India for its strong ability to attract global investments amid a churning in the supply chains with its policies like Product-Linked Incentive (PLI). The 5-day annual meet was held offline for the first time in three years. This was the first major international gathering of the year to address ongoing economic, energy and food crises while laying the groundwork for a more sustainable, resilient world.

This year, thousands of public and private sector leaders attended the meeting in the picturesque Swiss ski resort. Several leaders from India were present to present India's standpoint in the global spectrum. In the WEF meeting, discussions revealed that while a global slowdown is expected to impact emerging markets, India will remain resilient. India seemed to be the most visible among its regional Asian peers, with major tech companies staging booths in Davos. Indian business leaders were seen at the forefront of debates over technology and supply chain issues. Global leaders and noted economists hailed India for its strong ability to attract global investments amid a churning in the supply chains with its policies like Product-Linked Incentives (PLI). Global consultants PwC, Deloitte and BCG were equally positive about the Indian economy. PwC's Global Chairman Bob Moritz said there is optimism among Indian CEOs, and there is potential to crank up the growth from 6 per cent to 8 per cent. Noted economist Kenneth Rogoff expressed optimism and said India's economy will perform better than its emerging peers. He also mentioned China will no longer be the growth engine of the world. IMF deputy managing director Gita Gopinath also praised India's digital and physical infrastructure prowess and called for reforms in land and labour markets. India is expected to remain resilient despite the global slowdown impacting the emerging markets. Heads of Serum Institute of India, Bharat Forge Ltd., Dr Reddy's Laboratories Ltd. and Tech Mahindra Ltd. expressed their confidence in growth citing order books and client conversations. Amit Kalyani of Bharat Forge said that their businesses won't be impacted by the western slowdown while GV Prasad of Dr Reddy's showed optimism about pharma demand even in a slowing world. Serum Institute's Adar Poonawala said the supply of critical medication was growing, and India will become nearly self-sufficient in active pharma ingredients and some other inputs in two to three years.

Big-ticket deals were signed between states and investors at the WEF Davos 2023. Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, who attended the event said his state signed MoUs worth Rs 1.37 lakh crore at WEF, Davos. These non-binding MoUs are spread across avenues of electric vehicles, steel, and infrastructure among others. Telangana signed an agreement with Allox Advance Materials Pvt Ltd for setting up a C-LFP (Lithium Iron Phosphate) active battery material production unit. The initial investment of the project is Rs 210 crore. Tata Group's chairman N Chandrasekaran said that it will invest \$90 billion over the next five years in India. German conglomerate Siemens also expressed optimism about investing in India.

# Sitharaman must balance pre-poll compulsions with fiscal challenge

As is the practice, there is a demand galore before the 2023-24 budget for tax sops, whether justified or not. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has a difficult task cut out for her as she may have to address some of the genuine demands this time as it will be the last full-fledged budget of BJP led Narendra Modi government before the Lok Sabha polls in April-May 2024.

As it is, Sitharaman will have to make a tight rope walk to balance the growth momentum with inflation, though slowing down is still at uncomfortable levels, partly triggered by global economic situation. Also with recessionary trends in Europe and difficult geopolitical situation arising out of the prolonged Russian-Ukraine war, Indian industry do expect some handholding with exports growth not expected to be that buoyant. While every section of the society expects some sops or others as all were badly hit during the two years of Covid, none is willing to understand government's difficulty in raising more resources to meet their demand. In view of the impending elections, she cannot afford to be harsh, particularly to the middle-class, chunk of whom formed a major constituency of the ruling BJP. Certainly BJP government or for that matter any government does not have a magic wand or a milching cow to mop up additional revenue to present a please all budget.

Some genuine concerns may be met partially, but the government cannot let go of the revenue mobilization efforts in the wake of the need to bring about fiscal prudence, to meet the high food, fertilizer and fuel bills and more importantly the need to push up public expenditure to maintain the growth momentum. India's tax-GDP ratio is still much lower than advanced economies. But high growth gave some room for tax mobilization efforts. This year both indirect and direct tax collections are buoyant. In

## REFLEX ACTION

K R Sudhaman

Covid year direct and indirect tax collections grew by around 40 per cent at over Rs 27 lakh crore in 2021-22. In 2023 till now the overall growth has been good with government mopping up over 85 per cent of budget estimates till December 2022. The direct tax collection has increased nearly by 25 per cent, while indirect tax by around 20 per cent. This trend is quite healthy. But revenue mop up efforts from disinvestment is not that encouraging so far.

The emerging situation in neighbouring countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka is not all that encouraging. This may result in India extending helping hand particularly in the light of food shortage in war-torn Afghanistan and terror-infested and flood affected Pakistan on humanitarian considerations. As it is, India's food subsidy bill is very high after government decided rightly to provide food ration during Covid to 80 crore population, some of whom lost jobs. This food ration under garib kalyan yojana has already been extended till December 2023. The middle-class and salaried class were sandwiched during Covid the most as many lost jobs or took salary cut, while at the same time they did not have any safety net to fall back upon. They are going through severe hardships, that too with high inflation. The senior citizens had it worse with bank interest rates falling and their savings eroding with increased medical expenditure during Covid. It has been a double whammy for them. Sitharaman has said she herself belongs to middle-class family and she understands their woes better. Also middle-class is BJP's constituency particularly in North India. From

BJP's political considerations, this constituency needed to be addressed ahead of the election to nine state assemblies in 2023 and Lok Sabha elections in April-May 2024.

It is still a wild speculation if Sitharaman will reduce income tax rates as it has been broadly rationalized. At the most there could be small tinkering here and there. What is expected is raising of the exemption limit so that salaried class at the lower rung, middle class and the senior citizens depending upon pensions and interest on their savings get some relief. To push real estate sector which is not looking up, Sitharaman may give some additional tax benefit on housing loan interest. The quantum of standard deduction could be raised to benefit urban and salaried middle class with the gradual phasing out of work from home in service industries in vogue during covid. There could also be some rationalization of capital gains tax. There may not be much relief in corporate tax rates though there is a popular demand from chambers and industry. But some specific tax incentives could be there as the private sector investment is looking up. Schemes like PLI could be extended to more sectors. The reeling MSME sector, one of the main job creating sector, certainly needs major help and the budget may provide some sops. One proposal that is doing the rounds is introduction of MSME credit cards on the lines of Kisan credit cards to address the financial woes of the sector. The informal lending virtually dried up after demonetization and an alternative has not emerged as yet. Also covid made the situation worse resulting in closure of 10-20 per cent of over 6 crore MSMEs in the country. Ninety-seven per cent of MSMEs are micro industries.

Overall the budget may have some good news for middle class, MSME sector while maintaining the growth momentum and tax mobilization efforts. (IPA)



Armed forces personnel practice march past at Red Road for the upcoming Republic Day celebrations on Sunday--Arijit Ganguly

## Rijiju's letter to CJI is part of RSS design to have a pliant Judiciary

It obviously implied that any lawyer not subscribing to the RSS hegemony of Hindutva would not be considered fit for upgradation to the post of judge. This suggestion of Rijiju basically runs down the basic norms of MOP. Does Rijiju intends to deride the SC collegium of acting in a nonprofessional manner? While the Modi government feels that finalisation of the MoP could not occur unless the search committee is constituted, for the judiciary the existing MoP is the "law of the land" and should be followed.

It is quite obvious that RSS has been using Rijiju and Jagdeep Dhankar to project judiciary's wrong image and at the same time coerce them. As an individual Dhankar does not matter much for the RSS, it is the office that he is holding is of primary importance for RSS. The saffron brigade has been trying to floor judiciary by using all kind machination. First Dhankar questioned the basic structure of doctrine, and now Rijiju has fired a salvo in the form of need to constitute a search and evaluation committee.

Indian judiciary has been a major impediment in the path of the arbitrary functioning of the government, though in the past a number of judges of the Supreme Court were seen endorsing Modi government's policies and also eulogizing Modi. Surprisingly at that time the Modi government and its law minister Kiren Rijiju did not criticise

the judiciary for not caring for peoples' cause. By questioning the basic structure doctrine, Dhankar not only reiterated the principal tactic of RSS and Narendra Modi that the primacy of Parliament is absolute, he also tried to send the message to the people that democracy in India is yet to mature. His observation simply negated the basic concept that basic structure doctrine is good for robust democracy. By raising this issue at this stage, Dhankar has obviously expressed his disagreement with the verdict in the Kesavananda Bharati case. What is most interesting is Dhankar raised the issue of basic structure doctrine after 50 years of its acceptance. It is worth mentioning that in April 1973, a 13-judge bench of the Supreme Court in a 7:6 majority in the Kesavananda Bharati case had declared that Parliament's right to amend the Constitution is not unfettered. Modi government is angry with the judiciary for striking down the NJAC.

Quite shocking neither Dhankar nor Rijiju raised this issue during the last six years of Modi rule. The RSS and the Modi government resorted to this strategy only after a huge number of PILs were filed before the apex court

exposing the designs of the Modi government. True enough instead of holding judiciary guilty he should have asked Modi to open dialogue with the judiciary.

Rijiju's allegation against judiciary is purely of wild nature. He could not substantiate his accusations of judiciary working according to its whim, no effort was made to select good judges, and provisions of reservation could not be properly followed. Now it is absolutely clear that Modi has made implementation of the NJAC provisions as his prestige matter. The authority of the judiciary has to be smashed if the RSS is to proceed with its plan for saffronising judiciary. It is worth mentioning that senior Supreme Court lawyer and Congress veteran P Chidambaram through a series of tweets has described Dhankar's criticism of the basic structure doctrine as dangerous and part of planned confrontation with the judiciary. According to him the 'Basic Structure' doctrine was evolved as a safeguard against a possible majoritarian assault on the Constitution. He also sought to know what prevented the government from

introducing a new bill, after Supreme Court struck down the NJAC Act. Since Modi treats every one as inferior soul not competent to talk to him, he dislikes he concept of having dialogue.

He could have sorted out this issue by having a dialogue with the stake holders of the judiciary. If at all the RSS and Modi government felt that Supreme Court was intruding into the executive and legislature's domain, they should have undertaken measures to put the matter in right perspective. They kept in abeyance since at that point of time they did not perceive that their mission would face any obstruction. In the wake of recent changing political reckoning and scenario they are left with no alternative but to exert coercive mechanism. Assault on one constitutional institution by another is quite unprecedented in the democratic and constitutional history of India. But the BJP leadership has preferred to cross this Lakshman Rekha. The RSS and BJP are not at all bothered of maintaining transparency in their functioning and approach. They try to project that winning elections has given power to do away with the necessities of the democratic functioning. Winning election does not guarantee them to misuse the peoples' mandate to serve their narrow end. The people are witness to the misuse of power by Modi government. (IPA/Concluded)

Conventional Crossword

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ACROSS

1 Stiffly neat  
3 Narrates  
8 Disguise  
9 Outer covering  
11 Form a fabric  
12 Alone  
14 Bishop's territory  
15 Concise  
16 Farm birds  
19 Hill  
21 Part of a yacht  
24 Gather for oneself  
26 Sport  
27 Wealthy  
28 Metal  
29 Agitate

DOWN

1 Nosegay  
2 Wading bird  
4 First woman  
5 Letting contract  
6 Exist  
7 Glossy  
10 Musical sound  
11 Less well  
13 Vegetables  
16 Ooze  
17 Heavenly bodies  
18 Pleasing quality  
20 Leave out  
22 Plunder  
23 Make fast a vessel  
25 Pronoun

SUDOKU:3764

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Yesterday's Solution 3763

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Yesterday's Cross Word Solution 1772

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DISCLAIMER

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## Live coverage of Parakram Diwas by AIR

**PORT BLAIR, JAN 22/--/** All India Radio, Port Blair will give Live coverage to "Parakram Diwas" to be held at DBRAIT and on the occasion of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav Iconic Events Week celebration at Netaji Stadium, attended by Union Home Minister as chief guest. The Live commentary from DBRAIT will begin at 1055 hrs and from Netaji Stadium at 1645 hrs on 23rd January 2023. The commentator from Netaji Stadium are Mr. Zakir Hussain, Mr. Dinesh Kumar Singh and Dr.Shrabani Mallick.

Listeners can tune into MW 684 KHz or download 'newsonair' app from Google Play Store and tune into PC AIR Port Blair to listen to these Live Commentaries.

## National parties wooing TIPRA Motha, the trump card in the game of Tripura politics

**AGARTALA, JAN 22 /--/** The ruling BJP and the Opposition Congress- CPM alliance are vying with each other to woo TIPRA Motha, led by a scion of the Tripura royal family into an electoral understanding as the tribal party's votes will be crucial in determining who will rule the North-Eastern border state in next month's election.

The TIPRA Motha led by Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debbarma, which rules over the Tripura Tribal Autonomous District Council on its part has been demanding a Greater Tipraland', comprising of all areas where the tribals of Tripura live including TTADC areas as well as areas elsewhere and has strategically stated it would support any party or alliance which agrees to its demands.

The party swept the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADc) elections held in April last year, winning 18 of the 28 seats over the Greater Tipraland' demand in a direct contest with the ruling BJP-IPFT alliance. The saffron party's partner- Indigenous People's Front of Tripura - has since seen its base erode steadily with workers and MLAs deserting to the former royal's fold. There is also talk of it seeking to merge itself with Debbarma's outfit.

Analysts say the statehood demand will affect results in 20 Assembly seats, where tribals hold considerable clout electorally, in the 60-member House, besides others where they are a consequential minority.

Debbarma said that his party is willing to forge an alliance with any national party that provides a constitutional solution to the demand of the indigenous people of the Tripura, who form one-third of the state's estimated 40 lakh populations. The BJP government here on its part has pulled out all stops and poured projects for the development of this remote state where employment opportunities are few and far between. However, the tribal party is adamant that it wants more than just financial packages including a modern airport named after Debbarma's grandfather Maharaja Bir Bikram Manikya Debbarma, which was recently inaugurated with much fanfare.

"We want a constitutional solution to our demand, which only the central government can provide. It is not possible to solve our problem by sanctioning any financial package only," Debbarma has told reporters on several occasions. The party wants the Centre to discuss its demand, but has not received any response so far. All major political parties in the state including the ruling BJP, Opposition CPM and Congress, have however rejected the demand on several occasions, calling it "separatist and divisive". Some fear that if Greater Tipraland' state is formed, tribals, who form one-third of the population, will control two-thirds of the territory, and non-tribals, who form two-thirds of the population, will have to settle with only one-third of Tripura's area. However Tipra Motha points out that such majoritarian versus minoritarian fears are unfounded. "Many Bengalis live in the tribal council area. We want them to live in peace and harmony. In the princely state of Tripura, Bengalis and tribals lived peacefully and we want to maintain that tradition," Debbarma said.

The princely state, which was ruled by tribal kings for about 500 years, joined the Indian Union in 1949. "If the Centre is not in agreement with our demand, then Prime Minister Narendra Modi or Union Home Minister Amit Shah should give us an alternative solution in writing and we will discuss it with the people of our community. "However, the Centre is neither responding to our demand nor inviting us for dialogue. It can negotiate with groups that took to arms but not with us as we are agitating peacefully," he said.

Anti-incumbency coupled with frustration among the tribals as well as the re-emergence of CPM and Congress in the political horizon of the state has already set warning bells ringing in the ruling BJP camp. Its chief minister was as a consequence replaced last year with an eye on this year's polls.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which swept the 2018 Assembly elections riding on voters looking for a change as well benefiting from a division of votes between Congress and its tribal ally IPFT in tribal areas and managed to end the 25 years Marxist rule in the state, is sequentially extremely keen on getting the former royal on their side and is believed to have sent out several feelers to him and his close aides. The CPM and Congress which have agreed on an electoral alliance, have also reached out to Tipra Motha party (PTI)

## Track electrification to Silchar by 2023-end, says NFR GM

**HAILAKANDI, JAN 22 /- /** Trains running on electric traction are expected to reach Barak Valley of southern Assam by the end of this year, a top North-East Frontier Railway (NFR) official said.

Work of track electrification is going on in full swing, especially in the hilly terrain, he said. "Installation of electric lines is going on. We are expecting that trains on electric traction will start coming to Silchar by end of 2023," NFR general manager Ansul Gupta said in Silchar on Saturday.

The work of the installation of electric lines has been intensified in the hilly areas, he added. Gupta visited various routes and stations of Barak Valley during the trip and assessed the progress of work. An NFR source said

Rs 2,353 crore was sanctioned in the Union Budget of 2018 for electrification of entire track length under it.

It included 2,536 km of track length in Badarpur- Lumding, Badarpur- Silchar (including Arunachal- Jiribam, Katakhal-Bairabi) and Badarpur- Sabroom (Badarpur-Karimganj Agartala-Karimganj- Mahishashan). The work was delayed due to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic and consequent restrictions.

The first passenger train running entirely on electric traction had reached North East on October 22, 2021, when the Delhi-Kamakhya (Brahmaputra) Mail Special pulled into the Kamakhya Railway Station in Guwahati. (PTI)

## MP seeks events like flea market, beach festival, music festival etc on a regular basis

**PORT BLAIR, JAN 22/--/** The Member of Parliament, Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma has requested the Lt. Governor to conduct events like flea market, beach festival, music festival etc for the Islanders on a regular basis since there is no other mode of entertainment for the Islanders During a recent meeting the Member of Parliament informed the Hon'ble Lt. Governor that in the recent past Andaman and Nicobar Administration used to conduct regular events like flea market, beach festival, music festival etc for the entertainment of Islanders, which was hugely popular among local youths, Islanders and tourists. He added that these festivals were not only



a source of entertainment for Islanders but were also a source of income for the Islanders.

Such events brought a good amount of money into the local economy and many people had a good source of income. To some extent it will also promote tourism. He pointed out that very recently this has been observed that the frequency of such events has been reduced and hence he requested the Hon'ble Lt. Governor to direct the concerned departments to conduct such events on a regular basis throughout the Andaman and Nicobar Islands for the upliftment of the local community.

## Anna Dhanam by Rampur villagers



KARTIK

**MAYABUNDER, JAN 22/--/** Anna Dhanam was organised by the Rampur

villagers at Ganesh Temple Rampur under Mayabunder Tehsil. Devotees of the nearby villagers visited the temple and received the blessings of lord Sri Ganesh.

## Training of Aapda Mitra volunteers at Mayabunder



KARTIK

**MAYABUNDER, JAN 22/--/** A training of Aapda Mitra Volunteers under Up-Scaling of Aapda scheme was organised by the Directorate of Disaster Management, A&N Administration in coordination with District Disaster management, A&N Islands. The

Tehsildar, Mayabunder, Mr. Pillai, Block Development Officer, Mr. Joseph, SHO Mayabunder, Mr. Harif & CEO of Coast Guard Station Mayabunder were present. Certificates were distributed to the AApda Mitra volunteers on the occasion. During natural calamities, these Aapda Mitra will provide help to the needy people.

## WITH YOU NGO provides nutritional kits to TB patients



**PORT BLAIR, JAN 22/--/** To eradicate TB from our Islands, WITH YOU NGO extended support to the TB patients. Ni-kshay Mitra

- WITH YOU (NGO) provided 3 nutritional kits to TB patients under the jurisdiction of PHC Wimberlygunj on 21st Jan 2023

## When The Cure Suggested Is Worse Than The Disease

—From Page-3

In a separate parallel of another 'independent' institution that historically maintained distance from the political classes, historically 'barrackised' itself, and yet had sought systemic and operational reforms within (as do all institutions to meet new-age challenges) – the much bandied talks within the Armed Forces of 'teeth-to-tail ratio', 'theatre commands' et al, has been 'reformed' with Agniveers, nothing more to add. The case of judicial reforms is more than

just about the judiciary itself, as was the case and intent in the 70s.

The choice is finally between whom you trust more to deliver i.e., the partisan politician or the apolitical judicial personnel? Let not the proposed 'cure' be worse than the disease. Perhaps goading, supporting, and ensuring the CJI-led promise of 'judicial reforms' is still the better bet. (The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal.)

## Special remission programme: 189 Maharashtra jail inmates to be released on R-Day

**THANE, JAN 22 /--/** A total of 189 convicts will be released from prisons across Maharashtra, including three from Thane Central Jail, on Republic Day as part of the Union government's special remission programme to mark 75 years of Independence, an official said on Sunday.

The three inmates from Thane are undergoing jail terms for attempt to murder and other crimes, he added. "The special remission programme will see some prisoners being released on January 26,

2023 and August 15, 2023 for good conduct while serving their sentences. A total of 189 inmates from Maharashtra will be released," he said.

The prisoners are selected on the basis of age, time spent in jail, disabilities, health etc, he added.

Thane Central Jail has 4,569 inmates, including 132 women, while 52 are above the age of 70 and 386 below 20 years. The capacity of the jail is, however, just 1,105, officials here pointed out. (PTI)

SEVA SUCHNAYEIN				
All the sailings are subject to weather conditions				
Nalanda will sail for Campbell Bay via Nancowry on 28.01.2023 (Sat) at 1000 Hrs from Haddo Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on 30.01.2023 (Mon) at 0900 Hrs from Campbell Bay via Nancowry. Passenger tickets for the above sailing will be issued to the general public from 27.01.2023 (Fri) onwards at STARS Ticketing Counters. ? MV Bharat Seema will sail for Car Nicobar via Little Andaman on 28.01.2023 (Sat) at 0700 Hrs from Haddo Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on 29.01.2023 (Sun) at 1600 Hrs from Car Nicobar via Little Andaman. Passenger tickets for the above sailing will be issued to the general public from 25.01.2023 (Wed) onwards at STARS Ticketing Counters.				
MV Bharat Seema will sail for Nancowry via Little Andaman, Car Nicobar, Chowra, Teressa & Katchal on 02.02.2023 (Thu) at 0700 Hrs from Haddo Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on 05.02.2023 (Sun) at 0500 Hrs from Nancowry via same route. Passenger tickets for the above sailing will be issued to the general public from 31.01.2023 (Tue) onwards at STARS Ticketing Counters.				
LITTLE ANDAMAN:				
Nalanda will sail for Little Andaman on 24.01.2023 (Tue) at 0900 Hrs from Haddo Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 2100 Hrs from Little Andaman. MV Bharat Seema will sail for will sail for Little Andaman on 26.01.2023 (Thu) at 2000 Hrs from Haddo Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on 27.01.2023 (Fri) at 0800 Hrs from Little Andaman.				
Note: Passenger tickets for the above sailings i.e. (for 24" & 26 Jan., 2023) will be issued to the general public from 23.01.2023 (Mon) onwards at STARS Ticketing Counters.				
DIGLIPUR & MAYABUNDER:				
MV Bharat Seema will sail for Diglipur via Mayabunder on 23.01.2023 (Mon) at 2100 Hrs from Haddo Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on 24.01.2023 (Tue) at 1330 Hrs from Diglipur via Mayabunder. Passenger tickets for the above sailing will be issued to the general public from 23.01.2023 (Mon) onwards at STARS Ticketing Counters.				
FORESHORE SECTOR:				
Note: Passenger tickets for the Foreshore Sector vessels will be issued to the general public STARS Ticketing Counters two days prior to her scheduled departure date.				
23.01.2023 (MON)				
SHAHEED DWEEP & SWARAJ DWEEP				
■ MV Baratang will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 23.01.2023 (Mon) at 0630 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 0900 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.				
■ MV Chouldari will sail for Shaheed Dweep on 23.01.2023 (Mon) at 0630 Hrs. from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 0845 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep.				
■ MV Chouldari will sail for Shaheed Dweep on 23.01.2023 (Mon) at 1100 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1600 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep.				
■ MV Chouldari will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 23.01.2023 (Mon) at 1300 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep Jetty and will sail back to Shaheed Dweep on the same day at 1430 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.				
■ MV Bambooka will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 23.01.2023 (Mon) at 1400 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1630 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.				
■ MV Kamorta will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 23.01.2023 (Mon) at 1700 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail back to Port Blair on 24.01.2023 (Tue) at 0600 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep. RANGAT MV Rangat will sail for Rangat via Shaheed Dweep, Swaraj Dweep, Strait Island, Kadamtala & Long Island on 23.01.2023 (Mon) at 0700 Hrs. from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on 24.01.2023 (Tue) at 0700 Hrs from Rangat via same route.				
24.01.2023 (TUE)				
SHAHEED DWEEP & SWARAJ DWEEP				
■ MV Bambooka will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 24.01.2023 (Tue) at 0630 H's from Phoenix Bay Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 0900 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep. Jetty MV Chouldari will sail for Shaheed Dweep on 24.01.2023 (Tue) at 0630 Hrs. from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 0845 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep.				
■ MV Baratang will sail for Shaheed Dweep on 24.01.2023 (Tue) at 1100 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1630 Hrs from Shanced Dweep.				
■ MV Baratang will soil for Swaraj Dweep on 24.01.2023 (Tue) ar 1300 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep Jetty and will sol back to Shaheed Oweep on the same day at 1430 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.				
■ MV Bambooka will sail for Swaraj Dweep or 24.01.2023 (Tue) at 1400 Hits from Phoenix Bay Jetty Wharf and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1630 Hits from Swaraj Dweep.				
■ MV Kamorta will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 24.01.2023 (Tue) at 1700 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail back to Port Blair on 25.01.2023 (Wed) at 0600 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.				
25.01.2023 (WED)				
SHAHEED DWEEP & SWARAJ DWEEP				
■ MV Bambooka will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 25.01.2023 (Wed) at 0630 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 0900 Hrs from Sword Dweep.				
■ MV Baralang will sail for Shaheed Dweep or 25.01.2023 (Wed) or 0630 Hrs. from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at C845 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep.				
■ MV Baratang will sail for Shaheed Dweep or 25.01.2023 (Wed) at 1100 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1400 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep.				
■ MV Baratang will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 25.01.2023 (Wed) a 1300 Hrs om Shared Dweep Jetty and will sail back to Shahead Dweep on the same cay at 1430 His from Swaraj Dweep.				
■ MV Bambooka will sai for Swaraj Dweep on 25.01.2023 (Wed) of 1400 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1630 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.				
Dweep.MV Kamorta will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 25.01.2023 (Wed) at 1700 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail back to Port Blair on 26.01.2023 (Thu) at 0600 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.				
RANGAT				
MV Chouldari wil scil for Rangat via Shaheed Dweep, Swaraj Dweep, Strait Island & Long Island on 25.01.2023 (Wed) at 0730 Hrs. from Phoenix Bay Jelly and wil scil for Port Blair on 26.01.2023 (Thu) at 0700 Hrs from Rangat via same route.				
26.01.2023 (THURS)				
SHAHEED DWEEP & SWARAJ DWEEP				
■ MV Bambooka will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 26.01.2023 (Thu) at 06:30 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 0900 Firs from Swarcj Dweep.				
■ MV Rangat will sail for Shaheed Dweep on 25.01.2023 (Thu) at 0630 11's, from Phoenix Ray Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 0845 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep.				
■ MV Rangat will sail for Shaheed Dweep on 26.01.2023 (Thu) at 1:00 Tirs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1600 Hrs from Shaheed Dweep.				
■ MV Rangat will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 26.01.2023 (Thuj) at 1300 Tirs from Shaheed Dweep Jetty and will sail back to Shaheed Dweep on the same day at 1430 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.				
■ MV Bambooka will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 26.01.2023 Thul al 1400 Hrs from Phoenix Bay Jetty and will sail for Port Blair on the same day at 1630 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.				
■ MV Baratang will sail for Swaraj Dweep on 26.01.2023 (Thu) at 1700 Hrs from Phoenix Bay and will sail back to Port Blair on 27.01.2023 (Fri) at 0600 Hrs from Swaraj Dweep.				
Deputy Director (SS) A & N Admn.				

Venue	Date	Timing	Diversio	Parking
Netaji Stadium	23.01.23	1630 to 1815 hrs	<b>General Public are advised to follow the below mentioned routes to reach Netaji Stadium which are given below:-</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The parking for general public is arranged from Girls School to Flag point. Hence, those vehicles intending to proceed to Netaji Stadium shall follow the route i.e. Murugan Temple, RGT Road, Machi line Jn, and R.K.Mission.</li><li>Those vehicles intending to proceed to Netaji Stadium from Bengali Club shall follow the route i.e. Bengali Club- Model School Jn, Clock Tower, Y-Narayan Jn, Islet Jn, Cellular Jail, water sports complex and Marina park gate to reach general parking.</li></ul> <b>Dispersal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>After conclusion of Netaji Stadium Function, general public shall take the route towards Murugan Temple from RGT road, Sinclair route towards MazarPahar/South Point road or Clock Tower route towards Aberdeen Bazaar/Model School. No vehicles will be allowed towards Raj Niwas from Girls School via scout Hut/APWD Junction /Murugan Temple.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Four Wheelers: on the right side from Girls School to Flag Point and JNRM Campus/Football ground.</li><li>Two Wheelers: On the left side from Girls School to FI</li></ul>



# Rahul creating hatred among people to regain power, tarnishing India's image: Rajnath

**BHOPAL, JAN 22 /--/** Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi of creating hatred among people in order to regain power, and alleged that he was tarnishing India's image on international platforms.

Addressing a programme organised by the Madhya Pradesh government to provide land rights of residential plots to the poor in Singrauli district of the state located around 650 kms from here, Singh asked Rahul not to play with India's "prestige and pride". The Union minister also said that in the recent clash with the Chinese troops, Indian soldiers did a "charismatic job" and displayed bravery, and slammed the Congress for questioning the valour of the country's jawans. "Is India breaking? The country already got divided in 1947. Pakistan was created, though the leaders at that time were not in favour. These days, Rahul Gandhi is going around saying in his Bharat Jodo Yatra that there is hatred everywhere in India," he said. "Rahulji, what has happened to you? You want to regain power by creating hatred. Power cannot be achieved by creating hatred, it can be achieved only by earning the public's trust and love," the senior BJP leader said. "I want to ask him who is creating hatred in India? Is Modi creating hatred in the whole country? Is (MP Chief Minister) Shivraj Singh (Chouhan) doing the work of creating hatred in Madhya Pradesh? Are these

leaders creating hatred among people? Where did he see it," he asked the gathering. The minister also accused the Congress of trying to defame India and tarnish its image by saying that only hatred



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan (R) during a programme for presenting land leases to beneficiaries under Chief Minister's Residential Land Rights Scheme, in Singrauli, MP on Sunday

prevails in India, although the country has earned great respect in the world now. India is the only country that considers all the people of the world as its family. India is being maligned that there is only hatred in India, he alleged. India has never discriminated on the basis of caste, creed or religion as those born on Indian soil are

brothers as all have sacrificed their lives for the country's independence, he added. "I humbly want to say to Rahulji, don't spoil the image of India in the world by talking about hatred. You are creating hate by talking about it. You create hatred towards Modi and BJP by going to the people. The whole world is getting the image that there is only hatred in India," he said. Referring to the former Congress president's remark that he is out to sell love in the market of hatred, Singh asked the gathering: "Have you also got some love from him? Now what does he know about love?" Singh said Rahul and Congress members should keep in mind that politics should not be done just to form the government and it should be done for the society and the country.

"Rahulji, don't play with India's prestige and pride. India is moving forward, if you can cooperate then do it, if you can't, then sit silently, don't try to defame India in the international arena," he said. Singh also said that Congress leaders can defame the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), but they dared to question the bravery and valour of the country's army and soldiers who risked their lives to protect the country. "Being the country's defence minister, I don't want to speak openly. But I wanted to make it clear that whatever war has happened this time, be it between India-China, the bravery that our army soldiers have exhibited, if I discuss it in front of anyone, then everyone will boast, they have done a charismatic job," Singh said. (PTI)

## Former Cong chief to hoist tricolour in Srinagar to mark end of Bharat Jodo Yatra

**NEW DELHI, JAN 22 /--/** Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi will hoist the national flag at party headquarters in Srinagar at the culmination of 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' on January 30, with all Pradesh Congress Committee offices following suit in solidarity with the Yatra. Congress General Secretary K C Venugopal said the Bharat Jodo Yatra, which started in Kanyakumari on September 7, will conclude on January 30 in Srinagar after having covered 3,970 km, 12 states and two Union Territories. "The Bharat Jodo Yatra has received an overwhelming response from millions of people and has spread Rahul Gandhi's message of love and unity among citizens of the country. The tremendous support from all sections of the society and heartfelt involvement of the people has made this a historic Yatra and a game changer in Indian politics," he said in a statement. Venugopal said to mark the culmination of Yatra, Gandhi will hoist the tricolour at PCC headquarters of Jammu and Kashmir in Srinagar at 10 am on January 30. "As desired by the Congress president, all Pradesh Congress Committees (PCCs), District Congress Committees and Block Congress Committees will also hold flag hoisting functions at the same time on January 30 at their respective party offices or important sites in solidarity with the Bharat Jodo Yatra," he said. The Congress has also invited 23 political parties to participate in the Yatra on the concluding day as a mark of opposition solidarity. (PTI)



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with a supporter during party's 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', at Hiranagar on Sunday

## PM stresses enhanced cooperation between state police and Central agencies to leverage capabilities

**NEW DELHI, JAN 22 /--/** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said police forces should be made more sensitive and trained in emerging technologies while further strengthening traditional policing mechanisms like foot patrols. Addressing the 57th all India conference of Director Generals/ Inspector Generals of Police (IGP), the Prime Minister also emphasised on enhanced cooperation between state police and central agencies to leverage capabilities and share best practices. He recommended repealing obsolete criminal laws and building standards for police organisations across states. "The Prime Minister suggested making the police forces more sensitive and training them in emerging technologies," according to an official statement. Modi discussed strengthening the border as well as coastal security by organising frequent visits of officials. The Prime underscored the importance of the National Data Governance Framework for smoothening data exchange across agencies. He suggested that while police forces should further leverage technological solutions like biometrics etc., there is also a need to further strengthen traditional policing mechanisms like foot patrols. Modi also favoured prison reforms to improve jail management. The Prime Minister called for replicating the model of the DGP/IGP conferences at the state and district levels for discussing emerging challenges and evolving best practices among their teams. The conference covered various aspects of policing and national security, including Counter Terrorism, Counter Insurgency and Cyber Security. Union home minister Amit Shah and National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval among others attended the three-day meet. Around 600 more officers of various levels attended the conference in the hybrid mode from states and UTs. (PTI)

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Gunman kills 10 at LA ballroom dance club

**MONTEREY PARK:** A gunman killed 10 people and wounded 10 others at a Los Angeles-area ballroom dance club following a Lunar New Year celebration, setting off a manhunt for the suspect in the fifth mass killing in the US this month. Capt. Andrew Meyer of the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department said Sunday that the wounded were taken to hospitals and their conditions range from stable to critical. He said the 10 people died at the scene in the city of Monterey Park. Meyer said people were "pouring out of the location screaming" when officers arrived at around 10:30 pm on Saturday. He said officers then went into the ballroom and found victims as firefighters treated the wounded. (AP) (Details on Page 9)

## TMC will not join CPM-Cong alliance in Tripura, Mamata to visit on Feb 6

**AGARTALA, JAN 22 /--/** The Trinamool Congress (TMC) will not join the CPM-Congress alliance in the ensuing Tripura Assembly election, a senior party leader said on Sunday. Tripura TMC president Pijush Kanti Biswas said TMC supremo and West Bengal chief minister will arrive in Tripura on February 6 to campaign for party candidates. "The TMC is not going to forge any electoral understanding with the CPI(M)-Congress combine in the ensuing

Tripura Assembly elections because many Congress leaders and workers who had suffered during Communist regime will not vote for their own party," said Biswas. "Our assessment is that the CPM-Congress initiative will face the similar fate what had happened in West Bengal Assembly election in 2021, that's why we will keep our distance from it", he said. Biswas said: "Trinamool Congress will contest the election in the seats where the party has a chance to win and TMC's doors are open for



other parties for electoral understanding." He said Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee will arrive in Tripura on February 6 on a two-day visit and is scheduled to join a roadshow. "Party supremo is set to arrive in the poll bound state on February 6 to campaign for the party. She will join a road show to be organized on the following day", he said. Biswas said the party's All India general secretary (Abhishek Banerjee) is scheduled to arrive here on February 2 for

the election campaign. "He will address two election rallies at Dharmanagar in North Tripura and Boxanagar in Sepahijala district", he said. Besides, many senior party leaders including Tollywood stars from Kolkata are coming to the northeastern state for campaigning. "Today, we will have a meeting with senior party leaders to chalk out the party's election roadmap including campaigning for the upcoming elections", he said. (PTI)

## Drone carrying heroin consignment shot down near India-Pak border in Amritsar

**CHANDIGARH, JAN 22 /--/** A drone that was being used to smuggle drugs into the country was shot down near the India-Pakistan international border in Amritsar on Sunday in a joint operation by Border Security Force (BSF) and Punjab Police. Five drones have been recovered in Tarn Taran and Amritsar areas since November 29. The hexacopter was carrying five kg of heroin and was shot down in Kakkar village, Punjab Police said. The police have rounded-up two persons from the spot when they were trying to escape, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Amritsar Rural Swapan Sharma said. Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said the hybrid drone, estimated to be worth Rs 10 lakh, was assembled with parts manufactured in the US and China and

was equipped with hi-tech features including a long-lasting battery backup and infrared-based night vision camera and GPS. Yadav said after noticing the drone movement, police teams from Amritsar Rural district immediately shared the pin-pointed inputs with the BSF and jointly conducted an intensive search operation in Kakkar village, which is just 2 km away from the border. He said the police teams fired at least 12 rounds from AK-47 to shoot down the drone. The DG said this is the sixth drone recovered in less than two months. Investigations are on to ascertain the identity of the Pakistani smugglers, who sent the consignment via drone, and also their Indian associates who were to receive the contraband, the SSP said. (PTI)

### Velammal International School-A 'School of excellence'

From page-1  
TVIS, under the Velammal Educational Trust (VET), is affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), and it makes sure the students are provided international standards in education while adhering to the CBSE guidelines. The school provides integrated programmes for National Eligibility Cum Entrance Test (NEET) and Joint Entrance Exam (JEE) with outstanding academic track records over the years. This makes them future-ready citizens with global standards in talent and vision, he said. Admission to any class except Class X & XII is possible at any time during the year. For Class II to VIII, the admission is provided based on the performance of the students in the entrance test. For class IX and XI, admission is done only till 1st of August for students from any board. Admission is not possible for non CBSE Board after 1st of August. For Class X and XII, admission is provided based on the performance of the student in the entrance test. It is mandatory that the students must have studied in CBSE in Class IX and XI respectively. This is the world's best residential school with all the sports & games activities. The TVIS sports focus school trains children in all the sports and games activities. Qualified and experienced coaches from SAI ensure excellent coaching and as a result TVIS is always there in the podium in the State & National level athletics & tournaments held every year. The Velammal International School is the highest medical School in Chennai and last year in NEET, the School secured 700/720.

### MP inaugurates 'Bageecha', an initiative to bring people closer to nature

From page-1  
With the world reeling under various physical and mental illnesses, adopting plants and staying in their vicinity has scientifically proved to provide immense benefits. Concurring with the same ideology, 'Bageecha' provides nature lovers with an open air display of varieties of plants, pots, planters, pebbles and much more, which will also help people to enhance the beauty of their homes, mind and body. People can buy the plants based on their choices. For plant lovers many options are available as per their tastes, budget and requirements. 'Bageecha' further includes a display of local products viz. handicrafts, eateries etc. with a thought to promote local businesses.

## Gujarat, Assam, J&K, Bengal, others to showcase tableaux on Kartavya Path during R-Day Parade

**NEW DELHI, JAN 22 /--/** Colourful tableaux from Assam, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Gujarat, West Bengal and several other states and Union Territories will roll down the revamped Kartavya Path during the Republic Day celebrations on January 26, with 'Nari Shakti' being the theme for majority of the floats.

A total of 23 tableaux -- 17 from states and Union Territories, and six from various ministries and departments -- depicting India's vibrant cultural heritage, economic and social progress will be part of the ceremonial parade, defence ministry officials said on Sunday. Among the Union ministries and Central government agencies, the ministry of home affairs will display two tableaux -- one each by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), while one each will be exhibited by the ministry of agriculture, ministry of tribal affairs, ministry of culture and the central public works department that falls under the ministry of housing and urban affairs, a senior official told reporter here. A preview of many of the tableaux, some of which are still being constructed or given finishing touches, was held at the Rashtriya Rangshala Camp in the city. "A total of 23 tableaux -- 17 from states and Union Territories and six from various ministries and departments will be part if the



R-Day parade. Besides, there will be floats by the Army, Navy and the Air Force, and a vehicle will be displayed by the DRDO," the official said. Asked if there will be a tableau from the ministry of railways' side, he said, "No, there is no tableau from ministry of railways in this year's parade". The theme adopted this year by various states is largely 'Nari Shakti', besides cultural heritage and other themes, the official said. The West Bengal tableau depicts Durga Puja in Kolkata and celebrates its inscription on the UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List. Assam's tableau proudly showcases the legendary Ahom general Lachit Borphukan and its cultural landmarks including the famous Kamakhya Temple. The Union government last year had celebrated the 400th birth anniversary of Ahom general. Borphukan was a commander in the erstwhile Ahom kingdom and is known for his leadership in the 1671 battle of Saraighat that thwarted an attempt by Mughal forces to capture Assam. This will be the first Republic Day celebrations hosted at the ceremonial boulevard after Rajpath was renamed to 'Kartavya Path' last year.

A full dress rehearsal for the parade will be held on Monday. The 74th Republic Day celebrations will take place on the revamped Central Vista avenue, and the government has put 32,000 tickets on sale online for the masses, defence ministry officials had earlier said. (PTI)

## Akshay hails PM for urging BJP workers to avoid unnecessary comments on films

**MUMBAI, JAN 22 /--/** Superstar Akshay Kumar on Sunday praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for asking BJP workers to refrain from making unnecessary remarks on films. In his address to the BJP national executive meeting on Tuesday, the Prime Minister suggested party workers refrain from making unnecessary remarks on irrelevant issues such as movies, saying that they put the party's development agenda on the back-burner, party sources said. Kumar said the PM was "India's biggest influencer" and if his words can bring about some change it will be great for the film industry. "Positivity is always welcome. And if our Prime Minister is saying something like this... He is India's biggest influencer. If he is saying something and if things change it'll be great for the industry. "And why not, things should change, because we go through so much. We make films, go to the censor board, get them passed and then someone says something and phir gadbad ho jati hai (it becomes a mess). But now that he has said it, I think it'll be better for us," the actor said during the trailer launch of his upcoming movie "Selfiee". Film bodies -- Indian Film & Television Directors' Association (IFTDA) and Federation of Western India Cine Employees (FWICE) -- had earlier hailed PM Modi's comment and called it a "big boost of confidence" for the Hindi film industry. Directed by Raj Mehta, "Selfiee" is an official remake of the 2019 Malayalam blockbuster "Driving License" starring Prithviraj Sukumaran and Suraj Venjaramoodu. (PTI)



## Israel's Netanyahu fires Cabinet ally, heeding court ruling

TEL AVIV, JAN 22 /--/Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu fired a key Cabinet ally on Sunday, heeding a Supreme Court ruling commanding him to do so and deepening a rift over the power of the courts.

A statement from Netanyahu's office said the Israeli leader fired Interior and Health Minister Aryeh Deri, who the court decided could not serve as a Cabinet minister because of a conviction last year over tax offenses. Netanyahu announced the firing at a meeting of his Cabinet. The court ruling came as Israel is mired in a dispute over the power of the judiciary. Netanyahu's far-right government wants to weaken the Supreme Court, limit judicial oversight and grant more power to politicians. Critics say the move upends the country's system of checks and balances and imperils Israel's democratic fundamentals. Deri's firing is also expected to shake Netanyahu's governing coalition, a union buoyed by ultranationalist and ultra-Orthodox parties, including Deri's Shas, which is the third largest in the government. While some Shas lawmakers threatened to bolt the fledgling coalition in the aftermath of the court ruling, it is expected to survive Deri's absence and to attempt to craft legislation that would pave the way for his swift return.

Netanyahu is now expected to appoint other Shas members to replace Deri, at least temporarily. Netanyahu's government, the most right-wing in Israeli history, has made overhauling the country's judiciary a centrepiece of its agenda. It says a power imbalance has given judges and government legal advisers too much sway over lawmaking and governance. The plan has drawn fierce criticism from top legal officials, the chief justice of the Supreme Court, former lawmakers and tens of thousands of Israelis who have come out repeatedly to protest the overhaul. (AP)



## FBI searches US Prez Biden's Wilmington home, finds more classified materials

WASHINGTON, JAN 22 /--/FBI investigators have found additional classified documents from US President Joe Biden's residence in Wilmington after conducting a 13-hour search of the home, intensifying the probe into discoveries that could become a political and possible legal liability for him as he prepares to launch a reelection bid in 2024.

Bob Bauer, the President's personal attorney, said in a statement that during the search on Friday, "Department of Justice took possession of materials it deemed within the scope of its inquiry, including six items consisting of documents with classification markings and surrounding materials, some of which were from the President's service in the Senate and some of which were from his tenure as vice president. "DOJ also took for further review personally handwritten notes from the vice-presidential years," he said. The total number of classified documents found in the residences and private offices of Biden has now increased to nearly a dozen and a half. All documents, including from his term as vice president from 2009 to 2016, have now been taken into possession of federal agents. "DOJ requested that the search not be made public in advance, in accordance with its standard procedures, and we agreed to cooperate," Bauer said.

Biden is spending time at his Wilmington, Delaware residence this weekend. "DOJ had full access to the President's home, including personally handwritten notes, files, papers, binders, memorabilia, to-do lists, schedules, and reminders

going back decades," Bauer said. Last week, US Attorney General Merrick B. Garland appointed a special counsel Robert Hur to investigate the discovery of the classified documents at the private offices and residence of the President. Richard Sauber, Special Counsel to the President, said that Biden directed his personal lawyers to be fully cooperative with the Justice Department as part of its ongoing investigation. That has been the case since a small number of materials were initially discovered at the Penn Biden Center, he said.

The President and his team are working swiftly to ensure the DOJ and the Special Counsel have what they need to conduct a thorough review, he said. "Neither the President nor the First Lady were present during the search. The

President's lawyers and White House Counsel's Office will continue to cooperate with the DOJ and the Special Counsel to help ensure this process is conducted swiftly and efficiently," Sauber said. The federal search of Biden's



home, while voluntary, marks an escalation of the probe into the President's handling of classified documents and will inevitably draw comparisons to his predecessor, former president Donald Trump, even if the FBI's search of Trump's residence was conducted under different circumstances, CNN said. Trump also faces a probe over his alleged mishandling of hundreds of classified documents at his Florida Mar-a-Lago residence and his alleged failure to comply with a subpoena.

The lengthy search and subsequent discovery of more documents is a political headache and a possible legal liability for Biden, as he prepares to declare whether he will run for a second term. Biden, 80, already America's

oldest sitting president, in November said he intends to run again for the presidency in 2024. Biden said he was "surprised" to learn of the discovery of the records. He had branded his predecessor Trump, "irresponsible" for storing classified documents at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida. President Biden told reporters in California on Thursday that he "has no regrets" on the handling of documents marked classified. When asked why the White House didn't disclose the existence of the documents in November before the midterm elections, he told reporters he thinks they're going to find out "there's no there there." A first batch of classified documents had been found on November 2 at the Penn Biden Center, a think-tank Biden founded in Washington DC.

A second batch of records was found on December 20 in the garage at his Wilmington home, while another document was found in a storage space at the house on January 12. After finding the documents, Biden said his team immediately turned them over to the National Archives and the Justice Department. Under the Presidential Records Act, White House records are supposed to go to the National Archives once an administration ends, where they can be stored securely. The Republican Party was quick to slam Biden after the new discovery. (PTI)

## US ambassador heading to Africa as part of Biden's big push

UNITED NATIONS, JAN 22 /--/The US ambassador to the United Nations, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, is the



second Cabinet member heading to Africa as part of President Joe Biden's big push to engage with the world's second-largest continent.

The US Mission to the UN said Sunday she will travel to Ghana, Mozambique and Kenya starting January 25 "to affirm and strengthen our partnerships with key current and former UN Security Council members." Thomas-Greenfield's visit follows last week's start of a 10-day African visit by Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen. She arrived in Dakar, Senegal late Wednesday and will also visit Zambia and South Africa. Biden announced at the end of a US-Africa Leaders Summit in December that he will visit sub-Saharan Africa in 2023, the first trip to the region by a US leader in a decade. The summit and trip are aimed at strengthening US relations with Africa, where China has surpassed the US in trade and is aiming to increase its military presence, and Russia has military ties with the authorities in Mali and Central African Republic. Biden stressed at the summit that he is serious about increasing US attention to the continent and told the 49 African leaders attending the meeting in Washington that "Africa belongs at the table" in every conversation of global consequences.

The first stop for Thomas-Greenfield, a former US assistant secretary of state for Africa, is Ghana, which is in the second year of a two-year term as an elected member of the Security Council. On January 25 she will meet with women leaders and civil society representatives, the US mission said. Thomas-Greenfield then heads to Mozambique, which is just starting its first-ever two-year term on the council. During her visit on January 26-27, the US mission said she will meet with UN officials, entrepreneurs, alumni of US exchange programmes, international relations students and civil society members engaged in work to adapt to climate change, the mission said. The ambassador's final stop on January 28-29 is Kenya, whose two-year term on the council ended on December 31.

The US mission called Kenya "a key partner" and said Thomas-Greenfield's visit will focus on humanitarian programmes, including the regional response to drought and assistance to refugees, and on "the impact Russia's war against Ukraine continues to have on global food security, which has exacerbated the humanitarian crisis in the region."

The ambassador will also meet refugees pending resettlement in the United States and Kenya-based entrepreneurs "at the forefront of the country's transition to a green economy," the mission said. (AP)

## Nine killed in shooting near LA after Lunar New Year festival

MONTEREY PARK, JAN 22 /--/Nine people were killed in a mass shooting late Saturday in a city east of Los Angeles following a Lunar New Year celebration that attracted thousands, police said.



Sgt. Bob Boese of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department said the shooting was reported at 10:22 p.m. and occurred at a business on Garvey Ave. in Monterey Park. The shooter is a male, Boese said early Sunday. Officials provided no information for several hours after dozens of police officers had responded to reports of the shooting. Monterey Park is a city of about 60,000 people with a large Asian population that's about 16 kilometers from downtown Los Angeles. Seung Won Choi, who owns the Clam House seafood barbecue restaurant across the street from where the shooting happened, told the Los Angeles Times that three people rushed into his business and told him to lock the door. The people also told Choi that there was a shooter with a machine gun who had multiple rounds of ammunition on him so he could reload. Choi said he believes the shooting took place at a dance club. Saturday was the start of the two-day festival, which is one of the largest Lunar New Year events in Southern California. (AP)

## India FTA can be clinched this year, but no more visa offers: UK trade minister

LONDON, JAN 22 /--/The India-UK free trade agreement (FTA) is expected to be clinched this year but it won't involve any boost of free movement visa offers for Indians, British trade minister in charge of the negotiations has said.

Kemi Badenoch, who was in New Delhi last month to kick off the sixth round of FTA talks with Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal, said that former prime minister Boris Johnson's "deal by Diwali" deadline last year was not feasible and had to be changed. In an interview with The Times recently, the UK Secretary of State for Trade also ruled out any major similarities between the FTA the UK had struck with Australia one of the first post-Brexit trade deals and that with India. "We left the EU (European Union) because we didn't believe in free movement, we didn't think it was working. This is not a deal that's negotiating some kind of free movement with India," Badenoch told the newspaper, with reference to more visa offers. The minister indicated a willingness to make concessions on issues like business mobility, but ruled out the prospect of Indians getting the same kind of deal as with Australia which allows under-35s to live and work in the UK for three years. The reciprocal UK-

India Young Professionals Scheme, formally launched earlier this month, is seen as overcoming this hurdle by annually offering 3,000 18 to 30-year-old graduates visas to live and work in either country for up to two years. "We have to make sure that



Kemi Badenoch

each trade agreement we sign is tailored to the specific country. The kind of mobility offer I can do to a country like Australia is not going to be the same kind of mobility offer I can do with a country like India, which has got many times the population," said Badenoch. "And what people from the UK want to do when they travel to Australia is probably slightly different from what they do when they travel to India, and vice versa as well," she told The Times'.

Distancing from the previous Tory government's approach of deadline-bound FTA negotiations as

"unhelpful", Badenoch reiterated the Rishi Sunak led government's more flexible approach going forward. "The 'deal by Diwali' mantra is one of the things I have changed since becoming Trade Secretary. I tell people it's about the deal, not the day. I think that having a fixed day where everything needs to be completed is not helpful in a negotiation because the other party can run down the clock," she said. Johnson had set a Diwali 2022 deadline for the FTA during his prime ministerial visit to India in April last year. However, amid major political upheavals in the UK, that deadline fell by the wayside and most ministers have since been reluctant to set a fresh timeframe. "I do think a deal this year. I don't know when. But after a while if things don't conclude then people just move on, on both sides. I'm very keen to sign a deal this year," said Badenoch.

According to official UK government data, India-UK bilateral trade currently stands at around GBP 29.6 billion a year. Both sides formally launched FTA negotiations at the start of last year, with Sunak committing to working "at pace" towards an FTA that does not "sacrifice quality for speed" after that October 2022 Diwali deadline was missed. (PTI)

## King Charles Coronation street parties to be held across

LONDON, JAN 22 /--/Buckingham Palace on Sunday revealed further details of the grand Coronation Ceremony planned for King Charles III in May, which will involve scores of street parties being held across the UK and Commonwealth nations. The 74-year-old royal will be formally crowned as monarch along with his wife, Queen Consort Camilla, at Westminster Abbey in London on May 6 and millions are expected to join in the celebrations over a long holiday weekend.

Another key highlight will be a mega concert involving global music icons, orchestras, a diverse choir and world-famous entertainers to be telecast live from the grounds of Windsor Castle. "The Coronation of His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen Consort is a huge milestone in the history of the UK and Commonwealth," said Michelle Donelan, UK Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

"The weekend of events will bring people together to celebrate our monarchy and the mixture of tradition and modernity, culture and community that makes our

country great. "Everyone is invited to join in, on any day, whether that is by hosting a special street party, watching the coronation ceremony or spectacular concert on TV, or stepping forward during the Big Help Out to help causes that matter to them," she said. A Coronation Procession will be followed by the royal family gathering at the Buckingham Palace balcony to greet crowds. According to reports, a more multi-faith dimension is anticipated for the King's Coronation Service, with representatives of a range of religions.

The palace said tens of thousands of people are expected to visit the UK capital to experience the "unique and historic occasion", with millions more watching from home, across the UK and around the globe. "Coronation Big Lunches, thousands of street parties, and a day dedicated to good causes will bring communities together

throughout the UK over the special Coronation Bank Holiday weekend," the palace said. "On Sunday May 7, a spectacular Coronation Concert at Windsor Castle will showcase the country's diverse cultural heritage in music, theatre and dance. One of the highlights of the concert will be Lighting up the Nation', in which iconic locations across the UK will be



lit up with projections, lasers, drone displays and illuminations," it added. The audience for the Coronation Concert will include several thousand members of the public selected for free tickets via a public ballot. The weekend of celebrations will culminate with the "Big Help Out" on Monday May 8 a special Bank Holiday proclaimed by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak last year in honour of the coronation.

The event, created by Britain's leading charities and organised by the Together Coalition, is aimed at highlighting the positive impact

volunteering has on communities across the UK. "In tribute to His Majesty The King's lifetime of public service, the Big Help Out will encourage people to come out and support the causes that matter to them," the palace said. Various activities are expected on the day by local community groups, organisations and charities including the Scouts, Royal Voluntary Service and National Trust, with further details for community participation to be unveiled over time. Jon Knight, Chief Executive of the Together Coalition, said: "The Big Help Out is going to be a festival of volunteering.

A day when people up and down the country will roll up their sleeves and do their bit." "In the run up to the day we'll also be launching new ways of getting involved in volunteering in your community. The aim is to create a legacy of better-connected communities long beyond the coronation itself. "If you're a voluntary group who wants to be part of it, please reach out now so we can make this the start of the biggest volunteering effort in our country's history," Knight said. (PTI)



Australian Open:  
Iga Swiatek, Coco  
Gauff make exits  
on another day  
of shocks

MELBOURNE, JAN 22 /--/ Top seed Iga Swiatek and a tearful Coco Gauff both crashed out in straight sets in the last 16 on Sunday on another day of shocks at the Australian Open. Swiatek's defeat to Elena Rybakina makes it the first Grand Slam in the Open era— since 1968—to lose the top two seeds in the men's and women's draws before the quarter-finals. There was no such trouble for Jessica Pegula, however, the American third seed surging into the last eight with a 7-5, 6-2 win over former French Open champion Barbora Krejickova. Wimbledon champion Rybakina swept past the 2022 French and US Open winner Swiatek 6-4, 6-4 in 1hr 29min at a stunned Rod Laver Arena in Melbourne. Moscow-born Kazakh Rybakina, seeded 22, moves on to a last-eight encounter with Jelena Ostapenko. The Latvian 17th seed provided the second upset of a crazy few minutes by knocking out seventh seed Gauff 7-5, 6-3 on neighbouring Margaret Court Arena. The 18-year-



old Gauff broke down in tears during an emotional post-match press conference. World number one and hot favourite Swiatek admitted that Rybakina deserved to win. "I felt the pressure," Swiatek, 21, said. "I felt that I didn't want to lose instead of wanting to win." Swiatek, who dominated women's tennis last year and is already a three-time major champion, added: "I felt today that I don't have that much left to fight even more. I felt like I took a step back in terms of how I approach these tournaments, and I maybe wanted it a little bit too hard. "So I'm going to try to chill out a little bit more." Swiatek follows second seed Ons Jabeur out of the Melbourne exit door, the Tunisian having gone out in the second round in another surprise. But the 25-year-old Ostapenko was always in control to ensure that Gauff must wait at least a bit longer for a first major title. Gauff told reporters it was a "little bit frustrating", then her voice suddenly began to crack, the tears flowed and the teenager was offered a tissue. (AFP)

Arrest shatters Dani Alves' image as football's witty winner

BARCELONA, JAN 22 /--/ Dani Alves has spent his first night in pre-trial jail for alleged sexual assault in Spain, an incident that has left his wife distraught and shocked the football world. If he is found guilty, it will also destroy the already severely damaged reputation of one of football's most popular players.



Catalan regional police Mossos d'Esquadra trucks leave the Ciutat de la Justicia courthouse in Barcelona

The Brazilian star, who denies any wrongdoing, has many more days ahead of him at the prison near Barcelona. Unless he wins an appeal to reverse the judge's decision to deny him bail, he will remain weeks, even months, behind bars until a trial is set. The 39-year-old Alves was arrested on Friday by Spanish police

after they spent days carrying out a preliminary investigation into the accusation from a woman claiming he sexually assaulted her in a Barcelona nightclub last month. A judge agreed with state prosecutors after hearing the testimonies of Alves, his accuser and a witness that he should remain jailed, without the right to bail. Barcelona coach Xavi, who played with Alves for seven trophy-laden seasons at Camp Nou, said he was stunned and saddened. When Xavi returned to Barcelona as the coach midway through last season, he gave his approval to the club bringing back Alves for a second stint to provide his struggling side with some leadership. "It is difficult to comment on his situation," Xavi admitted on Saturday when asked at a regular news conference for

Barcelona's next match. "I am surprised and stunned. I am in shock. The justice system will decide what it must, we can't get into that. I feel very bad for him, because I know him." Under Spain's sexual consent law passed last year, sexual assault takes in a wide array of sex crimes from on-line abuse and groping to rape, each with different possible punishments. The worst case of rape including violence can receive a maximum sentence of 15 years. Neither the police nor the court would disclose any details of Alves' case, and the Spanish press has included differing accounts of the alleged events, ranging from Alves supposedly groping the woman to him allegedly raping her in a club bathroom. (AP)

Hockey  
World  
Cup  
2023

Heartbreak for INDIA,  
eliminated after losing  
to NZ in sudden death

BHUBANESWAR, JAN 22 /--/ India crashed out of the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup after losing 4-5 via penalty shootout to lower-ranked New Zealand following a 3-3 stalemate after the regulation time in a crossover match in Bhubaneswar on Sunday. India, ranked sixth in the world, produced a below-par performance, allowing New Zealand to claw back into the match after taking a 2-0 lead in the first half. India scored through Lalit Upadhyay (17th minute), Sukhjeet Singh (24th) and Varun Kumar (40th). New Zealand replied through Sam Lane (28th) and two penalty-corner conversions by Kane Russell (43rd) and Sean Findlay (49th). New Zealand will now take on reigning world champions Belgium in the quarterfinals.



I am happy with how I am  
going: Rohit Sharma

RAIPUR, JAN 22 /--/ Indian captain Rohit Sharma is not worried about the lack of big hundreds in recent times, saying he is quite content with his batting.

The scorer of three double centuries in ODIs, Rohit last made a hundred in the format way back in January 2020 as his conversation rate from fifty to a century dipped drastically. However, in the second ODI against New Zealand here on Saturday the opener struck a sublime 51 off 50 balls, with seven fours and two sixes, to power India to a series-clinching eight-wicket victory. "I'm trying to change my game a bit now, have been trying to take the bowlers on and I think that's important, to try to put the pressure back. I know the big scores haven't come, but I'm not too worried about it," Rohit said at the presentation ceremony. "I am happy with my batting. I have kept my approach quite similar. I am happy with how I am going. I know a big score is around the corner." With the 50-over World Cup slated later this year at home, he said the team wants to do all sorts of things (experimentation) before entering the marquee event. The Mohammed Shami-led attack produced an incisive effort to bowl out New Zealand for a meagre 108 before India knocked off the runs in 20.1 overs. Shami (3/18) was well supported by Mohammed Siraj (1/10) and Hardik Pandya (2/16). Shami and Siraj made life tough for the batters with their high-quality



*I thought these last five games, the bowlers have really stepped up. Whatever we have asked of them, they have delivered. Especially doing this in India. You can expect these performances away from India, but they have real skills. When we trained here yesterday in the night, it moved around, there was good carry. Which is why we wanted that challenge: 250 would have been quite challenging*  
—Indian captain Rohit Sharma

seam bowling, reducing New Zealand to a dismal 15 for five after Rohit opted to bowl. "I thought these last five games, the bowlers have really stepped up. Whatever we have asked of them, they have delivered. Especially doing this in India. You can expect these performances away from India, but they have real skills. "When we trained here yesterday in the night, it moved around, there was good carry. Which is why we wanted that challenge: 250 would have been quite challenging. "Shami and Siraj did want to go on for longer spells, but I told them a big Test series coming up (against Australia), so we need to take care of ourselves as well." New Zealand skipper Tom Latham said the failure to build partnerships hurt his team. "Batting up top wasn't our finest day. India bowled right areas for a long time and pretty much gave us nothing. Not idea but full credit to India. The surface did a little bit, a bit of tennis-ball bounce, some came through, some didn't. "Unfortunately we were unable to build a partnership. Every time you want to put in a great performance but unfortunately we were unable to adapt quickly enough," Latham said. Player of the Match Shami said he always focuses on maintaining the right line and length. "I always start trying to bowl good rhythm and line and length. The seam release is all about repetitions. I get irritated if the seam is not perfect. I love it when you can see the seam in the air. So I just keep trying to do that," Shami said. (PTI)

Tri-series: Indian women start favourites against West Indies

EAST LONDON, JAN 22 /--/ Hoping for its seniors to return to the playing XI, the Indian team will look to continue the winning run, when it takes on the West Indies in the Women's T20 Tri-Series match here on Monday. The Indians, without skipper Harmanpreet Kaur in the win over hosts South Africa, gave a good account of themselves in their opener. The captain missed the tie against South Africa owing to illness and it remains to be seen if she returns for the match against the West Indies, who are coming off a big loss against the home side. India's playing XI also didn't feature the returning Shikha Pandey, Renuka Singh and Pooja Vastrakar in their first game. Handed the India cap by stand-in skipper Smriti Mandhana, debutant Amanjot Kaur made her first outing a memorable one with a fine performance. Reeling at 69 for five at one stage, India went out to make a fighting 147 for six after Amanjot's 30-ball 41 while batting at number seven. Fitting, she was named the Player of the Match in a 27-run victory. Irrespective of whether the seniors return or not against the West Indies, a bit of focus will surely be on the 21-year-old Amanjot here on Monday, when the Women in Blue will look to consolidate their position in the tournament. "It's an unreal feeling. I had never thought my first match for India would go this way.



This is my first press conference. And to be the Player of the Match - that was even more unexpected," Amanjot said after the opening match here. The tri-series is significant as it is the last tournament before the Women's T20 World Cup which South Africa is hosting next month. The tri-series is slated to end on February 2. Even though some seniors have taken ill and teen sensations Shafali Verma and Richa Gosh are busy with their commitments in the U-19 World Cup, India can call on the services of their ever-reliable senior all-rounder, Deepti Sharma. Deepti was at her best against the South Africans, scoring a 23-ball 33 and taking 3/30 in a brilliant all-round display. She will look for an encore in the upcoming match. As far as the West Indies are concerned, they will need to improve in all departments if they are challenge the Indians. (PTI)

Indian team: Smriti Mandhana, Jemimah Rodrigues, Devika Vaidya, Sabbhineni Meghana, Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Harleen Deol, Deepti Sharma, Pooja Vastrakar, Shikha Pandey, Yastika Bhatia (wk), Sushma Verma, Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Radha Yadav, Renuka Singh Thakur, Meghna Singh, Anjali Sarvani, Sneha Rana, Amanjot Kaur.

GAME NOTES

WFI's emergency general council  
meeting in Ayodhya called off

AYODHYA, JAN 22 /--/ The Wrestling Federation of India's (WFI) emergency general council meeting, scheduled here for Sunday, was called off after the Sports Ministry directed it to suspend all ongoing activities owing to the various allegations against the sports body and its president. The ministry Saturday said it has asked the WFI to suspend "all ongoing activities with immediate effect", including the Ranking Tournament in Gonda, UP, the federation president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh's stronghold. Sharan has been accused of sexually harassing women wrestlers and working like a dictatorship by some of the country's top wrestlers, including Vinesh Phogat, Bajrang Punia, Sakshi Malik and Ravi Dahiya. The ministry on Saturday also suspended WFI's assistant secretary Vinod Tomar, a fallout of the grapplers' allegations of sexual harassment and corruption against the sports body's chief. It had decided to suspend Tomar, "with immediate effect, to ensure proper functioning of WFI". On Friday, Sharan's son Prateek had said that his father would issue a statement on the allegations against him after the sports body's meeting. (PTI)

Shami advises Umran: If you work  
on line and length you can rule the world

RAIPUR, JAN 22 /--/ Veteran Indian pacer Mohammed Shami feels young Umran Malik, with his raw pace, has a bright future ahead and the youngster "can rule the world" if he works on his line and length. The Jammu and Kashmir speedster has impressed with his express pace, bowling at 150 clicks consistently but has struggled with accuracy. "There's only one piece of advice I want to give. I don't think it's easy to play against the pace that you have. Just that we need to work a little on line and length. If we can get a command over it, we can rule the world. "You have a lot of power, future is bright. Best wishes for you, hope you do well," Shami said during a chat with Umran, which has been posted by bcci.tv. Shami and Mohammed Siraj generated considerable seam movement to run through the New Zealand's top-order as the hosts cantered to an eight-wicket win in the second ODI to seal the three-match series here on Saturday. When Umran asked how he remains so calm and happy in every match, Shami said "When you are playing for the country, you shouldn't take pressure on yourself. You should keep trusting your skills. You tend to get carried away when under pressure. (PTI)

Ashleigh Gardner condemns team's match  
against Pakistan on national day

MELBOURNE, JAN 22 /--/ Ashleigh Gardner condemned the national women's cricket team's decision to play a Twenty20 international against Pakistan on Australia's national day on January 26. Gardner, who is the second indigenous woman to play test cricket for Australia, said the national day is a "day of hurt and a day of mourning" for her people. In a tweet Gardner said playing a match on the day "certainly doesn't sit well with me as an individual but also all the people I'm representing. "For those who don't have a good understanding of what that day means it was the beginning of genocide, massacres and dispossession," she said. "When I take the field for this game I will certainly be reflecting and thinking about all of my ancestors and peoples' lives who changed from this day." The holiday commemorates the arrival of the "first fleet" which brought first white settlers to Australia in 1778. However, some indigenous Australians commemorate the day as Invasion Day or Colonization Day because the arrivals set in motion the seizure of lands and the diminution of the indigenous Australian culture. (AP)

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