

Fuel dispenser at petrol pump at Lucknow village gone defunct

Petrol & diesel provided through Kerosene jerrycan

KARTIK



MAYABUNDER, JAN 10/--/ Motorists are facing a lot of hardship as the fuel dispensers at ANIIDCO run petrol pump at Lucknow village in Mayabunder have developed technical snags and have stopped functioning for the past three-days. Long queue of vehicles, both cars and two wheelers can be seen lined up in the petrol pump to get fuel through manual methods. Kerosene jerrycan are used to provide petrol and diesel to the motorists. But this manual method of providing petrol and diesel by Kerosene jerrycan is consuming a lot of time of the motorists. Motorists have to stand for long hours to get the fuel. ANIIDCO officials have taken up the issue with the IOC Port Blair, but the IOC is yet to send a technical team for the repair of the fuel dispenser machines.

Motorists also face difficulties due to this ANIIDCO run petrol pump not having a canopy roof. Lack of canopy roof in the petrol pump is causing a lot of hardship to the two wheelers as they have to get the fuel on scorching sun in dry season and rain in rainy season. The canopy roof acts as a shelter for the motorists, particularly two wheeler riders.

MP seeks to constitute an expert committee for studying, improve water scenario in ANI

PORT BLAIR, JAN 10/--/ The Member of Parliament, Mr. Kudleerai Sharma has highlighted the problems being faced by the people of Andaman and Nicobar Islands due to scarcity of water during the dry season, in front of the Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Water Resources, New Delhi. The Parliamentary Standing Committee is scheduled to visit Andaman & Nicobar Islands on 18th & 19th January 2023. In a letter addressed to the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Water Resources, the Member of Parliament mentioned that the main source of water in A & N Islands primarily comprises of rain water, and A & N Islands are receiving an average annual rainfall of about 3000 mm every year which is way above the average annual rainfall of many other States and UT of Union of India. But, in spite of this the people of A



& N Islands and in particular Port Blair and adjoining sub-urban areas have to face a catastrophic situation of water supply during dry spells every year i.e. from January to June. He added that at times, the situation becomes so worse that the people are supplied potable water once in three days for only 15 to 20 minutes. He mentioned that the main reason for this being, dependency on single major water storage sources in most of the habitable island of A & N Islands and in particular Port Blair and adjoining sub-urban areas. (Contd. on page-6)

Mid Term Proposals for augmenting the water supply are

- 1) Creation of Planned Water Management Policy and accountable task force.
- 2) Augmentation of water supply by construction of Weir Dam at Bimblitan Village, Port Blair.
- 3) Augmenting the Dead Storage capacity of DhaniKhari Dam by Dredging / Desilting the Dam reservoir bed.
- 4) Augmenting the Storage capacity of various water sources / bodies in Port Blair Town by Dredging / Desilting the reservoir bed.
- 5) Rutland Island Water Supply Scheme (Balance work).
- 6) One more aspect to be taken into account when a proposal for augmentation of water supply is being envisaged is wastage of water from existing water generation and distribution systems.

Proposals for augmenting the Water Supply of rural areas of Andaman & Nicobar Islands (Mid-Term)

- 1) Construction of Check dam/ weir in all 37 habitable Islands.
- 2) Providing Filter water to all 400 villages in Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Long Term proposals for augmenting the water supply are:

- 1) Augmentation of water supply by constructing/ Developing Sweet Water Lake at Sippighat Village, Port Blair.
- 2) Augmentation of water supply by executing the Flat Bay project at Port Blair.

Gram Sabha meeting of Sitanagarpanchaya t held to finalize annual plans

Panchayat committed to achieve defined SDG goals in a time bound manner: Pradhan

EOI CORRESPONDENT

DIGLIPUR, JAN 10/--/ The final meeting of the Gram Sabha of Sitanagarpanchayat to give approval to the proposed action plans for the year 2023-2024, was held on Monday at the conference hall of the Panchayat. (Contd. on page-6)



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10.	OPERATION THEATER ASSISTANT	2YEARS	12 TH
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Indian diaspora an important and unique force in global scene: Prez

INDORE, JAN 10 /--/ President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday said the Indian diaspora has become an important and unique force in the global system. Addressing the valedictory session of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)



convention in Indore, the President praised overseas Indians for excelling in various walks of life through hard work and resilience. "Indian diaspora today has become an important and unique force in the global system. It has grown into an energetic and confident community in every region," she said. The President said the Indian diaspora has exhibited extraordinary dedication and hard work and overcome many challenges to achieve excellence in all walks of life including art, literature, politics, business, academics, philanthropy, and science and technology. On the occasion, the President conferred the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards on select members of the Indian diaspora to recognize their achievements and to honour their contributions to various fields including in India and abroad. Madhya Pradesh Governor Mangu Bhai Patel, chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, external affairs minister S Jaishankar, and civil aviation minister Jyotiraditya Scindia were also present. Earlier, President Murmu met her counterparts from Suriname and Guyana, Chandrikapersad Santokhi and Irfaan Ali, respectively, on the sidelines of the convention. (PTI)

There will be tarikh par tarikh', says Ajit Pawar as SC sets Feb 14 for rival Sena pleas hearing

MUMBAI, JAN 10 /--/ As the Supreme Court on Tuesday said it will start hearing on February 14 on pleas filed by rival Shiv Sena factions, Opposition leader in Maharashtra Ajit Pawar maintained there will be tarikh par tarikh' (dates after dates), indicating a prolonged legal battle over the matter. Pawar said the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray), an ally of Sharad Pawar's Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and the Congress, is doing the job of presenting the case through its lawyers in the apex court. The SC said it will commence hearing on February 14 on pleas related to the Maharashtra political crisis triggered by the Shiv Sena's division in June last year. A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud was told by senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena faction that he will seek reference of the cases to a seven-judge bench to have a re-look of a 2016 judgment on powers of assembly speakers to deal with disqualification pleas.

Reacting to the development in the top court, NCP leader Pawar told reporters: "Tarikh par tarikh hone wali hain (there will be dates after dates for hearing). It is their (court's) right. Can anyone ask the judiciary (about this)?" The former cabinet minister said the Shiv Sena (UBT) is doing the job of presenting its case through lawyers and it is the apex court's prerogative to decide the date of hearing and when to deliver judgement. "It is totally their (SC) right. We are also seeing that it's been six months (since the revolt in Shiv Sena) and dates (for hearing) are being given. Now, they have given the next date as February 14," said the Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly. Shiv Sena (UBT) leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut said since the date of hearing happens to be on February 14 (celebrated as Valentine's Day), "Everything will happen with love." "From February 14, the Constitution bench will hear the matter without any break. This is very important for us," he told reporters.

Maharashtra faced a political crisis in June last year after a section of Shiv Sena MLAs led by Eknath Shinde, who is now chief minister, revolted against the party leadership, triggering the collapse of the 31-month-old Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government which also consisted of the Congress and the NCP. The revolt led to a division in the Shiv Sena with one faction headed by former chief minister Uddhav Thackeray and the other by Shinde. They later filed pleas against each other in the apex court. (PTI)

SC refuses urgent listing of plea on Joshimath subsidence

Apex court says all important matters need not come to it

NEW DELHI, JAN 10 /--/ The Supreme Court on Tuesday refused urgent hearing of a plea seeking the court's intervention to declare the crisis in Uttarakhand's Joshimath a national disaster, saying there are "democratically elected institutions" to deal with the situation and all important matters should not come to it.

A bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice P S Narasimha listed the plea of Swami Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati of Joshimath for hearing on January 16. Advocate Parmeshwar Nath Mishra, appearing for the Swami, mentioned the plea and sought its urgent listing for Wednesday "Everything important need not come to us. There are

democratically elected institutions to look into it. We will list it on January 16," the CJI said. The lawyer had mentioned the plea also on Monday for urgent listing. "Mention again on Tuesday after following the due process when your matter is in the mentioning list," the bench had said. Saraswati has contended that the incident has occurred due to large-scale industrialisation and sought immediate financial assistance and compensation to the people of Uttarakhand.

The plea has also sought direction to the National Disaster Management Authority to actively support the residents of Joshimath in these challenging times. "No development is needed at

the cost of human life and their ecosystem and if any such thing is to happen, then it is the duty of the State and Union government to stop the same immediately at war level," the plea by the Seer said. Joshimath, the gateway to famous pilgrimage sites like Badrinath and Hemkund Sahib and international skiing destination Auli, is facing a major challenge due to land subsidence.

Joshimath is sinking gradually with huge cracks developing in houses, on roads and fields. Many houses have tilted and are sinking, locals said. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama has ordered immediate evacuation of 600 families living in houses that are at risk. (PTI)

Karnataka HC lays down norms for political parties on how to communicate with members

BENGALURU, JAN 10 /--/ The High Court of Karnataka has issued guidelines to political parties on how to communicate direction to its elected members. Even after 35 years, the State has failed to frame rules under the Karnataka Local Authorities (Prohibition of Defection) Act, 1987. In a litigation involving elected members of the Town Municipal Council, Mahalingapura, the court deemed it fit to issue the guidelines till the State framed the necessary rules. The guidelines issued by Justice NS Sanjay Gowdasay a political party or the person authorised by it has to serve a copy of the direction to its members about acting in a particular manner at least 5 days before the meeting is convened. This holds good for Whip issued by the parties on voting in a particular manner. The elected members of the party "would thus have the option of

seeking permission to act contrary to the direction and thus not be subjected to disqualification under the Act," the guidelines say. Another guideline is that no proceedings for disqualification shall be initiated against the elected members if the political party's direction is not communicated to the authority empowered to convene the meeting of the elected body. A political party's direction should be communicated to the elected member by the empowered authority within 5 days preceding the meeting.

If the notices are served in the same manner relating to the convening of the meeting, such service would be deemed service. Service of communication can be by courier or by email to the elected members giving them at least five days to seek for permission to vote contrary to the direction. The

guidelines were issued after a petition was filed by Savita, Chandini and Godavari, all members of the Mahalingapur Town Municipal Council from the BJP. The elections for the post of president and vice-president of the council were held in November, 2020. Before this, a meeting of the elected councilors of the BJP was convened by the party soon after. At the meeting Snehal Shivanand Angadi was declared the official candidate for president and Laxmi Mahalingappa Muddapur was selected as the official vice-presidential candidate. The three members (petitioners in the case) were not present in the meeting and the party's direction to its elected members to vote for the official candidates was communicated to them by way of affixing the direction on the doors of their houses. (PTI)

UP CM directs officials not to disconnect farmers' power connections due to non-payment of bills

LUCKNOW, JAN 10 /--/ Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday directed officials not to disconnect farmers' power connections due to non-payment of bills.

Adityanath's orders came while reviewing development works in Agra, Saharanpur, Azamgarh, Jhansi and Moradabad divisions with public representatives. Stating that protection of the interests of the 'annadata' (farmers) was the government's top priority, Adityanath said their electricity connections should not be disconnected due to non-payment of bills. Orders have also been issued by the UP Power Corporation in this regard. "Power disconnection has been reported from some areas. This is not acceptable. The chief minister's office (CMO) has taken cognisance of it and will take strictest action against the guilty," a government statement quoted the chief minister as saying. Adityanath also assured that the stray cattle menace would be permanently solved shortly and said: "Today, more than nine lakh cattle have been protected in destitute cattle shelters operating in the state. The scheme of giving Rs 900 per month to farmers interested in keeping the cattle is also getting good results. Taking interest in such schemes, MPs/MLAs should try to connect the general public with them. "The capacity of cattle shelters is also being increased for better

protection of destitute cattle. We are also preparing large cattle shelters at the development block level. MP-MLAs should cooperate for the availability of land for this project," he said.

Speaking on investments, Adityanath said Uttar Pradesh Global Investor Summit was being planned for February 10-12. "In view of this special



event, 'Team UP', which went to invite investors from the country and the world, has received investment proposals totaling more than Rs 12 lakh crore from the industry. The summit will help the state achieve its goal of becoming a USD 1 trillion economy by 2027," the statement quoted him as saying. Recently, some districts received investments worth thousands of crores by organising district investors' summits. Similar efforts should be made in all districts, he added. The chief minister also suggested that all MPs and MLAs should hold dialogue and maintain regular contact with entrepreneurs, businessmen and migrant people from their areas and



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi at Golden Temple in Amritsar ahead of party's 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' in Punjab

Rahul offers prayers at Golden Temple ahead of Punjab leg of Bharat Jodo Yatra

C H A N D I G A R H / AMRITSAR JAN 10 /--/ Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday offered prayers at the Golden Temple in Amritsar, a day ahead of the start of the Punjab leg of the Bharat Jodo Yatra. Rahul landed at the Amritsar airport Tuesday afternoon after concluding the Haryana leg of the march in Ambala district. Sporting a turban, the Congress leader paid obeisance at the sanctum sanctorum of the Golden Temple. Rahul was accompanied by Punjab Congress chief Amrinder Singh Raja Warring, Leader of Opposition Partap Singh Bajwa, local MP Gurjit Singh Aujla and other party leaders. Several Punjab Congress leaders till Tuesday morning were not aware of Gandhi's visit to Amritsar. Congress general secretary in-charge communications, Jairam Ramesh had told reporters earlier in the day in Ambala that Rahul will be going to the Golden Temple.

Earlier in the morning, Rahul resumed the foot march from Shahpur in Ambala Cantt during which

he was also joined by party leader Raj Babbar. The Yatra had entered Haryana's Panipat from neighbouring Uttar Pradesh on Thursday last and later it also passed through Karnal and Kurukshetra districts before concluding in Ambala district. Prior to that, in the first phase in Haryana, the Yatra had passed through Nuh, Gurugram and Faridabad districts from December 21 to 23. Ramesh said the Yatra covered 255 km in Haryana during eight days crossing seven districts. "In the afternoon today, there will not be Bharat Jodo Yatra. We will go to Punjab now and halt for the night in Sirhind. In the morning, flag transfer will happen from Haryana PCC to Punjab PCC. From Wednesday morning, we will begin the Punjab leg of the Yatra," he said. The Yatra on Wednesday will pass through Mandi Gobindgarh and halt for the night at Khanna. He said the Yatra daily covers 25 km in two phases. However, on January 12 during the Punjab leg, the distance will be covered in a single

stretch beginning morning after which the Yatra will take a break for that day in the afternoon and for the entire day on January 13 in view of Lohri festival. During the Haryana leg of the Yatra, Rahul was among others accompanied by senior Congress leaders Bhupinder Singh Hooda, Kumari Selja, Randeep Singh Surjewala, Deepender Singh Hooda, K C Venugopal and State Congress chief Udai Bhan. A large number of locals joined the march as it passed through Haryana. Replying to a question, Ramesh, without taking any names, charged that hatred is being spread in the country in the name of language, region, caste and religion. "While there is diversity in our society, that is being misused, so that society can be divided. Bharat Jodo Yatra, our aim is to take this message that Congress party unites, it does not break. Our constitution makers had said unity in diversity," he said. "To keep our diversity secure is the primary responsibility of the Congress party. We will

fight against any such ideology which uses our diversity to divide society for electoral gains," Rahul added. The Congress leader also hit out at the BJP for criticising former Army chief General Deepak Kapoor after he participated in the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Haryana. Ramesh, who was accompanied by former Haryana Chief Minister Hooda and AICC in-charge for Haryana, Shaktisinh Gohil, said the Yatra received an overwhelming response in Haryana, during which Gandhi met and interacted with a cross-section of people, including ex-servicemen, farmers and sportspersons. During Rahul's interaction with leaders of various farmer bodies including Rakesh Tikait, the latter put up some issues before the former Congress chief including legal guarantee for crop MSP. They also apprised the Congress leader that the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (Haryana Amendment) Bill, 2021 was not in the interests of farmers. (PTI)

PM to inaugurate National Youth Festival in Karnataka's Hubballi

NEW DELHI, JAN 10 /--/ Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the National Youth Festival in Karnataka's Hubballi on Thursday, an event that is being held on the National Youth Day which is celebrated on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekanand to honour his ideals, teachings and contributions. "Prime Minister Modi will inaugurate the 26th National Youth Festival in Hubballi at around 4 pm," a statement released by the Prime Minister's Office said. The National Youth Festival is held every year to provide exposure to talented youth at the national level and galvanise them towards nation-building. It brings diverse cultures from all parts of the country on a common platform and unites the participants in the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat'. This year, the festival is being held in Hubballi-Dharwad in Karnataka from January 12-16, with the theme being "Viksit Yuva-Viksit Bharat".

The Festival will witness Youth Summit, which will witness plenary discussions on five themes stemming from G20 and Y20 events -- Future of work, Industry, Innovation and 21st Century Skills; Climate change and disaster risk reduction; Peace building and Reconciliation; Shared future-youth in democracy and governance; and Health and Well-being, according to the statement. The Summit will witness participation of more than 60 eminent experts. Several competitive and non-competitive events will also be held. Competitive events will include folk dances and songs, and will be held to provide an impetus to local traditional cultures, the statement said. Non-competitive events will include Yogathon which aims to mobilise close to 10 lakh people to do Yoga, it said. Eight indigenous sports and martial arts will also be presented during the event by national level performers. Other attractions at the festival include a food festival, young artist camp, adventure sports activities and special 'Know Your Army, Navy and Air Force' camps. (PTI)

BJP's 'use and discard' policy responsible for plight of KP employees: Kharge

NEW DELHI, JAN 10 /--/ Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday attacked the BJP over protests by Kashmiri Pandit employees, alleging that the saffron party's "use, discard and betray" policy is responsible for their plight. "Kashmiri Pandit employees are protesting for over 245+ days, demanding their 'right to life' & 'relocation'. Their salaries are being withheld for months and their security is being compromised," Kharge said in a tweet. "BJP's 'use, discard & betray' policy is responsible for their plight," he said. Rahul Bhat, a Kashmiri Pandit employee, was shot dead by terrorists inside his office at Chadoora in Budgam district of Jammu and Kashmir in May last year. The killing had sparked off protests by Kashmiri Pandit employees who refused to return to work. A group of protesting employees had also left the Valley and demonstrated in Jammu, demanding that they be relocated outside the Valley till the security situation improved there. (PTI)

Elections our right but won't beg for it: Omar

SRINAGAR, JAN 10 /--/ National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said election is the right of the people but Kashmiris will not beg before the Centre to hold polls in Jammu and Kashmir. "If elections are not held this year, so be it! We are not beggars. I have said it time and again, Kashmiris are not beggars. Election is our right but we will not beg before them for this right. They want to restore the elections to us, good. But if they don't want to do it, so be it," Omar told newsmen in Anantnag district. Asked about the eviction of people from properties and state lands, Omar claimed it was one of the reasons why elections were not being held in Jammu and Kashmir. "That's why they are not holding elections. They want to 'harass' the people. Instead of applying balm to the wounds of people, they seem to have a penchant to aggravate the hurt," the former J&K chief minister said.

Omar said the BJP government knows that an elected government will try to heal the wounds of the people while they only allegedly rub salt and chilli into them. Asked about the government's decision to arm the village defence guards following the Rajouri attack, Omar said this was an admission by the government that its claims to the nation at the time of abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 had fallen flat. "On 5 August 2019, the nation was told that the gun in Kashmir is because of Article 370 and with repealing of Article 370, the gun culture will start to subside. (PTI)



Director General Indian Coast Guard, Mr. VS Pathania, PTM, TM ahead of relinquishing charge on superannuation called on Admiral D K Joshi (Retd.), Lt Governor, A&N Islands and Vice-Chairman, Islands Development Agency at Raj Niwas on Tuesday. The Lt Governor thanked him for all support rendered to Andaman & Nicobar Administration during his tenure.

CITU Observes Flag Day In A&N Islands



PORT BLAIR, JAN 10/--/ As part of the 17th All India Conference of CITU scheduled to be held at Bengaluru from 18th to 22nd January, 2023, CITU observed 10th January, 2023 as Flag Day (Jhanda Divas) all over the country. In Andaman & Nicobar Islands, CITU flags were raised throughout the islands including the tribal areas in Nicobars District today by various Unions. From the early morning to evening today, CITU leaders and workers enthusiastically participated in the Flag

raising functions. At Port Blair, B. Chandrachoodan, General Secretary, SP Kalairajan, P. Sathyapal, AnandRajan and MV Yugander, Secretaries of CITU State Committee and S. Chidambaram hoisted the CITU flags at different parts of Port Blair town and South Andaman areas. CITU flags were also raised at different areas of Diglipur, Mayabunder, Rangat, Kadamtala, Uttara, Baratang, Katchal, etc. CITU leaders and workers of the concerned areas participated in the programme.

HRS to stage protest against poor health infrastructure

PORT BLAIR, JAN 10/--/ The Hindu Rasthra Sangh (HRS) will stage a mass protest in front of Cellular Jail tomorrow at 2.00 pm against the poor health facilities provided to the Islanders. In a release, HRS has mentioned that inspite of repeated requests to improve the health infrastructure system for the sake of the welfare of Islanders, concerned Health Secretary or the Administration has turned a deaf year to the woes of the islanders. The apathetic attitude of the health department staff has already earned the wrath of the islanders. This careless attitude of the health department has taken a toll on the life of a young girl whose dreams are shattered in a nick of time. The staff of health department starting from the very basic technicians to highly qualified doctors behave as if islanders are beggars and they are rendering free service.

Firing practice by NCC Cadets



PORT BLAIR, JAN 10/--/ Senior Division/Senior Wing Army and Naval NCC cadets conducted firing from .22 Rifles at Brichgunj

firing range on 10 Jan 22 as a part of their training during the ongoing Combined Annual Training Camp at JNRM,

Port Blair. The firing was conducted under the guidance of Camp Commandant Lt Col Pankaj Modgil, Deputy Camp

Commandant Lt CdrAnkit Pant and PI staff of both the units. Cadets were also trained in various aspects of field craft.

Botany dept of JNRM adopts Sippighat village

PORT BLAIR, JAN 10/--/The Department of Botany, JNRM has adopted Sippighat Village in April 2022 on a long-term basis. The adoption

program, the M.Sc. Ist&IInd Year Students of the Botany Department visited Sippighat village and organized a range of activities like

scientific themes viz., Clean Earth, Green Earth etc. was organized for the children of the village. They were also shown a number of simple biological



program, which is part of the non-audit course for M.Sc. students, is prescribed by Pondicherry University. On 9th January, as part of the adoption

plantation of medicinal trees and demonstrations of the importance of herbal medicine in daily life. A workshop on poster making on

Sippighat. Faculty members Mrs. Rashmi Janak and Ms. Shalini of the Botany Department, JNRM were present on the occasion.

ACHIEVING TB FREE STATUS

Sub-National Certification survey commences in 10 selected villages of SA

PORT BLAIR, JAN 10/--/ As Tuberculosis continues to be a major public health problem and therefore implementation of National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) has witnessed immense political and administrative commitment to eliminate tuberculosis by 2025, five years ahead of the global target. To achieve this, the Central TB Division, Min. of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India (GoI) is adapting newer innovative strategies "TB free status" districts or states claiming reduction in TB (80% reduction in TB incidence from 2015). Since, it may take a longer duration for achieving TB free status, interim recognition is also considered as awards and certification of progress towards TB Free Status under bronze (20%), silver (40%) and gold (60%) categories. This aims to motivate, inspire and instil competitiveness in the mindset of the various stakeholders who are



working for TB elimination in the districts or states.

The District Administration through its District Health Society, South Andaman NTEP (SA) has claimed for Bronze award as per the programme indicators of the district. Accordingly, the Sub National Certification survey started today on 10th Jan 2023 in 10 selected villages namely Shore Point (RV), Kadakachang (RV), Hashmatabad (RV), Mithakhari (RV), PB (MCI) Ward No.10, Dollygunj (RV), Calicut (RV), PB (MCI) Ward No.8, PB (MCI) Ward No.15 and Hutbay (RV).

The Deputy Commissioner, South Andaman has appealed to the general public of the above said villages to cooperate with the field staff and those having fever, cough, night sweats and loss of appetite to visit nearest Health Centre or inform the volunteers reaching out for survey for investigation on the symptoms to keep the Islands healthy.

Cleanliness drive by SAAF



PORT BLAIR, JAN 10/--/ The Swachh Andaman Abhiyan With Friends (SAAF) conducted a cleanliness drive in collaboration with Port Blair Municipal Council (PBMC), Andaman Helping

Hands, A&N Islands (AHHANI), AlluArjun Army Andaman (AAAA), SreeSakthivelMurugan Youth Club (SSMYC), Yuva Bharat SamajSeva Charitable (YBSSCT), True Vision Foundation, Ration

Rasheed Foundation, Human Helping Animals and Walk For Plasticat New Fish Landing Jetty, Junglighat on 8th January 2023.

During this drive, all volunteers participated and

a total 09 bags of garbage were collected from FLC Jetty, Junglighat which consist of all types of mixed garbage like plastics materials, Alcoholic bottles, Juice bottles, Water bottles, Gutka wrappers etc.

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Everything you do in life, every choice you make, has a consequence. When you do things without thinkin' then you ain't makin' the choice. The choice is makin' you

Mark Steven Johnson

Kisida-Biden summit to boost Japan-US bond

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's upcoming summit with American President Joe Biden is likely underscore the strength of the Japan-US alliance and how the two countries can work more closely under Japan's new security and defense strategies. Kishida's week-long trip to strengthen military ties with Europe and Britain and bring into focus the Japan-US alliance at a summit in Washington, comes at a time when Japan breaks from its post-war restraint to take on more offensive roles with an eye toward China. Kishida's talks with Biden will highlight his five-nation tour that also takes him to France, Italy, Britain and Canada - some of the Group of Seven nations with which Japan has stepped up defence ties. Japan had in December adopted key security and defense reforms, including a counterstrike capability that makes a break from the country's exclusively self-defense-only post-war principle. Japan says the current deployment of missile interceptors is insufficient to defend it from rapid weapons advancement in China and North Korea. Japan is also reinforcing defences on its southwestern islands close to Taiwan, including Yonaguni and Ishigaki, where new bases are being constructed. These steps are aimed at achieving a free and open Indo-Pacific, Kishida believes.

Under the new strategies, Japan plans to start deploying in 2026 long-range cruise missiles that can reach potential targets in China, nearly double its defense budget within five years to a NATO standard of about 2% of GDP from the current 1%, and improve cyberspace and intelligence capabilities. The idea is to do as much as possible in a short time as some experts see growing risks that Chinese President Xi Jinping may take action against self-ruled Taiwan, which Beijing claims as part of its territory. Japan's new strategy has been well received by the Biden administration and some members of the Congress. Experts say it would also widen cooperation with their main regional partners Australia and possibly South Korea. It is considered to be an opportunity to rethink and update the structure and the mechanisms of the alliance to reflect a much more capable partner that's coming. The Biden administration, which also adopted its security strategy in October, expects Japan to assist in the supply and storage of fuel and munitions in case of a Taiwan emergency, experts say. Japan and the United States are also reportedly considering establishing a joint command. During the talks at the White House, the two leaders are expected to discuss China, North Korea's nuclear and missile development as well as Russia's war on Ukraine. Cooperation in the area of supply chain and economic security will be also on the table. Japan wants to work together with the US to promote and protect critical and emerging technologies, including semiconductors, and export controls to address competitiveness and security concerns.

During his trip, Kishida will seek to further strengthen bilateral military ties with four other countries. Japan's joint development and production of its F-X next generation fighter jet with Britain and Italy for a planned deployment in 2035 are top on the agenda during his visits to Rome and London. Japan and Britain have also been discussing a Reciprocal Access Agreement that would remove obstacles in holding joint military exercises in either country. Besides the Japan-US security treaty that allows US troops to station in Japan, Tokyo has a similar agreement only with Australia. Britain would be the second.

Naveen Patnaik has focused only on his State

Odisha Chief Minister and BijuJanata Dal President Naveen Patnaik is unlike other regional party founders and heads. He has no prime ministerial ambitions and is remarkably aloof, not seen as a threat to the ruling party at the Centre. And, if the BJP and Modi government see the Chief Minister and his party as rivals, it does not reflect in the duty rosters of central investigative agencies.

Also Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik could have said "rule", but instead he chose "serve", when talking of the BJD at the party's silver jubilee. The Chief Minister said his party BJD will "serve" the people of Odisha for the next 100 years, over and above the 20 years the BJD has been in power in Odisha. People talk of BJP's 27-year rule in Gujarat, but very few mention that the BJD has been in power in Odisha since 2000 with Naveen Patnaik as Chief Minister for five straight terms. And considering that politicians outlast most other humans on planet earth, he could even be CM for another 20-25 years. Also, Naveen Patnaik has taken the precaution not to groom a 'No.2', which proves he's a visionary twice over.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is not like Nitish Kumar, K Chandrashekhar Rao and Mamata Banerjee, all of them heads of party and state governments. Even MK Stalin and Uddhav Thackeray harbour latent prime ministerial ambitions, but not Naveen Patnaik. The Odisha CM is satisfied with the one bird in hand. His interests are limited to Odisha, and even if he's talking of 100 years of BJD-rule, it is more than apparent that the pep-talk is for the 2024 assembly and general elections. Come to talk of it, a 100-year BJD rule is in the realm of possibility unless a comet strikes planet earth. Patnaik is now 76, and has been Chief Minister for 22 years. And with no 'No.2', and no 'stress' to battle, chances are he might

REFLEX ACTION

Sushil Kutty

live up to a 100. And the BJD might emulate him in longevity. The party's silver jubilee was celebrated in Puri in the last week of 2022. The BJD is the baby of Naveen Patnaik s/o Biju Patnaik. The party was launched to carry forward Biju Patnaik's legacy, but instead the BijuJanata Dal is now being talked of as Naveen Patnaik's legacy for the people of Odisha, which is remarkable, if only for the fact that Naveen Patnaik had lived a significant portion of his first 50 years in life overseas and had no political experience to speak of. Today, if Naveen Patnaik is the "undefeated", the Biju Janata Dal is the "invincible".

Year 2024 will see both put to test once more. And though some are talking of "After Naveen, who?" that is redundant as of now even if the Chief Minister has in recent years given preference and opportunities to young fresh talent. The promised next 100 years in power obviously needs a crop of promising leaders. However, it does seem incongruous when some BJD leaders harp on "the party does not depend on one or two people" when it has been depending on the "one Naveen Patnaik" for 25 years.

Fortunately, the party has a slogan to rival Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'sabkasaath, sabkavikas' in Naveen Patnaik's 'asha, vishwas and swabhiman'. But where Chief Minister Patnaik scores over Prime Minister Narendra Modi is in the harnessing of women power. The BJD's focus on 'stree-shakti' is unparalleled and women are the ones who are keeping the BJD in power, and would for the next 100 years. The



A typical scene of Gangasagar transit camp at Babughat-----Arijit Ganguly

Political aspirations and manoeuvring capabilities on test

Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh were two legislative assemblies that were to expire on February 18 and January 1, 2023 respectively, the elections for which were held in November and December. BJP swept Gujarat but lost Himachal Pradesh, and thus the party begins the year 2023 with its political manoeuvring capability bruised that may not be working across the states. Congress snatched Himachal Pradesh from the BJP and AAP successfully entered the BJP's political forte Gujarat for the first time. Thus, the Congress and AAP in particular, and the political parties in opposition in general, are beginning the year with greater political aspirations.

As the year 2023 begins, political parties and analyst are pointing out that Narendra Modi's charisma is on the wane and has ceased to be effective across the states. Secondly, Modi-Shah duo's political strategies have some faultlines that can be used to successfully break the BJP's political forte that has recently been believed impregnable. However, both the political aspirations and manoeuvring capabilities would be put on the election touch stone of seven state election this year, which are considered to be semi-final for the grand general election of 2024 which would finally decide the fate of the running and opposition political parties as well as of the nation for the next term of five years. Meghalaya legislative assembly is to expire on March 15, Nagaland on March 12, Tripura on March 22, and Karnataka on May 24. Thus, elections of these four state's legislative assemblies are to be held in the first half

of 2023. The second half of 2023 would witness state election of Mizoram whose legislative assembly is due to expire on December 17, 2023. Terms of the legislative assemblies of Madhya Pradesh is expiring on January 6, 2024, Rajasthan on January 14, 2024, and Telangana on 16 January 2024, Chhattisgarh on January 3, 2024, and therefore elections to these states would also be held towards the end of 2023. State elections of these nine states are important because they send 116 members in the Lok Sabha out of 543.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is on Bharat Jodo Yatra. He is slowly but surely evolving as a stronger opposition leader than it has been expected so far, because he has been labelled as "pappu" ie merely an innocent "child in politics" by the BJP. However, one can see his coming of age in politics as he referred that people had also projected her grandmother Indira Gandhi as "gungigudiya" ie a dumb doll. Obviously the situation has been changing fast in favour of Rahul Gandhi, both in terms of support base among voters and among other opposition political parties. His Bharat Jodo Yatra has been attracting huge crowds and important personalities from all walks of life and disciplines including economy, politics and business. He has been earning praise even from unexpected corners, both overtly and covertly. The change seems

to be on the horizon, or else Gautam Adani had not even praised Congress Prime Ministers of the country at this time when his friend PM Narendra Modi is preparing for perhaps toughest political fight in his career as a politician in the last two decades.

While praising Bharat Jodo Yatra, Shiv Sena's Sanjay Raut has rightly observed that 2022 was a new avatar of Rahul Gandhi. "If this continues in 2023, then there may be a political change in 2024," he said amid talks of Rahul Gandhi becoming the opposition's PM candidate in the 2024 general election. Former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Kamal Nath had recently said that Rahul Gandhi will be the opposition's prime minister candidate for the 2024 Lok Sabha election. "Rahul Gandhi does not do politics for power, but for the people of the country," he said.

Acceptability of Rahul Gandhi has been increasing among the opposition political party that can be seen in statements of their leaders, such as Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who is said to have secret ambition of becoming Prime Minister, has said that he is open to the idea of Rahul Gandhi as the PM candidate in 2024 election. "We have no problem with it... When all opposition parties sit together and talk, then we decide on everything," he has said. Rahul Gandhi, on his part, has given proof of his maturity in a press

conference, when he said he liked and respected the regional opposition parties and felt that the role of the Congress was to provide a national framework to these regional parties where there was mutual respect. These statements are significant for several reasons including strengthening the grand political alliance of opposition parties to take on the BJP and Modi-Shah duo. The year 2023 has begun with a conducive opposition politics in the country.

Modi-Shah duos political strategy and manoeuvring capability would be put to test in almost all states going to poll in 2023. Toughest challenge would be in Karnataka. The state is fighting a border issue with Maharashtra. BJP is ruling in both the states having opposite interests. There is also infighting in the BJP. Congress and JD(S) alliance is emerging stronger.

Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh are being ruled by Congress, and barring a few incidents of infighting, the party seems to be in firm control. BJP will have tough time in both the states. Even in Madhya Pradesh there seems to be anti-incumbency against the BJP. It is precisely due to this reason BJP was seen fuming with desperation against the Congress when it was suggested that Congress would sweep the state election. BJP tried its best to penetrate in Telangana recently through defection but failed. TRS is still strong to protect its citadel. 2023 is clearly bringing a touchstone on which the BJP and the opposition would test their worth and capabilities while they would be aspiring for winning the 2024 Lok Sabha election. (IPA)

Chief Minister's vote winning "cradle-to-grave" welfare schemes are mostly aimed to "serve" women. The "Mission Shakti" scheme, which targets 70 lakh village women, enables women self-help groups to access interest-free loans up to Rs 5 lakh. The state government has a separate department for this scheme headed by an IAS officer. The women's self-help groups are into various activities including paddy procurement and helping students with school uniforms; arranging meals for hospitals and solid waste management. The hands-on CM makes it a point to regularly meet the leaders of these women's SHGs, which is why there's the confidence that the BJD will "serve" Odisha for the next 100 years. A point to note is that Naveen Patnaik is a confirmed bachelor and, therefore, perhaps trusted by women, the majority of whom are from rural areas. And while being a "single", Patnaik has not allowed any relative to infiltrate governance, just like Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who happens to be in the remarkable position of a "married bachelor".

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has also not married and remains a "bachelorette", but she has a relative in the party with great power. Naveen Patnaik relies on bureaucrats and ex-bureaucrats. This probably will be one more reason why the BJD will out-live Naveen Patnaik and ensure to "serve" Odisha for the next 100 years, as promised by current party head Naveen Patnaik. The "checks and balance within the party hierarchy"; the grooming of young leaders, the party's bonding with the grassroots will all serve to establish the party in the minds of the people for the next 100 years. What helps the BJD is that it is perhaps the most successful regional party of India to date. And that without the promise of a dynasty to carry it forward. (IPA)

Conventional Crossword								
1		2	3		4	5	6	7
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17		18		19		20		
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- ACROSS**
1 Thailand's former name
4 Unharmd
8 Rapid lively dance
9 Duelling sword
10 Dash
11 Drive back
12 Trick
14 Dry, of champagne
15 Fate
17 Short sleep
19 Spirit
21 Firm hold
23 Question closely
24 Naming word
27 Comfort
28 Melody
29 Matured
30 Untidy state
- DOWN**
1 Country
2 Partly open
3 Decreased by
4 Observe
5 Horrify
6 Charge for services
7 Slippery fish
11 Happen again
13 Durable cloth
16 Sport
18 Non-verse
20 Musical note
22 Skin opening
23 Vegetable
24 Torment
25 Resting place

SUDOKU:3753

	3	2		9				
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7			3		6		1	
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	6		9		5			4
						6		
				6		1	2	

Yesterday's Solution 3752

3	2	9	7	5	1	4	8	6
7	1	6	8	4	3	5	9	2
5	4	8	9	2	6	7	3	1
6	8	4	3	7	9	1	2	5
2	3	5	6	1	4	9	7	8
9	7	1	2	8	5	3	6	4
1	6	7	5	3	8	2	4	9
8	5	3	4	9	2	6	1	7
4	9	2	1	6	7	8	5	3

Yesterday's Cross Word Solution 1761

P	E	T		T	A	L	E	N	T
L		R	E	A	M		L	E	E
U		I		M	I	N	U	T	E
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O		O		S	T	E	W	S	
E	B	B	E	D		A		E	
X		A		A	N	T	H	E	M
I	N	S	A	N	E		E		A
S	E	T		C	A	V	E		R
T	E	E	T	E	R		D	O	T

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No bomb found, Moscow-Goa flight takes off from Jamnagar airport in Gujarat after 15 hours, reaches its destination

JAMNAGAR, JAN 10 /--/ Nothing suspicious was found on the Moscow to Goa international flight which had made an emergency landing at Jamnagar airport in Gujarat a day before following a bomb threat, officials said on Tuesday.

After nearly 15 hours, the Azur Air international flight finally took off for its destination Goa at around 1:20 pm on Tuesday with all passengers and crew members. "The flight landed at the Dabolim airport in Goa at 2.39 pm," a senior official from the airport told PTI. The flight was diverted to the Jamnagar airport following a bomb threat and made a safe emergency landing there at 9.49 pm on Monday, officials had said. After evacuating all 236 passengers and eight crew members, the plane as well as the luggage was thoroughly checked but nothing suspicious was found, they said.

The crew and passengers spent the night at the Jamnagar airport lounge. "The National Security Guard (NSG) and Jamnagar police teams completed checking the aircraft on Tuesday morning and found no suspicious object," Jamnagar Superintendent of Police Premsuks Delu told PTI earlier in the day. The bomb disposal squad of local police began checking the flight on Monday night. Later, the first NSG team arrived from Ahmedabad at around midnight. Another NSG team arrived from Delhi at around 3 am, Delu said.

Earlier, Jamnagar Collector Sourabh Pardhi said, "the Jamnagar Air Force base informed us about the bomb threat. Perhaps, the threat was received by the Goa ATC (Air Traffic Control). The search has been completed and nothing suspicious was found". Meanwhile, after landing at the Dabolim airport, some Russian passengers recalled they were initially clueless why they were debarked from the flight in Jamnagar. The passengers said they were looked after properly at the airport where they spend almost 15 hours. "We had no idea initially what was happening. We were told later about it (bomb scare). But that was fine," a Russian flyer said. Another passenger said they were provided with proper food and water at the Jamnagar airport. They (authorities) took care of us, he said. After landing, the Russian passengers travelled to their hotels in North Goa, a senior Airport official said. (PTI)

Three tourists from New York, 2 others injured in accident in UP's Mathura

MATHURA, JAN 10 /--/ Five persons, including three travellers from the US, were injured in a collision between a tourist traveller and a container vehicle due to dense fog on the Yamuna Expressway in Mant police station limits here, officials said on Tuesday.

The accident occurred on the Noida-Agra carriageway of the Yamuna Expressway. There were six passengers, a driver and a co-driver in the tourist traveller at the time, the police said in a statement. The passengers, all residents of New York, were identified as Luis Bajaron (58), Poll Purieet (53), Andria Golding (56), Carla Leech (60), Ketty Mekmekin (22) and Rohanda Deewal (52). Superintendent of Police (Rural) Trigun Bishen said, "Deewal and Leech were seriously injured, while Golding has suffered minor injuries. The driver and the co-driver were also seriously injured. They were rushed to a nearby hospital." The accident occurred when the Agra-bound tourist traveller rammed into the container vehicle from behind due to dense fog. (PTI)

Theatre festival to pay tribute to playwright Mohan Rakesh

NEW DELHI, JAN 10 /--/ Sahitya Kala Parishad, the Delhi government's art and culture arm, will showcase four plays here at Kamani Auditorium from Tuesday to pay tribute to playwright Mohan Rakesh.

The 'Mohan Rakesh Natya Samaroh' will see plays that are chosen through an all-India Mohan Rakesh Natya Lekhan competition. The theatre festival will open with "Dhanpati Nawab Se Prem", written by Shri Ram Sharma 'Kapren' and directed by Surenדר Sharma. Over the course of next three days, the theatre-goers will get to see Dr Pratibha Jain's "Mahasharman Chandragupta Maurya", which is directed by Bharti Sharma; Dayanand Sharma's "Ishq Samandar", directed by Ayaz Khan; and Rajesh Kumar's "Nishabd", directed by Lokendra Trivedi.

Monica Priyadarshini, secretary - Sahitya Kala Parishad said that the playwright competition received 68 entries this year, out of which four were selected for the theatre festival. "Sahitya Kala Parishad has been organising Mohan Rakesh Natya Samaroh for about a decade now in remembrance of Shri Mohan Rakesh Ji, one of the pioneers in modern Hindi play. With this festival, we hope to promote and support upcoming talent in the field of creative playwriting by offering a national platform," she said. (PTI)

Maharashtra: Ajanta caves to have QR codes to provide info of paintings to visitors, says ASI official

AURANGABAD, JAN 10 /--/ The famous Ajanta caves in Maharashtra's Aurangabad will soon have QR codes at the entrance to provide information to visitors about the paintings there, a senior Archaeological Survey of India official said on Monday.

The ASI is working to make the system available before the city hosts a G20-related event, the official said. The first inception meet of Women 20 (W20) as part of India's presidency of G20 will be held in the city next month. The Women 20 was set up in 2015 to ensure gender considerations figure in G20 discussions. The paintings in the fifth-century Ajanta caves illustrate the Jataka tales. They are in the dark area of caves where human eyes take time to get acclimatised. To make tourists learn more about the paintings they are going to see, the ASI will bring them on QR codes, the official said. "Tourists get a maximum of ten minutes in a cave to see the paintings. They are



randomly painted and not in a sequence. It takes time for our eyes to acclimatise to the poor lighting in the caves," ASI's Superintendent Archaeologist Milan Kumar Chauley told PTI. The QR codes will be installed outside the caves

and a temporary internet connection will also be made available on the rocky premises, he said.

"Tourists can scan the codes and find out the cave details, paintings in that cave with

Terror attack in Dhangri in J&K: 3 families lose breadwinners

RAJOURI, JAN 10 /--/ Terrorists who swooped on Dhangri village in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district and fired indiscriminately at local residents snatched three families of their breadwinners.

Seven people belonging to a particular community were killed and 14 others injured in twin terror attacks in Dhangri on January 1. While five people died in the firing by terrorists, two children -- aged four and 16 - lost their lives in an IED blast the next morning. Among the dead were two young brothers, a father-son duo and an ex-

serviceman, who were the only breadwinners of their families. Saroj Bala (58) is shell shocked and the only survivor in the family after her two sons -- Deepak Sharma (27) and Prince Sharma (21) -- died in the attack. Her husband Rajinder Sharma had died of a serious ailment four years ago. Pritam Lal (55) and his 31-year-old son Shishu Pal, who were working as labourers to earn their livelihood, were killed by terrorists inside their house.

"I was cooking dinner for the family when the terrorists started firing in the village. They

asked for identity cards and pushed me and my minor children -- a son and a daughter - into a store room before firing on them," Shishu Pal's widow Neeta Devi told PTI.

She said her father-in-law used to work as a labourer in the village, while her husband was working for a construction agency. Her mother-in-law had died some years ago. "There is no one who can feed us," she said, as tears streamed down her face. Satish Kumar (45), who retired from the Army three and a half years ago, was returning home when he heard firing shots.

Kumar gave his life saving his family from the terrorists, his brother-in-law Chaman Sharma said. "After his retirement from service, his primary focus was taking good care of his family and education of his children.

He was a man with a golden heart and was always available in happiness and sorrow for everyone," he said. He said Kumar was fired upon by the terrorists while he was trying to block their entry into his house and in the process his wife Saroj (36), daughter Arushi (14) and son Shub Sharma (17) also received bullet injuries as they

came out to see what is happening at the gate. "Saroj received a bullet injury in her lower back, Arushi in her leg and Shub Sharma in his knee. Both Saroj and Arushi are undergoing treatment in Government Medical College (GMC) hospital Rajouri, while Shub is admitted to a hospital in Punjab," Chaman Sharma said. Dheeraj Sharma, a local sarpanch, demanded special attention of the government for the three families to help them cope up with the situation besides ensuring better education to the surviving children. (PTI)

1,700 drug peddlers arrested in Kashmir in 2022: Police

SRINAGAR, JAN 10 /--/ Nearly 1,700 alleged drug peddlers were arrested in Kashmir in 2022 as part of a concerted drive against the substance abuse in the Valley which has assumed alarming proportions, police said on Tuesday. A huge quantity of contraband substances, cash, arms and ammunition were also recovered during this period, he said. "Police in Kashmir valley have registered 1,021 cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, arrested 1,685 drug peddlers including 138 notorious drug peddlers who have been detained under PIT-NDPS Act during 2022," a police spokesman said. Of the 1,021 registered cases, chargesheets were expeditiously filed in 917 cases before different courts of law against the accused persons, he said. The spokesman said a huge quantity of different types of contraband psychotropic substances were recovered from these alleged drug peddlers during this period. Police also busted many narco-terror modules and 35 accused persons were arrested in this regard in 2021-22, while a huge contraband substances, cash, arms and ammunition were recovered, he said. The contraband substances seized included 212 kilograms of charas, 56 kilograms of heroin, 13 kilograms of brown sugar, 1.127 tonnes of bhang, 4.355 tonnes of poppy straw and 1.567 tonnes fukki, he added. Police also launched drives against illegally cultivated poppy and bhang, destroying crops spread on about 51 hectares of land, the spokesman said. Additional Director General of Police, Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said the war against the drug menace will continue with more vigour. Strict action will be taken against persons involved in drug abuse and trade in the current year as well, he added. Kumar requested the community members to be part of the campaign by coming forward with any information regarding drug peddling in their neighbourhoods. "Our consistent actions against drug peddlers should reassure the community members that we are making efforts to keep our society free from the scourge of drug menace and to secure the future of our youth," he added. (PTI)



त्रिपुरा विश्वविद्यालय
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(केन्द्रीय विद्यालय) / A Central University), त्रिपुरा (T.) / PIN / 799022
No. 1/UT/F/Enp/13/Vol. N-20 **NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER** Date: 10/01/2023
Tripura University invites e-Tender from successful, experienced and bountide manufacturer/s
supplier/s/authorized dealer/agent for supply, installation and commissioning of open air
Gymnasium and Children's Park at Tripura University. The Details can be seen at Tripura
University website: [www.tripurauniv.ac.in](https://tripurauniv.ac.in). However, for submission of documents please
visit <https://mhnd.emuivizardc.com> (NB: Hindi version is available at T.U. website)
SD/- (Pranay Pal), Asstt. Registrar (Finance)

LOST

I, Mrs. Nalina Soreng, D/o Shri. Antoni Soreng, R/o Parangara, Mayabunder N & M Andaman, have lost my Duration Certificate for Class VII & VIII in between Mayabunder to Mohanpur area on 02-01-2023.

Finder may Please Contact: 9476094654



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Loan A/C No.	Customer Name
Branch Name: Port Blair	
214405000715	K Srinivasan
214405000756	K Srinivasan

Date : 11.01.2023
Place : South Adaman

S/d Authorised Officer
For ICICI Bank Limited

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF EMPLOYMENT

F. No. A1-D/2/2022-Admin Section

INVITING APPLICATIONS FOR THE POST OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS 9th Batch, ON CONTRACTUAL BASIS, UNDER NATIONAL CAREER SERVICE PROJECT OF MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT

Ministry of Labour & Employment, Directorate General of Employment has established "National Career Service Portal" as a modernized version of the National Employment Service, which shall act as a common, Centralized platform to provide a better range of services, Including, Jobseeker/Employer registration, Vacancy Notification, Counsellor services, Online/Offline Job Fairs, online Employability Training, Bilingual call centre, rich career content with sectors and profiles, and many more career related services etc. Under this scheme, 1 Young Professional is appointed by the Ministry of Labor and Employment at each Model Career Centre. Therefore, applications are invited for **YOUNG PROFESSIONALS**, on contractual basis, for deployment at Model Career Centres at various locations in the country. The YP will be under the overall supervision of Director NICS, Directorate general of Employment, Ministry of Labour and Employment. The application, eligibility criteria/ conditions are available at www.ncs.gov.in. The interested candidates may apply over NCS portal at www.ncs.gov.in. The last date for the receipt of applications shall be 15 days from the date of publication of this advertisement. No Physical Applications will be entertained. To apply please visit the link given below

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2	South Indian States & Nearby South Indian States	43	https://www.ncs.gov.in/Pages/ViewJobDetails.aspx?JSID=ft92b%2Fo1%2Bc%3D
3	North States and Nearby	18	https://www.ncs.gov.in/Pages/ViewJobDetails.aspx?JSID=gK%2Fd006jk%3D

Link for More Details:
<https://labour.gov.in/circulars>

CBC 23188/12/0003/2223

National Institute for Career Service
Directorate General of Employment

illustrations and the Jataka tales related to it," Chauley said. "We are working on the data that has to be uploaded on the QR codes. The basic work of this project will be finished prior to the W20 meet of G20 in Aurangabad next month," he added.

The project also aims to ensure that visitors spend less time inside the Ajanta caves as the moisture build-up due to the presence of too many tourists affects the ancient paintings, said a source. General details of Devgiri (Daulatabad), Bibi Ka Maqbara, Ellora caves and Aurangabad caves will also be made available in multiple languages through the QR codes, Chauley said.

Aurangabad Municipal Commissioner Abhijeet Choudhary has also asked officials to display data of historical places in Aurangabad city through QR codes, another official said. This work will be done through the Aurangabad Smart City Development Corporation Limited. (PTI)

Preparations begin to demolish 2 hotels in Joshimath, unstable houses to be razed

Immediate priority is complete evacuation of residents from affected areas: NCMC

JOSHIMATH, JAN 10 --/ The administration prepared on Tuesday to demolish two precariously standing hotels in subsidence-hit Joshimath, a day after the Uttarakhand government directed the razing of unstable structures amid stepped-up efforts to evacuate families living in the danger zone.

The two hotels - Malari Inn and Mount View - were leaning towards each other posing a threat to human settlements around them. The area was barricaded and power lines to these buildings and surrounding areas were cut, disrupting electricity supply to around 500 houses. The decision for their "mechanical demolition" was taken on Monday, secretary disaster management Ranjit Sinha told reporters, adding the Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee has been roped in by the state government for the exercise. State Disaster Relief Force (SDRF) personnel along with JCBs and workers reached the spot and announcements were made through loud hailers asking people to keep their distance from the two hotels. As evacuation efforts continued, as many as 131 families in total have so far been shifted to the temporary relief centres while the number of damaged houses in Joshimath has risen to 723, a bulletin from the Chamoli unit of Disaster Management Authority said on Tuesday. There are 86 houses in the area demarcated as an unsafe zone. The district administration has put red cross marks on houses in the sinking town that are unsafe for living. Uttarakhand chief secretary SS Sandhu had on Monday said that dilapidated houses that have developed huge cracks should be razed soon so that they do not cause further damage. Union minister of state for defence Ajay Bhatt visited the subsidence-hit areas of the town and met the affected people. He said the demolition exercise has been undertaken in public interest to secure the lives of people. Meanwhile, hotel owners said they came to know about the state government's decision through newspapers and demanded that a one-time settlement plan should have been offered to them before the decision to demolish their hotels. "I came to know about it through the newspapers this morning. There was no prior notice. If the government demarcated my hotel as unsafe it should have first come up with a one-time settlement plan before deciding to demolish it," said Thakur Singh the owner of Malari Inn. Mount View owner Lalmani Semwal expressed

similar sentiments. "It is like slaying a child one has reared through years of hard work in front of its parent," Semwal said. "We put all our resources into building this hotel. We paid regular taxes to the government. It said nothing then and now all of a sudden it comes up with a drastic decision like this. Isn't it a violation of human rights?" "If the government has decided what can we say. But we should be offered a one-time settlement plan in compensation on the lines of Badrinath," Semwal said. Officials had on Monday said the state government is working on a relief package for the people of the disaster-hit town, which will soon be sent to the Centre. Joshimath has been declared a land subsidence-hit area after huge cracks developed in houses and other structures, roads and on fields. The holy town is the gateway to famous pilgrimage sites like Badrinath and Hemkund Sahib and there has been a demand from some quarters, including the Opposition Congress, to declare the crisis a national disaster. Meanwhile, the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC) on Tuesday reviewed the situation in Joshimath where cracks have appeared in buildings and other structures and stressed that the immediate priority should be to ensure complete and safe evacuation of all residents

in the affected zone. At a meeting of the NCMC, cabinet secretary Rajiv Gauba stressed that priority should also be accorded to the demolition of vulnerable structures in a safe manner, an official statement said. The NCMC conveyed that all studies and investigations, including geotechnical, geophysical and hydrological, should be completed in a coordinated and time-bound manner. The chief secretary of Uttarakhand briefed the NCMC about the current situation and informed that residents of severely damaged houses were being shifted to safe places. Relief shelters have been identified in Joshimath and Pipalkoti to accommodate the affected families and appropriate compensation and relief measures are being provided by the state government, the statement said. The chief secretary apprised the committee that the operation of Joshimath-Auli ropeway has been discontinued and construction works in and around Joshimath Municipality area have been stopped till further orders. The national and state disaster response forces have been deployed to help the district administration in their relief and rehabilitation efforts. The cabinet secretary assured the chief secretary that all Central agencies will continue to be available for necessary assistance. (PTI)



Cracks appear on the floor of an indoor badminton court in Joshimath area. The town has been declared a disaster-prone after large cracks appeared in homes and on roads

Centre to set up micro-seismic observation systems at Joshimath: Union minister

NEW DELHI, JAN 10 --/ The Centre on Tuesday announced that it will install micro seismic observation systems at Joshimath - the gradually sinking Himalayan town in Uttarakhand. Union earth sciences minister Jitendra Singh made the announcement at the India-UK Workshop of Geosciences here and said the observation systems will be in place by Wednesday. Addressing the workshop, he said there was a critical need for fundamental research on the physical processes that lead to failure of the brittle layers beneath the crust and sub-crust. The minister noted that human consequences of natural disasters in India were rising rapidly and stressed on the need to



Union earth sciences minister Jitendra Singh

devise proper mitigation strategies.

Singh said the ministry of earth sciences had established 37 new seismological centres in the last two years for extensive observation facilities, generating a huge database for outcome-oriented analytics. The Union minister said in the next five years, 100 more such seismological centres will be opened across the country for improving real time data monitoring and data collection. Officials said seismic microzonation study for the area would generate risk resilient parameters for safer dwellings and infrastructure. They said Joshimath falls under the highest seismic hazard Zone V as it experiences continuous

seismogenic stresses. Seismic energy generation due to micro-earthquakes may have weakened the strength of the rocks as Joshimath is located in the earthquake rupture zone of the 1999 Chamoli earthquake, they said. Climatic factors such as excessive precipitation and flow of water from mountains into massive cracks and fractures in the sub-surface rocks lead to widening of cracks and hastening the slip in rock material, the officials said. Addressing the workshop, Singh said scientific understanding of the processes behind disasters has grown immensely over the past 50 years, and there is a need for strengthening further international collaborations like

the Indo-UK initiative to fight such disasters. The Union minister also added that scientific understanding of the processes behind disasters has grown immensely over the past 50 years, and there was a need for strengthening further international collaborations like the Indo-UK initiative to fight such disasters in future. The two-day workshop was attended by British High Commissioner Alex Ellis; Wendy Matcham, Head, Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), UK Research and Innovation (UKRI); O P Mishra, Director, National Centre for Seismology and Sukanya Kumar, Acting Director, UK Research and Innovation India. (PTI)

Gram Sabha meeting ...

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Chairing the meeting, the Gram Pradhan, Mr. Biplab Mondal said that the present panchayat will leave no stone unturned for the welfare of the villagers. To get the basic amenities to the last man in the queue is the priority of his team, he said. Addressing the villagers, who turned out in large numbers, the Pradhan said, his Panchayat has done a record number of works in the very short span of its tenure of 9 months till now. Mr. Biplab Mondal informed in the meeting that three works from each of the eight wards of the panchayat have been approved in the meeting. Priority was given to the construction of footpaths, rural roads and playgrounds for the youth, apart from ensuring proper water supply mechanisms, he said. Elaborating the plans already executed on the ground, Shri Biplab Mondal said the Panchayat has already executed the public projects of around Rs 3 crores till now in a very short 9 months since its election last year. Of these, some works have already been started and some are in the tendering process. Talking about the ambitious mini stadium project he said, the proposal for the construction of Mini stadium near the Model Senior Secondary School Sitanagar has been approved by the competent authority, and the work may begin soon after the official formality. To the query of the villagers, the Pradhan said, the installation work of the proposed RO plant would be completed soon, and the dream of getting safe drinking water through a door delivery system would come to reality. The enthusiastic Pradhan said his target is to reach the goal of getting a matching grant of Rs 10 lakhs in the coming year. The Block development officer Shri M. Rajendran, to the queries of the villagers informed, that the Administration is extending all possible help in facilitating the Panchayat to execute the welfare projects. He hoped that very soon the fund would be allocated to the panchayat and the projects in the pipeline would be in action. The zonal heads of different Government departments, representatives, too expressed their views on the plans, in the meeting. The Panchayat Up-Pradhan, Panchayat Samiti Member, other representatives of PRIs, people from line departments and around 150 villagers of the different wards of the Panchayat, including Krishnapuri village, participated in today's meeting.

NEWS BRIEF

5 injured in blast in Kamarhati

KOLKATA, JAN 10 --/ At least five people were injured in an explosion inside a shop in Kamarhati area near Kolkata on Tuesday afternoon, police said. The police are yet to ascertain the cause of the blast. However, an officer said it could be a gas cylinder explosion or a bomb blast. "The injured five people are undergoing treatment in a hospital. Of them, the condition of two seems to be critical," he said. The incident took place at around 12.15 pm inside the shop in North 24 Parganas district, where cooking gas cylinders were allegedly refilled illegally. (PTI)

DGCA issues show cause notice to Go First for leaving behind passengers in coach

Airline apologises, derosters staff involved in incident

MUMBAI/ NEW DELHI, JAN 10 --/ Aviation regulator DGCA on Tuesday issued a show cause notice to Go First for "multiple mistakes" that led to 55 Delhi flight passengers being left behind in a coach at Bangalore airport on Monday and the budget airline has apologised for the incident, saying it happened due to inadvertent oversight in reconciliation.

The airline has been given two weeks time to respond to the show cause notice and based on the response, further action will be initiated. Go First has derostered the staff involved in the incident pending an inquiry. The airline has issued a show cause notice to the ground handling agency concerned at the Bangalore airport for the lapse. The incident happened on Monday morning with the passengers who were to board a Delhi flight and later in the day, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had sought a report from the airline about the incident. In a statement on Tuesday, the

regulator said that Go First operated flight G8-116 on Bangalore-Delhi sector leaving behind 55 passengers in the passenger coach at Bangalore airport. After perusal of the incident report submitted by Go First on Tuesday, the watchdog said that prima-facie it emerges that the airline failed to comply with various norms. "In the instant case, multiple mistakes such as lack of proper communication, coordination, reconciliation and confirmation have resulted in a highly avoidable situation," DGCA said. It has issued a show cause notice to Accountable Manager/ Chief Operation Officer of Go First as to why enforcement action should not be taken against them for dereliction of their regulatory obligations. "We sincerely apologise for the inconvenience caused to the passengers due to an inadvertent oversight in the reconciliation of flight G8 116... passengers were accommodated on alternate airlines to Delhi and onward to other destinations," an

airline spokesperson said in a statement on Tuesday.

Go First has decided to offer all affected passengers one free ticket for travel on any domestic sector in the next 12 months. "The airline has initiated an inquiry into the incident and the matter is being investigated. All concerned staff off the roster till the inquiry is going on," it said, adding that the airline has also issued a show cause notice to the ground handling agency concerned. The number of staff who have been derostered could not be immediately ascertained. In its statement, DGCA mentioned about norms pertaining to 'Minimum Requirements for Grant of Air Operator Certificate to Operate Scheduled Air Transport Services (Passenger)' and the Air Transport Circular on 'Facilities/Courtesies to esteemed travelling public at airports'. "As per above-referred regulations, the concerned airline is responsible to ensure adequate arrangement for ground handling,

preparation of load and trim sheet, flight dispatch and passenger/cargo handling and also ensure that all the ground handling staff engaged in passenger handling undergo periodic soft skill training for sensitisation, courtesy, behaviour and procedures for assisting the passengers," it said. To follow the principles of natural justice, the regulator said two weeks time has been given to submit the response to the show cause notice and based on that further action will be taken. On Monday, some passengers mentioned about the incident on social media and in response to a tweet by a passenger, the airline urged the users to share their details and said: "We regret the inconvenience caused". This is at least the third instance in less than a week where DGCA has issued a show cause notice to an airline. The regulator has issued show cause notices to Air India with respect to incidents of passenger misbehaviour onboard two international flights. (PTI)

Govt panel likely to decide on Covovax as a heterologous booster dose for adults today

NEW DELHI, JAN 10 --/ An expert panel of the central drugs regulatory authority is likely to take a decision on Wednesday on granting market authorisation to SII's Covid-19 vaccine Covovax as a heterologous booster dose for adults who have been administered two doses of Covishield or Covaxin, official sources said. The Subject Expert Committee of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) is scheduled to meet on January 11. Prakash Kumar Singh, Director of Government and Regulatory Affairs at the Serum Institute of India (SII), had written a letter to the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) recently for the approval to Covovax as a heterologous booster dose for adults in view of the escalating pandemic situation in some countries, an official



source told. The DCGI had approved Covovax for restricted use in emergency situations for adults on December 28, 2021, for those in the 12-17 age group on March 9, 2022, and also in children aged 7-11 years on June 28, 2022, subject to certain conditions. Covovax is manufactured by the SII through technology transfer from Novavax. It has been approved by the European Medicines Agency for conditional marketing authorisation. It was granted emergency-use listing by the World Health Organization (WHO) on December 17, 2021. In August 2020, US-based vaccine maker Novavax Inc. had announced a licence agreement with the SII for the development and commercialization of NVX-CoV2373, its Covid-19 vaccine candidate, in India and low-and-middle-income countries. (PTI)

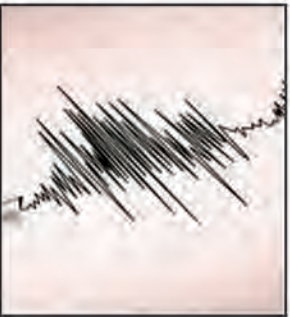
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Moreover, A & N Islands being an area under Seismic Zone - V is susceptible for frequent devastating EarthQuakes and Tsunami and if on any worse case this single dependent major water body/ reservoir gets affected then the entire major population of Port Blair and adjoining sub-urban areas will get affected causing a state that there might not be a single drop of water to drink and survive, he added. He further mentioned that if less rainfall is received during the North-East monsoon (during November-December every year), the reservoirs are not charged up to the optimum level resulting in depleted storage of required quantity of water to be used in dry spells. The Member of Parliament added that sometimes the situation gets so degraded that water barges/passenger ships are deployed by Andaman & Nicobar Administration to bring water from other islands to Port Blair to meet the exigency of the water crisis. Port Blair City in Andaman & Nicobar Islands is emerging as a planned city with global standards. As a futuristic city it has already attracted corporate majors and investors in Mainly Tourism and other potential sectors with an inflow of tourists travelling A & N Islands being about 5 lakhs in the year 2018 and the figure is likely to double up in 5 years to come, he added. He said that considering Tourism as the major sector of revenue and employment generation for the people of A & N Islands it has to be recognized on an early date the necessity of providing potable water generated from natural sources (i.e rain water) to the consumers in the city in quality and quantity and if the situation of water crises like this year persists in future also tourism sector is likely to be affected the most causing major losses to the stakeholders in terms of employment and revenue. The Member of Parliament said that as we cannot always rely on timely rainfall every year concrete engineering solutions to the problem of managing the water crisis has to be worked out especially when no sound contingency plan to cope up with this sort of crises in future is available with Andaman & Nicobar Administration. Hence, in the wake of overcome this sort of water crisis various Mid Term and Long Term measures as water supply projects for Port Blair and its adjoining sub-urban areas and rural areas of A & N Islands are proposed, which if taken up would mitigate the water crisis of Andaman & Nicobar Islands in the future years to come. Also, as per Flagship programme of Govt. of Union of India under JAL SHAKTI ABHIYAAN & JAL JEEVAN MISSION it is prudent on our part to provide effectively the basic means of living i.e WATER of optimum required quantity to the general public so as to improve their social living condition, the Member of Parliament added. The Member of Parliament requested the Parliamentary Standing Committee to recommend the Govt. of India to constitute an expert committee for studying water scenario of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and its augmentations to meet the perennial water requirements of the Islands in view of growing population and development of tourism sectors. Other than this the Member of Parliament proposed various mid term and long term proposals for Augmenting the Water Supply of Port Blair City and Adjoining Sub-Urban Areas.

7.6 quake damages buildings in Indonesia, felt in Australia

JAKARTA, JAN 10 /--/ A powerful deep-sea earthquake damaged village buildings in a lightly populated island chain in eastern Indonesia early on Tuesday and was widely felt in northern Australia.

Two school buildings and 124 houses were damaged in Indonesia's Tanimbar islands and Southwest Maluku districts, the National Disaster Mitigation Agency said. Only one injury was reported. "Local residents felt strong tremors for three to five seconds. There was panic when the quake shook so the residents left their houses," agency spokesperson Abdul



Muhari said in a statement. The epicentre of the magnitude 7.6 temblor was in the Banda Sea, nearest the Tanimbar islands, which have about 127,000 residents. The quake was felt in several regions, including Papua and East Nusa Tenggara provinces, as well as in northern Australia. Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysical Agency issued a tsunami warning that was lifted three hours later. "Based on four tide gauge observations around the centre of the earthquake, it did not show any significant anomaly or change in sea level," agency head Dwikorita Karnawati said.

The US Geological Survey said the quake was centred at a depth of 105 kilometres (65 miles) not far from Australia's northern tip. Deeper quakes tend to cause less surface damage but are more widely felt. More than 1,000 people in northern Australia, including in the city of Darwin, reported to Geoscience Australia that they felt the quake. The Joint Australian Tsunami Warning Centre said the quake didn't pose a tsunami threat to the mainland or any islands or territories. Australian singer Vassy wrote on Twitter that it was the longest quake she had felt. "We ran out of the house in the middle of the night. I've never experienced earthquake that lasted that long and felt so strong. It was rather scary," Vassy wrote. "Woke us up in the middle of the night." Indonesia is frequently shaken by earthquakes and lies on the Pacific "Ring of Fire," the arc of seismic faults around the Pacific Ocean where most of the world's earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur. (AP)

Biden, Lopez Obrador, Trudeau meet in Mexico City for summit

MEXICO CITY, JAN 10 /--/ President Joe Biden, Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau are meeting for a series of talks on migration, trade and climate change on Tuesday as the three leaders try to mend tensions that have divided the continent.

The three-way gathering is held most years, although there was a hiatus while Donald Trump was US president. It's often called the "three amigos summit," a reference to the deep diplomatic and economic ties between the countries.



Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, Joe Biden, Justin Trudeau

However, the leaders still found themselves at odds, especially as they struggle to handle an influx of migrants and to crack down on smugglers who profit from persuading people to make the dangerous trip to the United States. In addition, Canada and the US accuse Lopez Obrador of violating a free trade pact by favouring Mexico's state-owned utility over power plants built by foreign and private investors. Meanwhile, Trudeau and Lopez Obrador are concerned about Biden's efforts to boost domestic manufacturing, creating concerns that US neighbours could be left behind. The centrepiece of the summit will be hours of talks with all three leaders, but Biden will start Tuesday with a bilateral meeting with Trudeau. It's unlikely to be as contentious as his sitdown with Lopez Obrador on Monday.

During that meeting, the Mexican leader challenged Biden to improve life across the region, telling him that "you hold the key in your hand." "This is the moment for us to determine to do away with this abandonment, this disdain, and this forgetfulness for Latin America and the Caribbean," Lopez Obrador said. Biden responded by pointing to the billions of dollars that the United States spends in foreign aid around the world, saying that "unfortunately our responsibility just doesn't end in the Western Hemisphere." It was a noticeably sharp exchange after the two leaders had smiled and embraced and shaken hands for the cameras. Biden and Lopez Obrador haven't been on particularly good terms for the past two years. The Mexican leader made no secret of his admiration for Trump, and last year he skipped a Los Angeles summit of the Americas because Biden didn't invite the authoritarian regimes of Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua.

However, there have been attempts to thaw the relationship. Biden made a point of flying into the new Felipe Angeles International Airport, a prized project of the Mexican president even though it's been a source of controversy. The airport, which is expected to cost USD 4.1 billion when finished, is more than an hour's drive north of the city centre, has few flights and until recently lacked consistent drinking water. However, it's one of the keystone projects that Lopez Obrador is racing to finish before his term ends next year. The US and Mexico have also reached an agreement on a major shift in migration policy, which Biden announced last week. (AP)

Pakistan's election commission issues arrest warrants for Imran Khan, his aides in contempt case

ISLAMABAD, JAN 10 /--/ Pakistan's top election body on Tuesday issued bailable arrest warrants for former prime minister Imran Khan and other top leaders of his party in a contempt case.

The case is based on statements issued by top Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leaders against the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and Chief Election Commissioner Sikander Sultan Raja. A four-member ECP bench headed by Nisar Durrani issued warrants against Khan and his close aides - Fawad Chaudhry and Asad Umar. The election watchdog had issued notices against them in August and September last year in the exercise of its powers of contempt after the PTI leaders repeatedly bashed the commission and Raja over what they claim is their partisan policy and their alleged favouring of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). At the previous hearing, the ECP had given the PTI leaders a last chance to appear before it.

During the hearing on Tuesday, the commission rejected the pleas for their exemption from appearance and issued arrest warrants against surety bonds worth Rs 50,000 each. The bench adjourned the hearing till January 17. Khan has been asking the ECP chief to resign for allegedly failing to play the role of a neutral election commissioner. The chief rejected the calls by asserting he was working as per law. (PTI)

WHO Europe: No immediate Covid-19 threat from China

COPENHAGEN, JAN 10 /--/ The director of the World Health Organisation's Europe office said Tuesday that the agency sees "no immediate threat" for the European region from a Covid-19 outbreak in China, but more information is needed.

China is battling a nationwide outbreak of the coronavirus after abruptly easing restrictions. Hans Kluge said that, based on the information WHO had received from China, there was no threat, but more detailed and regular information was required from China to monitor the evolving situation. "We cannot be complacent," he added. Several countries have imposed Covid-19 testing requirements on Chinese travellers. Australia and Canada require travellers from China to

take a Covid-19 test prior to boarding their flight. Other countries including the U.S., India, Japan, South Korea and several European nations have announced tougher Covid-19 measures on travellers from China amid concerns over a lack of data on infections in China and fears that new variants may emerge. China has threatened to retaliate against countries that require travellers from China to show a negative test result for Covid-19 taken within the previous 48 hours. On Tuesday, it suspended issuing visas for South Koreans to

come to the country for tourism or business in apparent retaliation for the move by Seoul. "We do acknowledge that a number of countries, based on the precautionary principle, are implementing some measures," the WHO Europe director said. "It is not unreasonable for countries to take precautionary measures to protect their populations while we are waiting more detailed information that is shared in publicly accessible databases," he said. Any measure should be "rooted in science, ... proportionate and non



discriminatory." Catherine Smallwood, the World Health Organisation's Europe COVID-19 incident manager, added that "we should not be blindsided at any point by an exclusive focus on one particular geographic area."

Earlier this month, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the agency was "concerned about the risk to life in China" amid the coronavirus' explosive spread across the country and the lack of outbreak data from the Chinese government. He said the agency recently met with Chinese officials to underline the importance of sharing more details about Covid-19 issues including hospitalisation rates and genetic sequences, even as the pandemic continues to recede globally since it began in late 2019. (AP)

Italy's Meloni makes 1st state visit to meet with Francis

ROME, JAN 10 /--/ Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni, who came to power on a campaign motto of "God, Family, Fatherland" made her first official visit to see Pope Francis on Tuesday, fulfilling what she said was a hoped-for opportunity to better understand the Argentine pontiff.

Meloni spent 35 minutes with Francis alone, before she met with the Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, and the foreign minister. The Holy See said the talks with Parolin focused on the fight against poverty, family issues and Italy's demographic problems, a big concern for both Meloni and Francis who have lamented Italy's low birth rate. The war in Ukraine and migration were also discussed, according to a press statement. Meloni, whose far-right-led coalition won September national elections, has spoken at length about her Catholic faith and has been a high-profile participant in Italy's conservative Family Day rallies aimed at promoting "traditional" family values. During the 2016 edition she announced she was pregnant with her first child, Ginevra, who accompanied her to the audience with Francis on

Tuesday, along with her partner. Meloni has assured Italians she won't roll back abortion rights but she has vowed to pass initiatives to provide alternatives and to better support families to help reverse what Francis has called Italy's "demographic winter". She has made clear her affection for and admiration of Pope Benedict XVI, calling him a



Giorgia Meloni

"giant that history will never forget". She attended his funeral and joined the public viewing of his body in St. Peter's Basilica following his December 31 death, and ordered all public buildings in Italy to lower their flags at half-staff in his honour an action not even taken by the Vatican. In her autobiography "I am Giorgia", Meloni wrote that she was somewhat perplexed by Francis,

saying she sometimes felt like she was a "lost sheep". "I've never allowed myself to criticise a pope, but I admit I haven't always understood Pope Francis," she wrote. "I hope one day to have the privilege of speaking with him, because I'm certain that his big yes and direct words will give sense to what I don't understand."

Francis, for his part, has wished Meloni well and urged the centre-left opposition to work constructively and responsibly with her government the first far-right-led coalition in Italy since the end of World War II and its first ever headed by a woman. During Tuesday's audience, Meloni gave Francis an angel figurine from a collection of hundreds that she has in her home. She also gave him two books: one for children about Mass that was written in 1955 by Maria Montessori, Italy's famed educator, and a 1920 edition of a book containing the writings of the pope's namesake, St. Francis of Assisi. Francis, for his part, gave the premier copies of his main writings, as well as a bronze sculpture of a child helping another get up, bearing the words "Love, Help". (AP)

US Navy says it seized Iran assault rifles bound for Yemen

DUBAI, JAN 10 /--/ The US Navy seized over 2,100 assault rifles from a ship in the Gulf of Oman it believes came from Iran and were bound for Yemen's Iranian-backed Houthi rebels, a Navy spokesman said on Tuesday. It was the latest capture of weapons allegedly heading to the Arab world's poorest country. The seizure last Friday happened after a team from the USS Chinook, a Cyclone-class coastal patrol boat, boarded a traditional wooden sailing vessel known as a dhow. They discovered the Kalashnikov-style rifles individually wrapped in green tarps aboard the ship, said Cmdr. Timothy Hawkins, a spokesman for the Navy's Midwest-based 5th Fleet. The Chinook, along with the patrol boat USS Monsoon and the guided missile destroyer USS The Sullivans, took possession of the weapons. They resembled other assault rifles previously seized by the Navy, suspected to be from Iran and heading to Yemen. "When we intercepted the vessel, it

was on a route historically used to traffic illicit cargo to the Houthis in Yemen," Hawkins told The Associated Press. "The Yemeni crew corroborated the origin."

The Yemeni crew, Hawkins added, will be repatriated back to a government-controlled part of Yemen. A United Nations arms embargo has prohibited weapons transfers to the Houthis since 2014, when Yemen's civil war erupted. Iran has long denied arming the Houthis even as it has been transferring rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, missiles and other weaponry to the Yemeni militia using sea routes. Independent experts, Western nations and UN experts have traced components seized aboard other detained vessels back to Iran. Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Tuesday. The Houthis seized Yemen's capital, Sanaa, in September 2014 and forced the internationally recognized government into exile. (AP)

The E3 refer to the European co-sign "What madness looks like": Russia intensifies Bakhmut attack

KYIV, JAN 10 /--/ Russian forces are escalating their onslaught against Ukrainian positions around the wrecked city of Bakhmut, Ukrainian officials said, bringing new levels of death and devastation in the grinding, monthslong battle for control of eastern Ukraine that is part of Moscow's wider war.

"Everything is completely destroyed. There is almost no life left," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said late on Monday of the scene around Bakhmut and the nearby Donetsk province city of Soledar. "The whole land near Soledar is covered with the corpses of the occupiers and scars from the strikes," Zelenskyy said. "This is what madness looks like." The Kremlin, whose invasion of its neighbour 10 1/2 months ago has suffered numerous reversals, is hungry for any victories. Russia illegally annexed Donetsk and three other Ukrainian provinces in September, but its troops have struggled to advance. After Ukrainian forces recaptured the southern city of Kherson in November, the battle heated up around Bakhmut.

Ukraine's deputy defense minister, Hanna Malyar, said Russia has thrown "a large number of storm groups" into the fight for the city. "The enemy is advancing literally on the bodies of their own soldiers and is massively using artillery, rocket launchers and mortars, hitting their own troops," she said. Pavlo Kyrylenko, the Donetsk region's Kyiv-appointed governor, on Tuesday described the Russian attacks on Soledar and Bakhmut as relentless. "The Russian army is reducing Ukrainian cities to rubble using all kinds of weapons in their scorched-earth tactics," Kyrylenko said in televised remarks. "Russia is waging a war without rules, resulting in civilian deaths and suffering." The Moscow-backed leader of the occupied areas of Donetsk said on Tuesday that Russia's forces were "very close" to taking over Soledar. But the gains were coming "at a very high price," Denis Pushilin told Russian state TV.

Control over the city would create "good prospects" for taking over Bakhmut, Pushilin said, as well as for a further assault on Siversk, a town further north where Ukrainian fortifications "are also quite serious." The UK Defence Ministry concurred with that appraisal of the battle developments. Russian troops alongside soldiers from the Wagner Group, a Russian private military contractor, have advanced in recent days in Soledar and "are likely in control of most of the settlement", the ministry tweeted on Tuesday. It said that taking Soledar, which is located 10 kilometres (6 miles) north of Bakhmut, was likely Moscow's immediate military objective and part of a strategy to encircle Bakhmut. But it added that "Ukrainian forces maintain stable defensive lines in depth and control over supply routes" in the area. An exceptional feature of the fighting near Bakhmut is that some of it has taken place around entrances to disused salt mine tunnels which run for some 200 kilometres (120 miles) underneath the area, the British intelligence report noted. "Both sides are likely concerned that (the tunnels) could be used for infiltration behind their lines," it said. (PTI)

Trump admin's decision to withdraw from Iran nuclear deal great strategic blunder: Official

WASHINGTON, JAN 10 /--/ The previous Donald Trump administration's decision to withdraw from the JCPOA, a crucial agreement on the Iranian nuclear programme, is one of the greatest strategic blunders of US foreign policy in recent years, a top official has said.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), known commonly as the Iran nuclear deal or Iran deal, was reached in Vienna on July 14, 2015, between Iran and the P5+1 together with the European Union. "This (Joe Biden) administration considers the decision on the part of the last administration to withdraw from the JCPOA, one of the greatest strategic blunders of American foreign policy in recent years," State Department Spokesperson Ned Price told reporters at his daily news conference on Monday. The P5+1 includes the five permanent members of the Security Council -- China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States -- plus Germany, which during the Barack Obama administration had entered into an agreement with Iran.

The reason the United States was able to get JCPOA to arrive at a diplomatic arrangement was that it worked with allies and partners around the world to put significant economic pressure on Iran, Price said. "What ultimately brought Iran to the table was not a strategic change in mentality on the part of the regime. It was, I think, a realisation that they were under tremendous economic duress. And rather than provide them with a strategic asset, their nuclear programme at the time was a strategic liability," he said. Price said the goal is to ensure that Iran continues to feel pressure until and unless it changes course. Now you can do that as the United States, the last administration attempted to do that with the strategy of maximum pressure, he said. "That clearly didn't work. What history teaches us is that economic pressure is most effective when it's brought to bear with other allies and partners," Price said. (PTI)

Acceptance of Covid vaccines increased globally: Study

WASHINGTON, JAN 10 /--/ Acceptance of Covid-19 vaccines increased globally, from 75.2 per cent in 2021 to 79.1 per cent in 2022, according to a survey in 23 countries that represent more than 60 per cent of the world's population. The study underlines a wide variability among countries and the need for tailored communication strategies in addressing vaccine hesitancy. It was led by the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal), Spain, and the City University of New York Graduate School of Public Health and Health Policy (CUNY SPH), US. However, vaccine acceptance decreased in eight countries and almost one in eight vaccinated respondents, particularly younger men and women, were

hesitant about receiving a booster dose, the study said. The findings have been published in Nature Medicine. "The pandemic is not over, and authorities must urgently address vaccine hesitancy and resistance as part of their COVID-19 prevention and mitigation strategy," says Jeffrey V Lazarus, Head of the Health Systems Research Group at ISGlobal. To do so effectively, though, policy-makers need solid data on vaccine hesitancy trends (whether it is decreasing or increasing and in which populations) and drivers (factors that influence vaccine acceptance, such as income or education), the study said. To obtain these data, an international collaboration led by Lazarus and Ayman El-Mohandes,

Dean of CUNY SPH, performed a series of surveys starting in 2020 across 23 highly populated countries that were hit hard by the pandemic. The data reported here correspond to the third survey conducted between June and July 2022, the study said.

The countries surveyed were Brazil, Canada, China, Ecuador, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Poland, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States, the study said. Of the 23,000 respondents surveyed, 1000 per

country, 79.1 per cent were willing to accept vaccination. This finding represented an increase of 5.2 per cent from June 2021, the study said. The willingness of parents to vaccinate their children also rose slightly, from 67.6 per cent in 2021 to 69.5 per cent in 2022.

However, eight countries observed increased hesitancy from 1.0 per cent in the UK to 21.1 per cent in South Africa, the study said. Almost one in eight, 12.1 per cent, vaccinated respondents were hesitant about booster doses. This hesitancy was higher among the younger age groups (18-29 years), the study



said. "We must remain vigilant in tracking these data, containing COVID-19 variants and addressing hesitancy, which may challenge future routine COVID-19 immunization programs," said Ayman El-Mohandes, senior author of the study.

The survey also provides new information on Covid-19 treatments received. Globally, ivermectin was taken with the same frequency as other approved medications, even though the WHO and other agencies do not recommend its use to prevent or treat Covid-19, the study said. Almost 40 per cent of respondents reported paying less attention to new Covid-19 information than before and having less support for vaccine mandates, the study said. (PTI)



Virat Kohli celebrates his 45th ODI century

Kohli’s fist pump celebration on reaching ton

Virat Kohli slams 73rd international 100, equals Sachin Tendulkar’s record

GUWAHATI, JAN 10 /--/ Virat Kohli scored back-to-back centuries in ODI cricket when he brought up his 45th ODI ton against Sri Lanka in the first three-match ODI series on Tuesday. It was also his and 73rd hundred in international cricket. With this century, Kohli reached another ODI milestone, equalling Sachin Tendulkar’s record of 20 ODI tons at home. While Tendulkar reached the landmark in 164 matches, Kohli did it in 101 games. Kohli also surpassed Sachin Tendulkar’s record of most centuries against Sri Lanka in ODIs. Tendulkar has eight to his credit while Kohli has gone to nine. Earlier, Kohli ended his ODI century drought during India’s tour of Bangladesh. The number 3 batter remained century-less for 1214 days. The former India skipper had left batting legend Ricky Ponting behind when he last scored an ODI century. Kohli is just five ODI centuries away from breaking Tendulkar’s record for most hundreds in the format. Kohli has 45 ODI centuries, whereas Tendulkar has scored 49 ODI hundreds in his career. Kohli will likely break more ODI records as India has a packed ODI calendar — 15 matches

excluding the Asia Cup — in the 10-month window in the build-up to the World Cup in October-November. Kohli can break another record as he needs 180 more runs to enter the top 5 all-time run-getters in ODIs. Kohli is only behind Tendulkar, Sangakkara, Ponting, Jayasuriya, and Jayawardene in the elite list. Virat Kohli on Tuesday moved another step closer towards equalling Sachin Tendulkar’s record of scoring the most number of centuries in

One-Day Internationals. In the first ODI against Sri Lanka in Guwahati, Kohli slammed his 73rd international century, and his 45th in the format. He is now only four hundreds away from equalling Tendulkar, who scored 49 ODI tons during his illustrious playing career. The 34-year-old reached triple figures off 80 deliveries, after having scored his fifty off 47 balls. He reached the 100-run mark with a single on the second ball of the 47th over. After

achieving the milestone, a pumped-up Kohli jumped in joy to celebrate his knock, and also pointed towards the sky. Kohli now has 20 ODI tons at home, and equalled the record of Tendulkar, who too has 20 centuries in the format at home - most by any batter. On way to his 73rd international ton, Kohli also became the fastest to score 12500 ODI runs in 257 innings. Kohli now is four tons short of Sachin’s record of 49 ODI tons.

Kohli, who was earlier dropped twice, was eventually dismissed on 113 off 87 balls, smashing 12 fours and a solitary six. His knocked helped India to post a mammoth total of 373/7 in 50 overs. After being put into bat, openers Rohit Sharma and Shubman Gill had given India a flying start. The pair added 143 runs for the first wicket. Gill was dismissed on 70 while Rohit missed out on his century, getting out on 83. While Kohli anchored the innings from one end, Shreyas Iyer (28) and KL Rahul (39) chipped in with valuable contributions to keep India’s scoreboard ticking. India lost a flurry of wickets in the end, failing to cross the 400-run mark. (PTI with agency inputs)

Dasun Shanaka century in vain as India beat Sri Lanka by 67 runs

Virat Kohli and Dasun Shanaka stole the limelight as India defeated Sri Lanka by 67 runs in the first ODI of the three-match series at the Barsapara Stadium in Guwahati. Virat Kohli scored 113 off 87 balls -- his 73rd international century -- as India posted a formidable total of 373 for 7 against the guests, who ended their quota of 50 overs at 306 for 8, thanks to Dasun Shanaka’s unbeaten 108 off 88 balls. For India, Rohit Sharma (83) and Shubman Gill (70) laid a solid platform with a 143-run opening stand after Sri Lanka skipper Dasun Shanaka won the toss and invited the hosts to bat first. Kasun Rajitha picked three wickets but he leaked 88 runs in his 10-over spell. During Sri Lanka’s chase, Dasun Shanaka, Pathaum Nissanka (72) and Dhananjaya de Silva (47) showed good resilience but failed to avoid a defeat. Umran Malik was the pick of the bowlers with figures of 3 for 57.

'Hopefully, we can finish on top', says Sreejesh

ROURKELA, JAN 10 /--/ All set to play in his fourth FIH men’s hockey World Cup and the third on home soil, veteran India goalkeeper P R Sreejesh feels his team can do better than the quarterfinal exit in the last edition, and even finish on top of the podium this time. The showpiece begins here on Friday. India topped their pool after winning two matches and drawing one, but lost to eventual runners-up Netherlands 2-1 in the quarterfinals of the 2018 edition, which was played at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, one of the two venues this time. “It is a great honour for me to play my fourth World Cup for our country and the special part is, this is my third World Cup on home soil. I don’t think any player has had this privilege of playing three World Cups at home,” Sreejesh said ahead of India’s first Pool D match on Friday against Spain. “In 2018, we couldn’t go into semis. Now, we have one more opportunity to change our fortunes at this mega event. Hopefully we can improve

our previous performance and finish on top,” he said. India has not finished on the podium in 48 years since winning the gold in 1975 edition in Kuala Lumpur under the captaincy of Ajit Pal Singh. The 34-year-old experienced goalkeeper, the second most capped Indian player in the team after Manpreet Singh, said results matter more than the number of times a player turns up for a marquee event like the World Cup. “I’ve always felt it’s not about how many times you have played a tournament but whether you have won it or not is what matters the most. This time too, it’s important for me to give my 100 per cent and get the desired result from the tournament,” said Sreejesh, who played a major role in India’s historic bronze-winning feat in the Tokyo Olympics. Indian goalkeeper Sreejesh Raveendran tries to stop an attempt at goal as Pakistani players Rehan Butt and Mohammad Zubair look on during their World Cup 2010 match. (PTI)

Messi, Ronaldo to meet in friendly between PSG and Saudi select

PARIS, JAN 10 /--/ Lionel Messi and Paris Saint-Germain will play a friendly against a select side made up of players from Cristiano Ronaldo’s new club Al Nassr and their Saudi rivals Al Hilal in Riyadh on January 19, the French champions announced on Monday. Qatar-owned PSG will travel to Doha on January 17 before moving on to the Saudi capital for the match at the King Fahd Stadium which will see Messi and Ronaldo renew their rivalry. Messi returned to training with PSG last week after being given a fortnight off following Argentina’s World Cup triumph in Qatar in December. Meanwhile Ronaldo, who will turn 38 in February, recently joined Al Nassr after agreeing a contract that runs until 2025 and is reportedly worth more than 200 million euros (\$214m). His arrival at Al Nassr, who are coached by Frenchman Rudi Garcia, comes as Saudi Arabia seeks to improve the profile of football in the country ahead of a possible joint bid to host the 2030 World Cup along with Greece and Egypt. Ronaldo and Messi have dominated the sport over the last 15

years, winning the Ballon d’Or 12 times between them. Their rivalry grew during nine years in which they came up against each other in Spain, when Messi was starring for Barcelona and Ronaldo for Real Madrid. Riyadh clubs Al Hilal and Al Nassr are Saudi Arabia’s two most successful sides. PSG have



made a habit of travelling to Qatar in winter since the Gulf state bought the club in 2011. However, this trip comes despite the Ligue 1 leaders having a French Cup tie scheduled for the weekend of January 21 and 22 against lower-league opponents yet to be determined. (AFP)

Women umpires Rathi, Narayanan and Venugopalan make Ranji Trophy debut



NEW DELHI, JAN 10 /--/ A former scorer, an ex-software engineer and a player, whose career was cut short by injury, scripted history on Tuesday as Vrinda Rathi, Janani Narayanan and Gayathri Venugopalan became the first female trio to officiate in the prestigious Ranji Trophy. Venugopal is officiating in the second round match between Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh in Jamshedpur while Narayanan and Rathi are umpiring in the Railways versus Tripura game in Surat and Goa versus Pondicherry clash at Porvorim respectively. Hailing from various backgrounds, the trio, already well-respected on the women’s circuit, became pioneers courtesy BCCI’s decision to draft women umpires on the men’s domestic circuit. The 36-year-old Narayanan loved cricket and everything related to it. She

wanted to be on the field and even approached Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA) a couple of times to become an umpire. A few years after the the state body changed its rule to allow women to officiate, she cleared the BCCI’s Level 2 umpiring exam in 2018 and had to think little before quitting her cushy IT job to pursue umpiring. She has also officiated in the Tamil Nadu Premier League in 2021. The 32-year-old Rathi, on the other hand, has risen from the maidans of Mumbai. She used to score local matches before clearing the BCCI scorers exam. She was the official BCCI scorer for the 2013 Women’s World Cup. Later on, she moved to umpiring. Narayanan and Rathi are seasoned umpires and were also included in International Cricket Council’s (ICC) panel of development umpires back in

2020. Veteran umpire coach Denis Burns, who has worked closely with Indian umpires and overseen their rise to the international level, had hailed the duo’s promotion to the ICC development panel. “I think Janani and Vrinda represent the ‘new wave’ of female umpires in India,” he had said. Delhi-based Venugopalan, 43, dreamt of becoming a cricketer but a shoulder injury quashed her hopes. She started umpiring in 2019 after clearing the BCCI exam. She has already served as a reserve (fourth) umpire in Ranji Trophy. The BCCI still has a lot of catching up to do with female umpires already officiating in men’s cricket in Australia and England. Out of 150 registered umpires with the BCCI, only three are women. (PTI)

GAME NOTES

Saina, Srikanth make first round exits from Malaysia Open

KUALA LUMPUR, JAN 10 /--/ Ace Indian shuttlers Saina Nehwal and Kidambi Srikanth’s woeful run continued as they suffered first round exits from the season-opening Malaysia Open here on Tuesday. Two-time Commonwealth Games champion Saina, who endured a tough 2022, battling multiple injuries and a lack of form, went down 12-21 21-17 12-21 to Han Yue of China in the USD 1,250,000 Super 1000 tournament. Having lost the first game, Saina, who has slipped to world number 30, fought back to force a decider in a women’s singles first round match. However, the 2012 Olympic bronze medallist fell behind as Han built a sizable lead to take the fixture comfortably. Former world number one Srikanth’s surrender was tamer. The world championship silver medallist, who has also been struggling for form recently, was stunned by the unseeded Kenta Nishimoto of Japan 19-21 14-21 in 42 minutes. Srikanth, ranked 13th, fought hard in the opening game, but Nishimoto managed to take the lead. (PTI)

X factor is dropped and mediocrity is retained:

Prasad on India's selection calls

NEW DELHI, JAN 10 /--/ Former pacer Venkatesh Prasad has criticised the exclusion of Ishan Kishan from India’s playing eleven for the first ODI against Sri Lanka, saying "there is no way you drop a player for scoring a double hundred". Ahead of the first ODI against Sri Lanka on Tuesday, India skipper Rohit Sharma made it clear that he will open alongside Shubman Gill and not Kishan, who scored a double hundred in his last innings in the 50-over format. "Think fair would have been to give chance to a man who scored a double hundred in India’s last ODI, and in a series where India lost two games and the series. "Have all the time in the world for Gill, but no way you drop a player for scoring a double ton," Prasad said in a series of tweets. Playing only his 10th ODI, Kishan had scored the fastest double hundred in ODI cricket history last month against Bangladesh. Prasad, who played 33 Tests and 161 ODIs for India, also feels that mediocrity is being preferred over "x-factor" in the current setup. "There is a reason we have under performed in limited overs cricket. Constant chopping changing and a guy who does brilliantly and is an X factor is dropped and mediocrity retained. (PTI)

AIFF announces first batch of professional match officials offered full time contracts

NEW DELHI, JAN 10 /--/ In a first for Indian football, the first batch of elite match officials (referees and assistant referees) have been inducted into the system with full-time contracts. A joint investment of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and its commercial partners, the Elite Refereeing Development Plan (ERDP), in keeping with the outlines of "Vision 2047", aims to make refereeing a viable career pathway in the Indian football ecosystem. The first batch consists of eight referees and as many assistant referees. The next batch of professional match officials will be announced in 2024. AIFF president Kalyan Chaubey said, "A game of football cannot be conducted without a referee, and therefore it is a core area of focus for us. By employing referees full time, we will make sure they get the right kind of training, attention, support and also have financial security. "A measure like this will incentivise the profession, hopefully make refereeing an attractive proposition and draw more of them into the system, especially at the grassroots. This would help our competition structure hugely. (PTI)

Harry Brook, Ashleigh Gardner named ICC Players of the Month For December

Dubai, Jan 10 /--/ Harry Brook on Tuesday bagged his maiden ICC Men’s Player of the Month crown after a blistering run of scores that helped England claim a historic World Test Championship (WTC) series victory in Pakistan. Australia’s Ashleigh Gardner secured the ICC Women’s Player of the Month award as her contributions with bat and ball guided her side to T20i series victory in India, and led her to the summit of the Player Rankings for all-rounders. Both scoop their awards following a global vote conducted among media representatives, ICC Hall of Famers, former international players, and fans registered at icc-cricket.com. Brook was largely unstoppable during England’s triumphant Test return to Pakistan, scoring centuries in each match as the tourists sealed a 3-0 victory. Despite having only played a solitary Test match before arriving in Pakistan, Brook lit up the series with his aggressive strokeplay and firepower, seamlessly integrating into England’s pioneering style of play in the longer format. He started the series in Rawalpindi in emphatic fashion, hitting 19 fours and five sixes on his way to a blistering 153 in the first innings, before another quickfire 87 in the second innings ensured Pakistan fell short on a dramatic final day. This set the tone for his breakout month, and he followed up with two further impressive centuries – 108 in Multan and 111 in Karachi. (PTI)

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