

GLARING EXAMPLE OF HEALTH SYSTEM FAILURE

'Torturous' Ambulance 'delay' causes patient death at PHC Hut Bay

ROOPA LALL



PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ The falling healthcare system in the islands has apparently accounted for the death of a 54 years old man at PHC Hut Bay. This time this man M. ThataRao who suffered a heart attack died due to the delayed arrival of an ambulance to take him to the hospital. According to reports, Mr. ThataRao suffered cardiac arrest in the evening on Tuesday. The family members immediately called the hospital and pleaded to send the ambulance immediately to take him to the hospital. But the ambulance took more than 40 minutes to arrive at the spot, even though the residence of the deceased person is just two km away from PHC Hut Bay and it requires only five minutes for the ambulance to reach the house. Kin of the deceased have blamed that the patient died due to delayed arrival of the ambulance

van to their house. They also blamed the driver of the ambulance who they say was under the influence of alcohol and did not cooperate with the family. While on way to PHC Hut Bay, the family requested the ambulance driver to provide oxygen support to the patient. But the driver, citing that they have almost reached the hospital, did not provide the desperately needed oxygen to the patient. Relatives of the deceased have staged a protest in front of the hospital and have registered a complaint with the SHO Hut Bay citing medical negligence and sought a detailed investigation into the matter. This is not the first time that ambulance services were not provided to the patients on time. In the past also, several incidents have happened when patients could not be saved due to delay in arrival of ambulance vans.

MP highlights grievances of employees of Betapur & Chatham Saw Mills



PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ The Member of Parliament, Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma on Wednesday called on the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCF) and highlighted some genuine grievances of employees of Government Saw Mill Betapur, Middle Andaman Forest Division & Chatham Saw Mill. During the meeting, Mr. Sharma informed the PCCF that during his visit to Betapur saw mill on 29th November 2022, the employees of the establishment met him and brought some of their genuine grievances in his notice. He pointed out that a dispensary was functioning within the saw mill for a long time but about two years back the pharmacist posted at the dispensary retired, but no substitute has been posted in place of the retired pharmacist till now. Because of this, the dispensary has been kept closed. In emergency cases for medical care / injuries sustained during duty hours the needy workmen has to travel about 22 km from sawmill to CHC Rangat or 12 Km to the PHC Billiground. Mr. Sharma demanded

immediate arrangements to post a Pharmacist in the saw mill and revoke the function of the dispensary of Betapur Saw mill. He also demanded to replace all machineries which are in use in the GSM Betapur with new ones to avoid mishaps during its operation by the employees of the saw mill.

While pointing out the need of filling-up vacant posts of Betapur saw mill and Chatham Saw Mill, he informed that there are many vacant posts like Mechanical fitter, Assistant fitter, Sawyer, Assistant sawyer, Grader, Carpenter, Assistant Carpenter, Dogger, Assistant saw filler, Grinder and Mazdoor in these two Saw Mills. He requested to fill up the posts as soon as possible. The Member of Parliament also demanded to repair and repaint all the five labour barracks of Haddo as soon as possible. He demanded to provide a mini RO plant in the premises of the saw mill to cater the need of drinking water to the workmen and other staff of the saw mill.

Dental health camp marks 25th anniversary of Nirmala Dental Clinic

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ Nirmala Dental Clinic celebrated its 25th anniversary on 25 November 2022. On the occasions of silver jubilee celebrations, a free dental camp was organised at Port Blair on 26 November 2022. During the free dental camp, various preliminary tests to identify problems such as gingivitis (which affects the gums), broken teeth, tooth pain and other ailments were undertaken. In addition, 25% of fee waiver was offered to all



patients for the scaling carried out on 28th and 29th November 2022. The team headed by Dr Sheela Kumari, Sr. Dental Surgeon honestly believes that "Every tooth in a human being is more valuable than a diamond". The team would also like to thank everyone for their extended support in making this dental camp at Nirmala Dental Clinic a huge success. The clinic has also extended sincere thanks to all for providing the team the opportunity to meet the dental health needs of the people.



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2.	AIR & SEA CARGO MANAGEMENT	1YEAR	10 TH / 12 TH
3.	AIRHOSTESS TRAINING	1YEAR	10 TH / 12 TH
4.	CABIN CREW MANAGEMENT	1YEAR	10 TH / 12 TH
5.	PRE - PRIMARY EDUCATION	1YEAR	10 TH / 12 TH
6.	PRIMARY EDUCATION	1YEAR	10 TH / 12 TH
7.	X - RAY TECHNOLOGY	1YEAR	10 TH / 12 TH
8.	SANITARY INSPECTOR	1YEAR	10 TH / 12 TH
9.	MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNICIAN	2YEARS	12 TH
10.	OPERATION THEATER ASSISTANT	2YEARS	12 TH
11.	AIRFARE & TICKETING	6MONTHS	10 TH
12.	AIRPORT GROUND STAFF TRAINING	6MONTHS	10 TH

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MESSAGE

World AIDS Day observed on 1st December every year, gives us an opportunity to unite in the fight against Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), show solidarity for the people living with HIV, and remember those who have lost their lives from HIV-related illness.

World AIDS Day 2022 is being marked under the theme Equalize. The theme "Equalize", is a call to take action to address inequalities that make the lives of many people living with HIV more challenging.

Our firm commitment of ending the Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), as a public health threat should continue with persistent zeal and enthusiasm throughout the year. We must make every possible effort to empower communities by awareness and encouraging them to avail HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment and care services without any stigma or discrimination.

On this World AIDS Day, I call upon all government agencies, community organizations, civil society and stakeholders to make relentless efforts and join hands with A&N AIDS Control Society with the ultimate objective to end AIDS as public health threat.

(Admiral DK Joshi)
PVSM, AVSM, YSM, NM, VSM (Retd.)
Lieutenant Governor
Andaman & Nicobar Islands
Vice Chairman, Islands Development Agency

PBMC bid farewell to retired staff

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ The Port Blair Municipal Council bid farewell to Mr. Rakkam Singh, Sr. Caretaker who superannuated from government service on Wednesday. At a



simple function held at the conference hall of the Council, the Senior Vice Chairperson, Mr. Aziz-Ur-Rehman, PBMC handed over the retirement benefits and mementoes and recalled valuable services rendered by the employee to the Council and wished him happy and healthy post retired life. Mr. Sadananda Bachar, Chief Accounts Officer, Mr. Ashok Anand, Administrative Officer and Mr. S. Karthick, Revenue Officer PBMC were also present during the function. Staff of various sections were also present.

IGNOU TEE exams starts on 2nd December

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ The Term End Examination for December, 2022 of Indira Gandhi National Open University is going to commence from 02nd December, 2022 and will conclude on 9th January, 2023. To facilitate smooth conduct of TEE in A & N Islands, the IGNOU conducts exams at 7 locations, namely: JNRM, Port Blair (Ph. No. 03192-237078), Rangat-0202 (03192-274205), (Hut Bay (03192-284300), Car Nicobar (Ph No. 03193-265037), Kamorta (03192-263225) Campbell Bay (Ph. No. 03193-264307) and Mayabunder (Ph. No. 03193-276462). The exams will be conducted in two sessions i.e. Forenoon and afternoon timings are: 10 AM to 1 PM and 2 PM to 5 PM. The students are requested to download the Hall Tickets from the University website www.ignou.ac.in and advised to appear in the examination along with IGNOU student Identity Card.

Mobile phones and electronic gadgets are not permitted inside the examination halls. For exam related queries, the learners are advised to use email reportblair@ignou.ac.in or call 03192-230111, 242888 for further information.

Industry Institute Interaction (III) session with BARSYL

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ As part of Industry Institute Interaction (III) programme, a special lecture session was held with Mr. Sunil Srivastava, Managing Director of Balaji Rail-



road Systems Pvt. Ltd (BARSYL), at DBRAIT on 25th November 2022. BARSYL have been providing effective systems for integration of railway transportation, in various parts of our country as well as abroad, and deals with design and planning of rolling stock, track, power and traction, signaling and telecommunication and railway station design.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Sunil Srivastava, MD, BARSYL explained the importance and scope of core engineering in industry. More than 160 students from Civil, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering department along with faculties attended the special lecture session.

As part of training and placement initiatives the institute organizes such Industry Institute Interaction (III) sessions to orient students about the requirements of industry.

Aato President condoles demise

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ Mr. M. Vinod, President, Andaman Association of Tour Operators have mourned the demise of Mr. Hari Kishen, Retd. Executive Engineer, APWD, aged 78 years, R/o of Babu Line today. He has prayed to the almighty god to grant eternal peace to the departed soul and courage to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

Vishal apprises CS about awful power supply condition in remote islands of Nicobar District

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ Mr. Vishal Jolly, BJP's National Executive Member has written a letter to Chief Secretary highlighting issues pertaining to power supply, street light, non-availability of generator etc, which are seriously affecting the lives of people belonging to Katchal, Terrasa, Chowra & Nancowry group of Islands after concluding his tour to Nancowry Group of Islands. In his letter, he raised a host of genuine facts regarding the appalling condition of services rendered by the Department of Electricity at Katchal, Terrasa, Chowra & Nancowry group of Islands, which requires immediate intervention.

He mentioned that in the Dering Island, for the past 4 months there has been a complete blackout as there is no power supply at all since then. People of this island are forced to face such a situation due to the absolute failure of the Electricity Department's inability to provide services. It was further reported & observed that the power generator has been brought to Port Blair for

repairing and since the past several months, the same is kept at Port Blair for repair.

In the village namely Sola Tekri, there are around 60-70 families residing and



there are hardly 3-4 houses which do have the power supply. All the rest of the houses do not have any power supply. No street lights are available in this village. Likewise, in Meenakshi Ram Nagar village as well as E-Wall village also there is no street light.

In the entire Terrasa Island, there were two power generators and one has been non-functional for more than 2 years. The other generator is being managed by using it

merely for a period of 9.00 am to 1.00 pm and thereafter from 6.00 pm to 5.00 am. Rest of the period remains completely black out and if this generator also stops working for any reasons, then the entire island will face complete black out.

In Chowra Island also the situation is identical like that of Terrasa. There is only one DG set presently installed for the entire Island and the same hardly supplies electricity for 16 to 17 hours. Another DG set of the capacity of 125 KV would seriously be required for uninterrupted proper supply of electricity.

In Champion Islands, there is no street light in any village. Power supply is mostly provided only during school functioning hours and on weekends i.e. On Saturdays and Sundays, no power supply is given, when the schools are not functional. Apart from that, the power supply is made for a period of 9.00 AM to 1.00 PM and thereafter from 6.00 PM to 5.00 AM. Only one generator is functional out of two and that too constantly requires

Two-week workshop on bird identification & basic ornithology by ZSI concludes

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ The two-week long workshop on 'Bird Identification & Basic Ornithology' under the Accelerate Vigyan scheme (AV) sponsored by Science & Engineering Research Board (SERB), Department of Science and Technology, Ministry of Science and Technology, Government of India was organised by Zoological Survey of India, Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre, Port Blair concludes on Tuesday.

Dr. R.S.C. Jayaraj, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF), Andaman and Nicobar Islands was the chief guest, while Dr. Ramakrishna, Director (Retd.), Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata, Mr. T. N. Krishnamoorthy, Chief Engineer and Administrator, Andaman and Lakshadweep Harbour Works, Port Blair and Dr. S. Senthil Kumar, Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), Department of Environment and Forests, Andaman and Nicobar Islands were the guests of honor. The programme was also attended by delegates from Dept. of Environment and Forests, Botanical Survey of India, Pondicherry University, Jawaharlal Nehru Rajakia Mahavidyalaya, Andaman Law College, Central Island Agricultural Research Institute, Scientific fraternity, academicians and trainees of the SERB/DST. The ceremony was started with a welcome song and lightening of traditional lamp by the dignitaries.

Dr. R.S.C. Jayaraj in his address highlighted that the trainees must know the importance of bird identification and how they can publish their findings as short note which can benefit them with various opportunities. He emphasized about the three-fold benefits from the course work i.e., the trainees

will gain knowledge on the conservation strategies and policies, taxonomic identification, indirect services of birding as a guide in bird tourism. He mentioned that ecotourism involves visiting fragile, remote, undisturbed, natural areas rather than popular tourists spots which itself requires educated people. It also involves the protection and conservation of natural resources, the flora and fauna. It also aims

to support the local people, tribes and wildlife. Since it brings in money, ecotourism is frequently seen as an incentive for protecting habitats and species and thus can be promoted to the local communities of the island.



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Dr. Ramakrishna, former Director, Zoological Survey of India, Kolkata in his felicitation address beautifully described the basic concepts of ornithology. The speaker then gave his insights on environmental awareness and conservation of species and how these two sectors are webbed in ecotourism. In his address he signified about the use of molecular taxonomy and how it has shaped the knowledge on the evolution of avifauna. He then remarked upon the contribution of local population and the environment and interlinks which embarks the sustainability and educa-

tion of youth.

Mr. T.N. Krishnamoorthy, Chief Engineer and Administrator, Andaman and Lakshadweep Harbour Works, Port Blair mentioned the role of employment and the education remarking upon the benefits from the workshop. He justified the bird watching and the passion for bird identification is a great force for any birder to create opportunities in the ecotourism sector. He men-

ment, aim to upskill the human resources so that they can support individuals in finding employment more effectively. He also emphasised the significance of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands' extensive biodiversity, which can be explored by potential tourists by the assistance of trained manpower. The workshop will be extremely helpful to participants. He extended his wishes to everyone who participated and successfully completed the workshop. He also complimented ZSI for creating such programme, and asked them to continue making similar efforts in the future.

Dr. Sivaperuman, Officer-in-Charge, ZSI, Port Blair, welcomed the dignitaries, invited guests, trainees and participants. In his welcome address he reported a comparative data from previous workshops. He significantly said how the workshop has helped the students to attain a better understanding of facilities present in the islands. He thanked Department of Science and Technology for providing the opportunity to host this kind of training programme for a second time. He also mentioned that students from various institutes such as Tagore Government College of Education, IGNOU, Jawaharlal Nehru Rajakia Mahavidyalaya, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Pondicherry University has participated in this two-week workshop. He has highlighted about the lecture class and field visits by the trainees, and they have identified total of 81 species of birds, of 13 were endemic and 20 were migratory species. The function concluded with the feedbacks from the trainees from various institutes and vote of thanks.

Municipal Councillors sensitize about Ayushman Bharat scheme

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ An awareness meeting was held in the conference hall of the Port Blair Municipal Council to sensitize the Ward Councillors about the implementation of Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana.

The meeting was attended by the Chairperson, PBMC, Smti. U Kavitha and other Councillors.

The Nodal Officer, AB-PMJAY, Dr. P Lal briefed the gathering about the benefits and operational aspects of the scheme. He exhorted the Ward Councillors to take steps to identify the left out beneficiaries of their respective areas.

The use of web portal <http://aapkedwarayushman.pmjay.gov.in> which can be used by any citizen to see the list of eligible PMJAY beneficiaries of any geographical area

was demonstrated during the meeting.

Presently, 12,745 families (40,279 members) have registered under the AB-PMJAY scheme in this UT. The registered beneficiaries are entitled for a cashless treat-



ment worth 5 lakh per family per year against secondary and tertiary hospitalization care at 28,000 empanelled public and private hospitals across the country.

Special progen Jyotirlingam Darshan-cum-Rajyoga Exhibition by BIVV

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ The local centre of the Brahmakumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya will organize a special program on Jyotirlingam Darshan-cum-Rajyoga Exhibition at Bathubasti Junction from 2nd to 4th December 2022 from 5.00 to 8.00 pm. The aim of this programme is to facilitate people to connect with the supreme source of peace and happiness, and understand the relevance of their beliefs and practices with practical life. There will also be Rajyoga Exhibition & literature counters on various topics. Entry is free for the program. This programme is followed by a special talk on stress management on 5 December 2022 from 6.00 to 7.00 pm at the Centre-Birdline Junction. In addition, there is Rajyoga Meditation camp at the centre from 6th to 12th December 2022 on timings from 6.00 to 7.00 am, 4.00 to 5.00 pm & 6.00 to 7.00 pm in which people will get an opportunity to develop inner peace.

Bairagi condoles demise

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ Mr. Ajoy Bairagi, State BJP President has expressed his deepest condolence on the demise of Mr. Hari Kishen, Retd SE APWD, aged 78 years, R/o Babu Line who breathed his last today. Mr. Bairagi has prayed to the almighty god to grant eternal peace to the departed soul and give courage to the bereaved family to bear this irreparable loss.

Subsidy to fishermen for purchase of outboard/inboard marine engine/fishing gear & propeller

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ The Department of Fisheries, A&N Administration is implementing a component 'Motorization of Traditional Craft' under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme - 'Blue Revolution' wherein subsidy is provided for purchase of outboard/inboard marine engine / fishing gear & propeller. The pattern of subsidy and eligibility criteria for the programme of the scheme are as under:-

Pattern of Subsidy for General Category
40% of the unit cost with a ceiling of Rs. 48,000/- per inboard / outboard engine, fishing gear and propeller for unit cost of Rs. 1.20 Lakh.

Pattern of Subsidy for ST/SC, Women Category
60% of the unit cost with a ceiling of Rs. 72,000/- per

Pattern of Subsidy for General Category	Pattern of Subsidy for ST/SC, Women Category
40% of the unit cost with a ceiling of Rs. 48,000/- per inboard / outboard engine, fishing gear and propeller for unit cost of Rs. 1.20 Lakh.	60% of the unit cost with a ceiling of Rs. 72,000/- per inboard outboard engine, fishing gear and propeller for unit cost of Rs. 1.20 Lakh.

inboard outboard engine, fishing gear and propeller for unit cost of Rs. 1.20 Lakh.

For availing the benefit under the scheme, applicant should be a bonafide fisherman of A & N Islands possessing registered non-motorized or motorized fishing craft, holding valid fishing licence continuously for 02 years including the current year. The pandemic COVID relaxation is applicable. The engine to be purchased should not be of more than 30 Horse Power (HP). The eligible subsidy for procurement of engine shall be upto 10 HP. The fishermen possessing motorized fishing crafts, whose engines are of more than 05 years old and are unserviceable, are also eligible to replace the engines. The fishermen seeking replacement of 05 years old and unserviceable engine should produce a certificate issued by an Authorised Marine Engineer stating that the engine is beyond economical repair. The type / size of gear allowed to purchase are Gill net not below 25 mm mesh (knot to knot diagonally), hook & line. Shore seine / drag net of mesh size not below 25 mm., fish traps. The applicant should not have availed the assistance for purchase of engine, fishing gear and propeller from the Department of Fisheries or any other Government Department during the last 5 years.

Applications have been invited from eligible beneficiaries interested in the procurement of outboard/inboard marine engine / fishing gear & propeller to extend subsidy by the Department during 2022-23. Application form and detailed terms & conditions of the scheme can be obtained from the Directorate of Fisheries / Fisheries Zonal Offices / Fisheries Sub Stations / Zilla Parishads / Panchayat Samities. The applications completed in all respect should reach the nearest Fisheries Zonal Office / Sub-Stations by 31st December.

SBI AUCTION NOTICE

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Place : Port Blair			

Disaster mock drills conducted at Campbell Bay



CAMPBELL BAY, NOV 30/--/Disaster mock drill conducted on Wednesday at Campbell Bay to assess the readiness for Tsunami and Cyclone Warning Alert near Kamal Basti at 7.00 am. During the mock drill instructions were given for evacuation of people from the coastal areas to higher grounds. More than 50 residents were evacuated from Kamal Basti to Murgan Temple which was located at higher ground. Medical triage was also done and red ribbon cases and yellow ribbon cases were immediately given medical care in the PHC, Campbell Bay followed by green ribbon cases.

Similarly, warning red was issued for Cyclone storm at 10.30 am and at all coastal areas of Vijay Nagar, people were evacuated within half an hour to safer places such as Vijay Nagar Govt. Sr. Sec. School. The cyclone storm was of category from with assimilate wind speed 1.30 Km/H gusting to 170 Km/H.

Dr. Nitin Shakya, Assistant Commissioner, Campbell Bay told that in the all exercises Police, Fire, APWD, Forest, Education, ALHW, Veterinary, Emergency Operation Center and others concerned departments, alongwith forces from Army, Navy, Coast Guard participated in the drill and local residents were made aware of the drill one day before to engage them in the evacuation. School children also participated and learned the evacuation technique in a real time scenario as possible was created and society / administrative readiness for managing was checked.

—SUBRATA



The Lt Governor, Admiral DK Joshi (Retd.), called on Vice President, Mr. Jagdeep Dhankhar on Wednesday at New Delhi. He briefed about various ongoing/forthcoming mega infrastructure, Tourism and developmental projects in A&N Islands under the aegis of Islands Development Agency.

MP seeks resolving power crisis at Shaheed Dweep

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ The Member of Parliament, Mr. Kuldeep Rai Sharma has requested the intervention of the Chief Secretary to resolve the severe power crisis at Shaheed Dweep. In a letter, Mr. Sharma said that the Shaheed Dweep is facing a severe power crisis for the last nearly four weeks.

He pointed out that a DG of a private power producer set was sent to Shaheed Dweep to supply power in Island but now the DG set has developed some technical problems because of which the power situation has worsened in the Island. He added that presently residents of Shaheed Dweep are witnessing multiple load sheddings in the Island and power is reportedly being supplied to different parts of Shaheed Dweep on rotational basis for only two hours. The General Public are witnessing power cuts for nearly 10 to 12 hours a day, which is making their life difficult.

Mr. Sharma mentioned that many students of Shaheed Dweep are preparing for their exams, but due to indiscriminate

power cuts, it has become impossible for students to focus on studies moreover as Kerosene has been banned in the Islands, the students are unable to use lantern or any other lamps.

He added that Shaheed Dweep is also known as the vegetable bowl of South Andaman region but due to power cuts farmers are unable to use motors for irrigation and are suffering losses. Unemployed youths who are now dependent of Tourism are also unable to operate their business because of lack of power as they are unable to operate computers to mail customers and complete other online formalities.

He further added that small hotel/ Bed and Breakfast owners are also witnessing huge losses as their guests are leaving their rooms due to power cuts and shifting to bigger hotels, who have their own power backup system. The Member of Parliament noted that due to such power cuts visiting tourists are also going back with a bitter memory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.



Ayyappan visits Composite Regional Centre at Brookshabad

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ On getting complaints of shortage of faculty and staff, Mr. D. Ayyappan, Secretary, CPI (M) Andaman & Nicobar State Organising Committee visited the Composite Regional Centre for Skill Development, Rehabilitation and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Brookshabad, Port Blair today (30.11.2022) and discussed the issue with the Resident Nodal Officer of the Centre. It was noticed that although 365 Children with Special Needs have registered with the Centre, only 40 - 45 are attending the Centre. It was found that the important posts of Speech Therapist, Clinical Psychologist, Physiotherapist and Occupational Therapist are

lying vacant. Faculty/ Special Teachers are posted to the Centre from Chennai by the National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (Divyangjan) on contract basis. On completion of the contract period, the services of these Faculty/ Special Teachers are not extended by the National Institute and such Faculty/ Special Teachers are returned to the mainland, thereby paralyzing the functioning of the Centre. A number of children who need the services of Speech Therapist are facing problems due to the reason that such Faculty/ Special Teachers are reportedly not available in these islands. It was learnt that out of the 14 sanctioned posts of Faculty and staff,

only 6 persons are presently available in the Centre. Mr. Ayyappan met some parents in the Centre and heard their grievances. He assured the parents and the officials in the Centre that the non-availability of sufficient Faculty/ Special Teachers will be taken up with the above-mentioned National Institute and Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Govt. of India.

Firing practice

PORT BLAIR, NOV 30/--/ CISF Unit Port of Blair Port will carry out Annual Range Classification for the year 2022 on 3rd December 2022 & 12th December 2022, from 0700hrs to 1700hrs at Army Firing Range, Brichgunj.

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Date : Saturday, 10th December 2022
Time: 11.00 am to 6.00 pm

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Selfishness is not living
as one wishes to live, it
is asking others to live
as one wishes to live
Oscar Wilde

Harsh Covid-19 curbs in China boomerang

China’s “zero-Covid” policy has upended the lives of millions of citizens, hit their employment and incomes and slowed down the economy in the past three years. China has tightened security with heavy police deployment in several cities, including Beijing and Shanghai, where thousands of people took part in protests in the past few days against harsh Covid-19 curbs – lockdowns and quarantines, restrictions on freedoms and heavy-handed treatment of citizens. Spontaneous demonstrations were held across China with protestors showing rare unity in opposing the harsh zero-COVID policy through means of civil disobedience and expressing their resentment, exasperation and anger. Police used pepper spray against protesters in Shanghai and struggled to suppress demonstrations in other cities including Beijing. Protests- which has made headlines across the world - were reported in Beijing, Shanghai, Urumqi, Wuhan, Hangzhou, Lanzhou, Chengdu, Chongqing and Guangzhou and in dozens of university campuses which were triggered by the death of 10 people in a tragic fire in a Covid-restricted high-rise in Urumqi, Xinjiang. Smaller protests were also reported in Nanjing, Dali, Changsha and Xi’an. The Chinese foreign ministry dismissed questions on the exceptionally rare demonstrations, saying they do not reflect “what actually happened”, glossing over the widespread resentment among citizens, which prompted them to gather on the streets and voice their anger. Moreover, it did not include any question related to these nationwide protests in the official transcript of their daily press briefing as if nothing happened. The Chinese ministry during its daily press briefing played down the incident of assault on a BBC journalist during the coverage of the protests in Shanghai.

Authorities in Beijing and Guangzhou have eased some zero-Covid measures and warned that essential exits must not be blocked, amid calls for an end to lockdowns following last week’s deadly fire in Urumqi. Health authorities in Beijing said high-risk areas should be defined by units and buildings. These areas could be expanded when transmission risks were unclear, or transmission was widespread in the community but only after “rigorous assessment”. However, it was clear that Zero-COVID is not going to go away anytime soon. The US Embassy on Monday encouraged all U.S. citizens in China to keep a 14-day supply of medications, bottled water, food for yourself & any members of your household as Chinese authorities have “expanded COVID-19 prevention restrictions and control measures” amid outbreaks. Reportedly, 30% of delivery personnel in Beijing are under some type of lockdown affecting the delivery of essentials. China has reported 40,052 new Covid-19 infections on Monday for Sunday, setting a new daily record for the fifth straight day. Since November 1, China has logged nearly 4.5 lakh new infections though the fatality rate remains very less. Chinese media, which is mostly Communist party-run or affiliated to the government, has ignored the widespread protests, while carrying several editorials and opinion pieces defending the “zero-Covid” policy as the best option for the country without mentioning a word on the protests. They also emphasized how Chinese authorities are implementing the newly-released 20 measures in a “more targeted and scientific manner” to curb the latest Covid-19 resurgences across the country.

Foreign diplomats want proper general elections in Bangladesh in 2023

REFLEX ACTION

Ashis Biswas

angels feared to tread, violating recognised Vienna-defined diplomatic protocols. The dreaded call from Dhaka’s foreign ministry was seen as par for the course. However, with only a year left for the impending elections and keen to ensure continuing Japanese financial support at a time of financial torment in the post Ukraine war period, Dhaka foreign policy mandarins chose, according to reports, not to be ‘over censorious’. Mr, Shahriyar Alam, Minister of state for Foreign Affairs, said on social media that a meeting had indeed been held with the diplomat concerned -- and that was all.

In one sense, Mr Naoki was in good, if somewhat incongruous, company in urging upon Bangladesh to ensure reasonably fair elections. His advice delivered in a foreign capital was generally perceived as being a tad ‘supervisory’ for the local ruling Government. But then, he was not the first envoy to cross the diplomatic red line in this respect. Some time ago it may be recalled, Chinese ambassador to Bangladesh Mr. Li Jiming had done exactly the same thing. Commenting upon the emergent QUAD tie-up in the Indian Ocean region as a strategic initiative aiming to keep China out geo-politically, he had praised Bangladesh for not opting to join it. Doing so, he had hinted, would have brought major unwelcome consequences for Bangladesh and South Asia.

On that occasion a few months ago, Bangladeshi media reaction had been sharper and more strident. China was by far the biggest investor in Bangladesh in mega infra-related projects. Bangladesh had agreed to become a partner in some of the projects that formed part of the ambitious Belt and Roads Initiative (BRI) sponsored by Beijing. GOB had adopted a more pro-China position than its bigger neighbour, India had done, let alone Japan. Over the next few years,

top Chinese leaders from President Xi Jinping downwards had pledged investments over \$22 billion in various infra-related projects in Bangladesh during the present decade. Yet, not only the Bangladeshi media, but the ruling AL-run government lost little time in pulling up Mr Jiming. Bangladesh, he was reminded by Foreign office spokesmen, was mature enough as a sovereign independent nation to take responsible decisions suiting its regional priorities on international issues. It needed neither advice nor guidance from other countries.

Mr Jiming in contrast with Mr Naoki’s present silence, had walked the diplomatic step back, not keen to add fresh twigs to a raging controversy. He issued a conciliatory message to the media saying he fully understood and respected the position taken by the Bangladesh government. While he stood by his assessment of the QUAD as an initiative intended to isolate China in the region, a misunderstanding had resulted from media persons quoting words attributed to him out of context. Further, he was not quite at home while communicating in English, which was not exactly his mother tongue, he added, bringing the matter to an end. As with most things, political perceptions differ widely in Bangladesh about such diplomatic mix-ups.

The opposition outfits led by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) maintain that often, through the apparently cavalier remarks made by serving diplomats from time to time, different countries indicate their awareness that they were dealing with a weak government led by the AL-- a discredited party, that may not win the next elections. Contrarily, ruling AL leaders insist that the GOB had always resisted apparently patronizing behaviour of even powerful countries with due firmness and dignity. However, such issues in the long run hardly mattered. Bangladesh had warm economic ties with China, India and Japan -- it is perhaps the only country in South Asia which has been maintaining a close balance with all major nations. Surely major credit, not brickbats, was due to the ruling AL for this, (IPA)



FIFA World Cup fever still grips Kolkata. Traders make a brisk business in jerseys and flags of participating countries at Esplanade market on Wednesday--Arijit Ganguly

Republican establishment wants to ditch Trump

Whatever their disappointment about this month’s lackluster midterm results might be, the United States’ conservative establishment has clearly sensed an opportunity. Over the past two weeks, a swelling cavalcade of right-wing pundits, talking heads, and elected officials have sought to distance themselves from Donald Trump and signal in no uncertain terms that the future of the Republican Party lies elsewhere.

Reacting to the results, Fox’s Laura Ingraham – notably a longtime Trump sycophant – remarked: “It is not about any one person. If the voters conclude that you’re putting your own ego . . . ahead of what’s good for the country, they’re going to look elsewhere. Period.” Former congressman Mick Mulvaney, who served as Trump’s chief of staff for over a year, meanwhile told CNBC:

I’m ready for a generational change in my party. Ron De Santis would make a great president. Tim Scott would make a great president. Nikki Haley would make a great president. Mike Pompeo. Mike Pence. Go down the list. . . . I think [Trump] is the only Republican who could lose. Also joining the chorus was Candace Owens, who asked, “What is his vision for 2024? Is it going to be more than ‘I’m back’? Because that’s not a vision to me.” None other than Chris Christie, arguably one of the most abject and pathetic Trump grovelers on the face of the earth, even drew applause for his attacks on the former president at a recent meeting of Republican governors. Apparently smelling blood, the National Review several days ago

issued an editorial rejecting a Trump rerun in 2024 simply titled “No.” The opening lines of a November 14 report in Politico more or less sum up what now seems to be the consensus view on the state of Trumpism after the 2022 midterms: “Donald Trump’s iron grip on the GOP is beginning to crack. And some Republicans aren’t even sure he’s in command at all anymore.”

Watching these convulsions, it’s hard not to feel a palpable sense of déjà vu. Throughout the entirety of his initial rise, virtually every part of what officially calls itself the conservative movement—from big-money corporate donors and Republican power brokers to the supposedly upright and cerebral intellectuals who populate outlets like National Review—did their utmost to brand Trump an electoral albatross and instruct Republican voters to reject him.

To say that none of it mattered would, if anything, be an understatement. Far from blunting the mercurial front-runner’s momentum, the Republican establishment’s attacks on Trump only seemed to make the base like him more. In the years since, Trumpism not only brought erstwhile critics onside—including many of those who had contributed to the National Review’s January 2016 “Against Trump” issue—but so firmly embedded itself as the lingua franca of American conservatism that it’s

become difficult to imagine what a post-Trumpian GOP would even look like.

If there was a broader takeaway to be drawn from the Trump candidacy and subsequent Trump presidency, it was that the conservative establishment wielded considerably less authority or legitimacy within the Republican base than its elites had long liked to tell themselves. Having repeatedly ordered Republican primary voters not to anoint Trump as their standard-bearer, those voters proceeded to do so anyway—and, having done so, rallied around his administration with a fanatical devotion arguably without precedent in US politics. Predictably enough, many of the right-wing elites who had so shrilly spent a year or more denouncing Trump hastily bent the knee.

Notwithstanding all of this, the Republican Party’s decidedly unremarkable showing in the recent midterms appears to have inspired right-wing apparatchiks and opinion leaders to initiate a reboot of their own failed strategy from 2016. Trump, it must be said, does indeed look weaker than he’s looked for quite some time. His recent presidential announcement, while hitting all of the familiar notes, was a somewhat downbeat and deflated affair lacking the transgressive aura of its 2015 equivalent and devoting considerable time to the parochial

grievances that have increasingly dominated Trumpist discourse since 2020.

Barring some unexpected shift in American conservatism, however, there’s little reason to believe that the dynamics of 2016 won’t persist into 2024. Among the basic lessons of 2016 was that pure and unrestrained ideology is a much more potent force within the Right than the conventional electoralism typically favored by Republican elites. Conservative donors and public intellectuals may prefer to erect an artifice of respectability around their project, but Republican voters overwhelmingly respond when such calculations are set aside and their pleasure centers are stimulated instead. No figure on the modern right has done that more effectively than Trump, and even if the growing chorus of critics is correct in deeming him a spent force and an electoral liability, there’s little reason to think it will be of any concern to the Republican base.

If anything, in fact, such attacks may help Trump rediscover his lost élan and reclaim the mantle of transgressive outsider that served him so well throughout his improbable 2016 ascendancy. As the young conservative writer Nate Hochman recently observed:

One of the reasons Trump’s base adores him is that he overcame overwhelming odds—including both party establishments—to win. The more Republican elites consolidate against him, the more otherwise persuadable Trump voters are going to remember why they loved him in the first place. (IPA)

Conventional Crossword						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8			9		
			10			
11	12	13				
			14	15	16	
17	18	19				
			20	21	22	23
24	25					
26			27			
28					29	

ACROSS							DOWN						
1	Vigour	2	Small craft facility	3	Partly open	4	Colour	5	Got up	6	Angry	7	Mashed fabric
8	Turn	9	One’s right wits	10	Cast out	11	Numeral	12	Female sheep	13	Prosecute	14	Type of aircraft
15	Bear witness to	16	Guarantee	17	Sheltered side	18	Extremities	19	Leave off	20	Long-leaved lettuce	21	Injure with hot liquid
22	Golf mound	23		24		25		26		27	Receptacles for flowers	28	Nostrils
29		30		31		32		33	Camping item	34	Direction	35	Faithful
36		37		38		39		40	Observe	41		42	

SUDOKU:3712								
5					1	9	6	
							5	1
	1			8	6	3		
	2	5		7				8
	9						7	
8				2		6	3	
		9	4	6			1	
7	3							
8	4	7						9

Yesterday’s Solution 3711								
4	5	7	2	1	8	3	9	6
9	8	6	4	3	7	1	2	5
3	2	1	5	9	6	8	7	4
1	6	2	7	8	9	5	4	3
7	9	8	3	5	4	6	1	2
5	3	4	6	2	1	9	8	7
2	4	9	8	6	3	7	5	1
6	1	5	9	7	2	4	3	8
8	7	3	1	4	5	2	6	9

Yesterday’s Cross Word Solution 1720								
S	M	U	G			C		F
A			N	O	W		D	U
G	A	I	N			C	A	B
G		T	E	N	O	R		G
E	V	E				D	E	F
D	O	S	E	S			E	R
W		V	I	V	I	D		T
R	E	F	E	R		R	O	U
E	L	A	N		T	O	R	L
D		N				N	A	P

DISCLAIMER

The views in the articles published here are absolutely the views of the author and The Echo of India does not stand liable for them.

Sailing programme of
MV Swaraj Dweep for December-2022.

SCHEDULE-QEWSWARAJ-D-WEEEP							
ARRIVAL	DAY	PORT	DEPARTURE	DAY	VOY. NO	TIME in Hrs	REMARKS
		PORT BLAIR	06.12.2022	TUE	1022	1000	
09.12.2022	FRI	CHENNAI	14.11.2022	WED	1023	1600	
17.12.2022	SAT	PORT BLAIR	19.12.2022	MON	1024	1000	
22.12.2022	THU	VIZAC	23.12.2022	FRI	1025	1 600	
26.12.2022	MON	PORT BLAIR	28.12.2022	WED	1026	1000	
31.12.2022	SAT	CHENNAI					

Advance reservation of passenger tickets for the above sailing will commence from 01.12.2022

NABARD launches potential linked credit plan 2023-24 for ANI

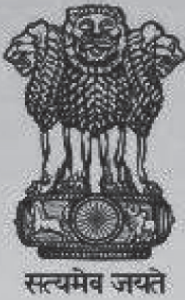
PORT BLAIR, NOVE 30/- / The NABARD Andaman & Nicobar RO, Port Blair organised UT level Credit Seminar on 30 November 2022 and launched the Potential Linked Credit Plan (PLP) 2023-24 for UT of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. Mr. C Arvind, Secretary, Finance was the chief guest and Mr. Suman Bakshi, RM, SBI, was the guest of honour. Potential for Priority Sector Lending for the financial year 2023-24 was estimated to the tune of Rs. 1032.23 crore. Potential for Farm credit (including crop production and term loan for agriculture) was assessed at Rs. 234.51

crore, Agriculture Infrastructure at Rs. 14.70 crore, Ancillary Activities at Rs. 26.40 crore, MSME at Rs. 560.29 crore, Export Credit at Rs. 63.75 crore, Education at Rs. 5.85 crore, Housing at Rs. 101.41 crore, Renewable Energy at Rs. 0.62 crore and Social Infrastructure involving bank credit at Rs. 7.08 crore. The major thrust areas of the PLP are promotion of Hi-tech agriculture, formation and linkage of Farmer Producer Organisations, doubling of farmers' income, capital formation in agriculture, creation of infrastructure for fisheries, and climate change adaptation.

Mr. H Manoj, General Manager/OIC, NABARD, while delivering the special address deliberated upon the objective of preparing the document, its methodology and its utility for the bankers, Administration, line departments and the Islanders. He also highlighted NABARD's key interventions during the current FY 22-23 which includes submission of GI application for Nicobari craft and Andaman Coconut and Rice, etc, SHG bank linkage programme, promotion of FPOs and dissemination of digital literacy awareness in every nook and corner of the Is-

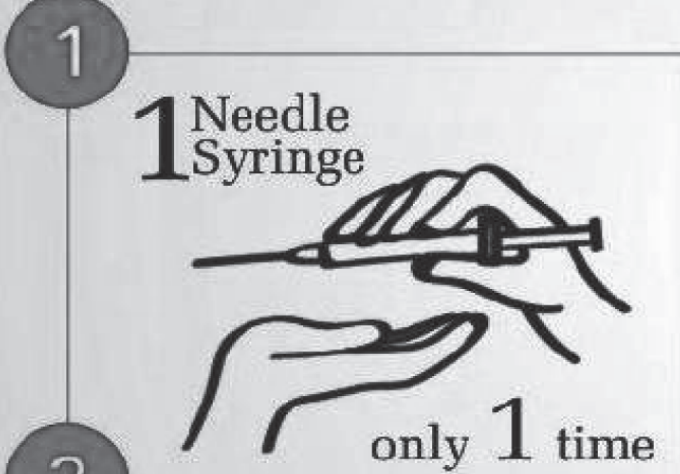


lands, computerisation, etc. A Convergence Meet was also organised during the Seminar to showcase and upscale the successful projects supported by NABARD and implemented by ICAR-lands, computerisation, etc. A Convergence Meet was also organised during the Seminar to showcase and upscale the successful projects supported by NABARD and implemented by ICAR-lands, computerisation, etc. A Convergence Meet was also organised during the Seminar to showcase and upscale the successful projects supported by NABARD and implemented by ICAR-



Know for No Hep C
Common Modes of Transmission

UNSAFE INJECTIONS
Reuse of needles and syringes



SHARING OF NEEDLES to inject drugs



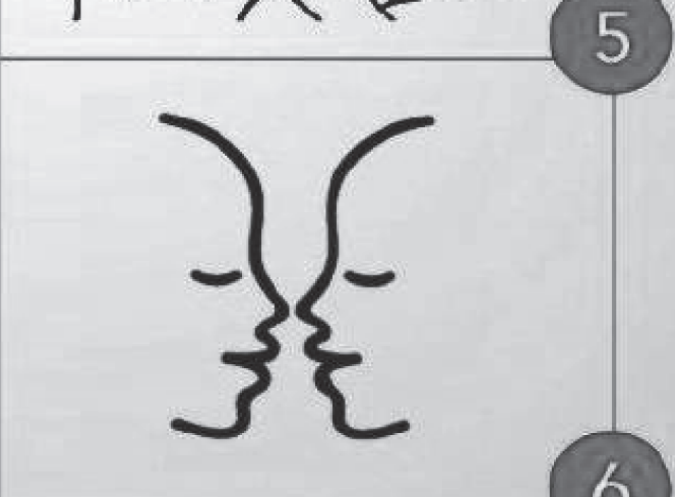
SHARING OF PERSONAL USE ITEMS
Razors, blades, nail clippers, toothbrushes etc.



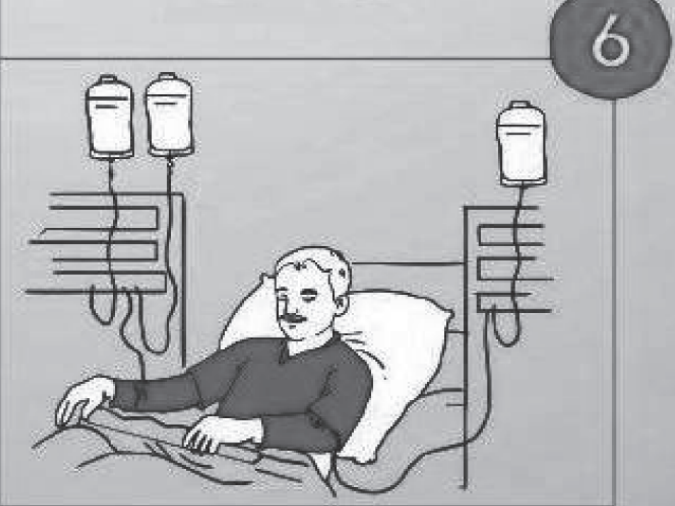
USE OF INFECTED NEEDLES & INK
For tattoos and nose, ear and body piercings



UNSAFE SEXUAL PRACTICES
Both heterosexual and homosexual



INFECTED BLOOD AND BLOOD PRODUCTS
Transfusion, dialysis etc



राष्ट्रीय वायरल हेपेटाइटिस नियंत्रण कार्यक्रम
NATIONAL VIRAL HEPATITIS CONTROL PROGRAMME
राष्ट्रीय स्वास्थ्य मिशन
NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION
पोर्टब्लेयर, अं और नि. द्वीप
PORT BLAIR, A & N ISLANDS



A collage of pictures showing chief minister Mamata Banerjee interacting with local woman Namita Mondal during her lunch and the CM trying her hands at the steering wheel of a vessel at Hasnabad —Photo : EOI

State govt extends 'Duare Sarkar' till Dec 5

KOLKATA, NOV 30 /--/ The West Bengal government on Wednesday announced the extension of 'Duare Sarkar', social outreach camps about its various projects, till December 5. As per the earlier notification issued in September, the Duare Sarkar camps (government at your door step) were being held from November 1 to November 30. Chief sSecretary H K Dwivedi said in a notice on Wednesday "the state government is pleased to announce that the schedule of the outreach camps is now extended and shall continue upto December 5, 2022." The state had on September 26 notified that Duare Sarkar and camps "at the habitation levels" (in localities) will be held from November 1 to 30. The fifth edition of the 'Duare Sarkar' in the current fiscal is aimed to reach out to people on benefits of nine welfare schemes like 'Khadya Sathi' (food and supplies), 'Swastha Sathi' (health), caste certificates to SC, ST and OBCs, 'Kanyashree' and 'Rupashree' at the camps during that time. The 'Kanyashree Prakalpa' is an initiative taken by the state government to improve the life and status of the girls by helping economically backward families with cash so that families do not arrange the marriage of their girl child before 18 years of age because of economic reasons. (PTI)

Mamata promises to address water woes, connectivity issues in N-24 Parganas

HASNABAD, NOV 30 /--/ Chief minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday promised to address water woes and connectivity problems in North 24 Parganas, and said a master plan to develop the Sundarbans region would soon be drafted and sent to Niti Aayog for its consideration. Mamata, who visited Taki College during the day, said its second campus would shortly come up in the district. People in Hasnabad were heard complaining of drinking water woes to the CM, who is in the district on a three-day visit. The chief minister immediately directed additional district magistrate (ADM) Preeti Goyal to facilitate the supply of drinking water to all homes in the area. "I've heard about your water-related problems. We are working on it. By 2024, we will connect all households with tap water. I'll ask ADM Preeti Goyal, who will be in charge of Sundarbans, to work with Public Health Engineering department and start supplying water within seven days," she told the villagers of Khapukur. Mamata also said that damaged roads would be rebuilt in the area. Banerjee had on Tuesday assured people of the region of improving infrastructure, with her government all set to create Sundarbans as a district "soon". Earlier in the day, the chief minister interacted with children at a primary school here, and distributed chocolates and soft toys among them. The CM also handed over winter garments and sarees to the locals of Khapukur in Hasnabad. During lunch, she stopped by the residence of a local woman, Namita Mondal. Mamata was seen relishing rice with 'Tangra' and 'Rupchand' fish. Mondal rued that she was yet to get benefits of the state government's Lakshmi Bhandar cash transfer scheme. The chief minister assured her of all possible help. (PTI)

Lapid stands by his comments against 'The Kashmir Files', says can recognise 'propaganda disguised as a movie'

JERUSALEM, NOV 30 /--/ Unfazed by the widespread criticism of his comments against the Hindi film "The Kashmir Files", Israeli director and IFFI international jury chair Nadav Lapid said he stands by his remarks as he "knows how to recognise propaganda disguised as a movie". Reacting to the backlash he received for calling "The Kashmir Files" a "vulgar" and "propaganda" movie, Lapid said making bad films is not a crime, but the Vivek Agnihotri directorial is "crude, manipulative and violent". "Making bad films is not a crime, but this is a very crude, manipulative and violent propaganda film," Lapid said in an interview with Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz. According to the filmmaker, he felt it was his "duty" to speak his mind as the head of the international jury. "The truth is that I also couldn't help but imagine a similar situation that

might happen one day soon in Israel, and I would be happy that in such a situation the head of a foreign jury would be willing to say things as he sees them. In a way, I felt it was my duty to the place that invited me," he said. The award-winning filmmaker had called out "The Kashmir Files", which was screened at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) on November 22 under the Indian Panorama section, at the closing ceremony of the nine-day festival in Goa on Monday. The team of "The Kashmir Files", including writer-director Agnihotri, stars Anupam Kher and Pallavi Joshi, several BJP leaders including Goa CM Pramod Sawant as well as Israel's Ambassador to India Naor Gilon and Consul General to Midwest India Kobbi Shoshani panned Lapid. Sudipto Sen, one of the members on the jury, said remarks expressed by the Israeli filmmaker were his "personal opinion". (PTI)

Excluding Tamil refugees from CAA's purview is discriminatory, DMK tells SC

CHENNAI, NOV 30 /--/ The ruling Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) has submitted before the Supreme Court that it is discriminatory to exclude Tamil refugees from the purview of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 and prayed that the legislation be declared null and void as it is unconstitutional and 'destroys the basic fabric of secularism.' The party sought the CAA to be declared unconstitutional as it is ultra vires of Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution and said the Act is 'arbitrary' as it relates to only three countries, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh and also covers only Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christian communities from such nations and expressly excludes Muslims. "The act deliberately keeps away the people belonging to Muslims who had suffered persecution in the three countries and therefore it is highly discriminatory and manifestly arbitrary," the DMK said. In an additional affidavit filed on behalf of the DMK in the apex court, the party's organising secretary R S Bharathi said that the Indian origin Tamils, who fled Sri Lanka due to persecution and now in India as refugees, are out of the ambit of the legislation. Bharathi contended that the Union government in its counter affidavit in October 2022 has categorically remained silent to the plight of the Tamil refugees. (PTI)

India, B'desh pledge to work together to curb terrorism as Indian envoy meets PM Hasina

DHAKA, NOV 30 /--/ Newly-appointed Indian High Commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina here on Wednesday during which they pledged to work together to curb terrorism in the region.

Verma, a 1994-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, met Hasina a month after presenting his credentials to President Abdul Hamid on October 27. "India has a policy for neighbouring countries. But Bangladesh gets the highest priority. Bangladesh always gets priority in any case," Verma was quoted as saying by a PMO spokesperson during his meeting with Prime Minister Hasina at her official Ganabhaban residence. Noting that Bangladesh is "a very good friend" of India, Verma said the two countries will work together to stamp out terrorism in the region. Echoing the envoy's comments, Hasina said Bangladesh has vowed not to allow terrorists to use its soil. "The ruling Awami League never ever pampers terrorism and it never allows the use of

Bangladesh soil for the purpose," the Bangladeshi Prime Minister said. She also said her government believes that terrorism has no religion and boundaries.

Hasina said she believes that Bangladesh and India could resolve all outstanding issues, including Teesta river water sharing, through dialogue. According to the PMO spokesperson, Verma told Hasina that bilateral trade and connectivity increased remarkably in recent times, while the Prime Minister said she expects Indian businessmen to invest in Bangladesh's economic zones. Bangladesh has 100 economic zones. Hasina and Verma also discussed the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) for facilitating economic relations between the two countries. Verma said India is willing to cooperate with Bangladesh in power and energy sectors. He appreciated the socio-economic development of Bangladesh under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Hasina, the PMO spokesperson said. (PTI)



India will succeed in handling inflation better: Sitharaman

NEW DELHI, NOV 30 /--/ Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday exuded confidence that India will succeed in handling inflation better as it has already put in place a "very good framework" in place to address supply side pressures on food prices. The retail inflation based on the consumer price index (CPI) has remained above the Reserve Bank's comfort level of 6 per cent since January. Virtually participating in 'Reuters NEXT' event, the finance minister also acknowledged that inflation due to imports of commodities like crude oil is going to persist. "We probably will succeed in handling inflation better and there is clearly a picture from the RBI that is on a downward slide and it will be well within the tolerance band by early next year or middle of next year," said the minister who is scheduled to present the Union Budget for 2023-24 early next year. Sitharaman further said inflation is going to be influenced by external factors but within India, "we are comfortable" in terms of agricultural supplies, and energy among

others. "I look forward to a good, fast growing Indian economy and the next year," the minister said. To a question related to crude oil prices, the minister said since February India has shown its stand which is in the country's interest. "I need to have affordable prices, I need to have those prices which are sustainable and above all global public goods will have to be available for everyone. "They cannot be weaponised. I would think if movement of goods is restricted, it is going to hurt some of us," she said. The finance minister said that India's import from Russia has gone up and countries in the West too are importing a lot more now from Russia, like fuel. "So India's imports, like many other countries, from Russia are going up because the price factor favours buying from Russia. India is not isolated in this... Those who are calling for price cap are themselves importing a lot more from Russia," Sitharaman said. When asked about Russia's interest in importing some items from India, the minister said India has already announced the rupee trade framework. (PTI)



Assembly Speaker Biman Banerjee, state minister and Kolkata mayor Firhad Hakim and others during a tour to Alipur Jail which was recently converted into a museum —Photo: Shyamal Maitra

Cong urges EC to take action against channels allegedly airing opinion polls ahead of 1st phase of voting in Gujarat



Polling officials collect EVMs and other election equipment at a distribution centre before leaving for their respective polling stations ahead of the first phase of Gujarat Assembly elections, in Surat

NEW DELHI, NOV 30 /--/ The Congress has urged the Election Commission to take strict action against the alleged airing of "sponsored" opinion polls on the Gujarat assembly election ahead of voting in the first phase on Thursday and claimed it was a brazen attempt to influence the electorate.

A delegation of Congress leaders led by AICC legal cell head Vivek Tankha met the Election Commission and apprised the poll body of the "violations by media". The Opposition party urged the EC to take action against news channels violating directions issued by it in respect of programmes related to the dissemination of election results. They alleged that the media channels were predicting the poll outcome in a bid to influence the voters and this was a serious issue. Tankha also claimed that they have information concerning the "safety of the ballot boxes" and urged the Commission to ensure there is no tampering. The Congress said it has observed that certain news channels have been publishing/publicising

programmes related to the dissemination of results for the 2022 Gujarat Legislative Assembly. "These programmes are publishing opinion polls" favouring one particular party over the other. The programmes and their result prediction about the prospects of the various political parties in the Gujarat elections clearly aim to influence the electors of the constituencies going to polls," the memorandum said. "The Commission must enforce what it commands. We request this Commission to utilise its powers under Article 324 of the Constitution of India to address the issue by passing immediate directions to the news channels," the memorandum also said. The Congress leaders urged the EC to act with urgency as these violations undermine the sanctity of electoral laws and the authority of the Commission. "We all went to the Election Commission and told it that the level playing field is being disturbed by the media. Ahead of polling tomorrow, they are giving results methodically, as if the result has come

beforehand," Tankha said. He said the exit polls are banned and predictions are banned, but still this is being done. "There is no fear of the Election Commission. The EC was worried about this issue and has assured us it will look into it as it was a serious matter. They also said that since this is a public interest issue, they will look into the steps to be taken in the future to check this," he said. Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinete alleged that some channels were indulging in putting out opinion polls almost 48 hours before Gujarat goes to polls in the first phase. "The opinion polls which are giving region-wise predictions, it is very methodical that they are almost predicting what the results will be. This is nothing but a blatant and brazen attempt to influence the voting pattern. And, this weakens our democracy," she said. Shrinete also said that they have brought this before the Commission and "the Commission has assured us that they will look into this matter and seemingly at a future date, they would perhaps look into the legal provisions as well". (PTI)

Suicide blast targeting police truck kills 4, injures over 20 in Pak

KARACHI, NOV 30 /--/ A suicide bomber from the banned Pakistani Taliban blew himself up near a patrolling police truck carrying security personnel to protect polio workers in the restive Balochistan province on Wednesday, killing at least four people and injuring 26 others, including 23 policemen.

The attacker targeted the paramilitary Constabulary truck in Quetta's Baleli area, which was going to provide security to polio workers at the ongoing drive. Quetta Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGP) Ghulam Azfar Mahesar confirmed the attack and said that a total of three vehicles were hit in the blast. "Looking at the crime scene and given that the truck toppled, it is estimated that 25 kilograms of explosives were used," he said. The death toll from the targeted suicide attack in Quetta rose further as another child died during treatment, Geo News reported. The attack killed a cop and a child on the spot, and reportedly left 26 including 23 cops wounded, it said. The death toll climbed to 4 after a woman and her child injured in the bombing succumbed to their injuries later in the day, the report quoted the hospital administration as saying.

Earlier, the hospital administration had said that most of the injured are out of danger. The banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) group claimed responsibility for the attack which came just two days after the group announced to call off its ceasefire. It said the attack was in retaliation for the killing of Abdul Wali also known as Omar Khalid Khurrassni killed in Afghanistan in August. Mahesar said that the explosion was a suicide attack as they have found the remains of a suicide bomber near the crime scene. Preliminary police investigations showed that a rickshaw hit the police truck. Authorities have declared an emergency in the hospitals of Quetta to treat the victims.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned the incident and directed the authorities to initiate an investigation into the attack. According to the state-run Radio Pakistan, the premier expressed grief and sorrow over the loss of life. He also said that polio workers across the country were fulfilling their responsibilities without caring for their lives. "Eliminating polio virus from the country is amongst the top priorities of the government and we will not rest until polio is completely eradicated," he said, asserting that "evil elements" would always fail to harm the anti-polio campaign in the country. President Dr Arif Alvi also condemned the attack and prayed for the forgiveness of the deceased and the recovery of the injured. He said that children were Pakistan's most valuable asset and the government was determined to protect them from diseases such as polio. "The State will not allow anti-social elements to interfere in the mission of complete eradication of polio," he said.

Former premier and PTI chief Imran Khan also expressed deep grief on the attack and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured people. Attacks on workers of the anti-polio vaccination drives in Pakistan have increased in recent times. In March this year, gunmen in northwestern Pakistan shot and killed a female polio worker as she was returning home after taking part in the country's latest anti-polio campaign. In January last year, armed gunmen shot dead a police officer guarding a team of polio vaccine handlers in northwestern Pakistan. Pakistan, along with Afghanistan, remains the last polio-endemic country in the world, according to the World Health Organisation. (PTI)

EU seeks specialised court to investigate Russia war crimes

BRUSSELS, NOV 30 /--/ The European Union proposed Wednesday to set up a U.N.-backed specialised court to investigate possible war crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine, and to use frozen Russian assets to rebuild the war-torn country.

European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen said in a video message that the EU will work with international partners to get "the broadest international support possible" for the tribunal, while continuing to support the work of the International Criminal Court. Since Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, his military forces have been accused of abuses ranging from killings in the Kyiv suburb of Bucha to deadly attacks on civilian facilities, including the March 16 bombing of a theatre in Mariupol that an Associated Press investigation established likely killed close to 600 people. Investigations of military crimes committed during the war in Ukraine are underway around Europe, and the Hague-based International Criminal Court has already launched investigations.

Ukrainian first lady Olena Zelenska on Tuesday also urged that Ukraine's invaders be held account as she addressed lawmakers in London. "Victory is not the only thing we need. We need justice," she said, comparing Russian war crimes to the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany in World War II. She called on Britain to lead efforts to set up a criminal tribunal to prosecute senior Russians over the invasion, similar to the postwar Nuremberg trials of leading Nazis.

Von der Leyen on Wednesday added that the 27-nation bloc wants to make Russia pay for the destruction it caused in neighbouring Ukraine by using Russian assets frozen under sanctions. She estimated the damage to Ukraine at 600 billion euros. "Russia and its oligarchs have to compensate Ukraine for the damage and cover the costs for rebuilding the country," von der Leyen said. "We have the means to make Russia pay." (AP)

Crunch time: UN puts baguette on cultural heritage list

PARIS, NOV 30 /--/ The humble baguette the crunchy ambassador for French baking around the world is being added to the UN's list of intangible cultural heritage as a cherished tradition to be preserved by humanity.

UNESCO experts gathering in Morocco this week decided that the simple French flute made only of flour, water, salt, and yeast deserved UN recognition, after France's culture ministry warned of a "continuous decline" in the number of traditional bakeries, with some 400 closing every year over the past half-century. The UN cultural agency's chief, Audrey Azoulay, said the decision honours more than just bread; it recognises the "savoir-faire of artisanal bakers" and "a daily ritual". "It is important that these craft knowledge and

social practices can continue to exist in the future," added Azoulay, a former French culture minister. With the bread's new status, the French government said it planned to create an artisanal baguette day, called the "Open Bakehouse Day", to connect the French better with their heritage. Back in France, bakers seemed proud, if unsurprised. "Of course, it should be on the list because the baguette symbolizes the world. It's universal," said Asma Farhat, baker at Julien's Bakery near Paris' Champs-Elysee avenue. "If there's no baguette, you can't have a proper meal. In the morning you can toast it, for lunch it's a sandwich, and then it accompanies dinner."

Despite the decline in traditional bakery numbers, France's 67 million people still

India's envoy at UN Amb Kamboj meets UNSG, PGA ahead of December UNSC Prez

UNITED NATIONS, NOV 30 /--/ As India gears up to preside over the UN Security Council for the month of December, the country's envoy here Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj met Secretary-General Antonio Guterres as well as President of the General Assembly Csaba Korosi and discussed priorities during its presidency of the powerful body.

India assumes the monthly rotating Presidency of the Security Council from December 1, the second time after August 2021 that India will preside over the Council during its two-year tenure as an elected UNSC member. "Today,

delighted to call on Secretary-General @antonioguterres.

Discussed the priorities and programme of work ahead of India's December Presidency in the @UN Security Council, " Kamboj tweeted on Tuesday. On Monday, Kamboj met Korosi, who tweeted: "Always a great pleasure to meet with @ruchirakamboj.



Ruchira Kamboj

India's PR Nations in New York sitting in the Today's President's seat at the powerful

discussions focused on India's presidency of the Security Council,

which begins on Thursday. I look forward to the month ahead." India's 2021-2022 term on the Council ends December 31, with Kamboj, India's first woman Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York sitting in the President's seat at the powerful

horseshoe table for the month.

India will also take over the year-long G20 Presidency from December 1. Countering terrorism and reformed multilateralism will be among the key priorities for India during its UNSC presidency which will culminate in the completion of its two-year tenure as a non-permanent member of the 15-nation powerful body. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will travel to New York to preside over "signature events" in the Security Council on renewed orientation for reformed multilateralism on December 14 and on countering terrorism on December 15. (PTI)

Ukraine welcomes arms offers, no word on Patriot missiles

BUCHAREST, NOV 30 /--/ Ukraine's foreign minister said Wednesday that NATO diplomats have given him a "number of new commitments" on arming his nation, but declined to say whether that included promises of badly wanted Patriot missile batteries.

Dmytro Kuleba spoke at a NATO foreign ministers' meeting in Bucharest, Romania. Equipping Ukraine with arms and equipment to rebuild its battered electricity grid to survive winter under Russian bombardment has been a top issue. At the gathering, "we heard a number of commitments, new commitments, from various NATO members with regard to providing Ukraine with more defensive weapons and energy equipment," Kuleba told reporters. Kuleba had declared Tuesday that Ukraine most needs Patriots and electrical transformers, to cope with what NATO says is a targeted Russian barrage of missile strikes aiming to cripple Ukraine's energy transmission grid as it moves into winter. Ukraine is seeking U.S.-made Patriot missile batteries or other air defense systems that are more advanced than those it has gotten so far from the United States and other allies to block Russian airstrikes.

Kuleba did not respond to repeated questions from a reporter ahead of a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken Wednesday about whether he had gotten any commitments on Patriots. "What is very clear to me is that support remains strong, resolute, determined" on the behalf of NATO foreign ministers to continue supporting Ukraine with weapons and other aid, Blinken said. (AP)

King Charles to inaugurate new gurdwara in eastern England

LONDON, NOV 30 /--/ Britain's King Charles III is expected to officially open a new gurdwara and learn about its work within the local community during his first tour as monarch of the eastern England region of Bedfordshire.

According to local media reports, the 74-year-old will inaugurate the Guru Nanak Gurdwara (GNG) Luton next Tuesday, speak to local volunteers about its langar service, an associated soup kitchen for the needy and Covid vaccine clinics during the pandemic. At the gurdwara, he will be greeted by Indian-origin Professor Gurch Randhawa, member of the local Sikh congregation and Director of the Institute for Health Research at the University of Bedfordshire. "We are delighted that King Charles will come to officially open our new gurdwara and recognise GNG's amazing work supporting local communities Langar service, Soup Kitchen, Covid Vaccine Clinics," the Guru Nanak Gurdwara Luton said in a Twitter statement. The building work for the new gurdwara commenced in 2020 and is described as an impressive 37 by 32 metres wide, three storeys high construction, built with the support of local donations. "The Gurdwara Sahib is an amalgamation of Sangat from Luton and the surrounding villages," it notes.

The gurdwara langar serves around 500 meals a day and the local community also runs the Luton Sikh Soup Kitchen every Sunday outside the Town Hall, serving around 150 meals. After meeting volunteers who run the Sikh School, King Charles will interact with children who are learning Punjabi and traditional music. He will then also meet local doctors who ran the Vaisakhi Vaccine Clinic during the pandemic, Luton Today reported. On his first visit as King to the area, he will also tour the Luton Direct Air-Rail Transit (DART) Parkway Station to find out about the new cable-drawn mass passenger transit system connecting Luton Airport Parkway railway station to London Luton Airport. He is then expected to take the short ride on the DART network. The King is expected to unveil new plaques during the course of his visit, which will commence at the Luton Town Hall. (PTI)

Hawaii volcano eruption has some on alert, draws onlookers



HILO, NOV 30 /--/ The first eruption in 38 years of the world's largest active volcano is attracting onlookers to a national park for "spectacular" views of the event, and it's also dredging up bad memories among some Hawaii residents who have been through harrowing volcanic experiences in the past.

It was just four years ago that Nicole Skilling fled her home near a community where more than 700 residences were destroyed by lava. She relocated to the South Kona area, only to find herself packing her car with food and supplies this week after Mauna Loa erupted late Sunday. Officials were initially concerned that lava flowing down the side of the volcano would head toward South Kona, but scientists later assured the public that the eruption migrated to a rift zone on Mauna Loa's northeast flank and wasn't threatening any communities. Still, the uncertainty is somewhat unnerving. "It just happened last night, so I really haven't had a lot of time to worry about it yet, basically," Skilling said Monday. "And thankfully, right now, it's at the northeast rift zone. But if it breaks on the west side, that's when we're talking about coming into a large populated area. ... That's why I do have a little bit of PTSD." Even though there were no evacuation orders, some people decided to leave their homes, prompting officials to open shelters in the Kona and Kau areas. Very few if any stayed in them overnight, Hawaii County Mayor Mitch Roth said, and they would be closing Tuesday. Despite that, some in the

area were preparing for unpredictable changes. Kamakani Rivera-Kekololio, who lives in the south Kona community of Hookena, was keeping supplies like food and blankets in his car. "We're being makaukau for anything," Rivera-Kekololio said, using the Hawaiian word for "ready." Ken Hon, scientist-in-charge at the Hawaiian Volcano Observatory, said Tuesday that the lava was flowing "not super fast" at less than 1 mph, though the exact speed wasn't yet clear. It was moving downhill about 6 miles (10 kilometers) from Saddle Road, which connects the east and west sides of the island.

The flow was likely to slow down about 4 miles (6.4 kilometers) from the road when it hit flatter ground. It was not clear when or if the lava would reach the road. It could hit flatter ground later Tuesday or Wednesday, according to Hon. "We're not even sure it will reach the highway, but that is certainly the next step in progress if it continues on these trends," he said, adding that it's also possible a fissure could open up and drain away some of the supply feeding the flow. The smell of volcanic gases and sulfur was thick in the air Tuesday along Saddle Road, where people were watching a wide stream of lava creep closer. Clouds cleared to reveal a large plume of gas and ash rising from an open summit vent above the flow. Gov. David Ige issued an emergency proclamation. "We're thankful the lava flow is not affecting residential areas at this time, allowing schools and businesses to remain open," he said in a statement. (PTI)

Supreme Court wrestles with Biden's deportation policy

WASHINGTON, NOV 30 /--/ The Supreme Court on Tuesday wrestled with a partisan-tinged dispute over a Biden administration policy that would prioritize deportation of people in the country illegally who pose the greatest public safety risk. It was not clear after arguments that stretched past two hours and turned highly contentious at times whether the justices would allow the policy to take effect, or side with Republican-led states that have so far succeeded in blocking it. At the centre of the case is a September 2021 directive from the Department of Homeland Security that paused deportations unless individuals had committed acts of terrorism, espionage or "egregious threats to public safety". The guidance, issued after Joe Biden became president, updated a Trump-era policy that removed people in the country illegally regardless of criminal history or community ties. On Tuesday, the administration's top Supreme Court lawyer told the justices that federal law does "not create an unyielding mandate to apprehend and remove" every one of the more than 11 million immigrants living in the country illegally.



Solicitor General Elizabeth Prelogar said it would be "incredibly destabilizing on the ground" for the high court to require that. Congress has not given DHS enough money to vastly increase the number of people it holds and deports, the Biden administration has said. But Texas Solicitor General Judd Stone told the court that the administration violated federal law requiring the detention of people who are in the US

illegally and who have been convicted of serious crimes. Chief Justice John Roberts was among the conservative justices who pushed back strongly on the Biden administration's arguments. "It's our job to say what the law is, not whether or not it can be possibly implemented or whether there are difficulties there, and I don't think we should change that responsibility just because Congress and the executive can't agree on something... I don't think we should let them off the hook," he said.



Yet Roberts, in questioning Stone, also called Prelogar's argument compelling. "It's impossible for the executive to do what you want it to do, right?" Roberts asked.

Roberts wasn't totally satisfied when Stone said the number of people potentially affected total 60,000 to 80,000. Justice Brett Kavanaugh said that whatever the actual number, "the resources still aren't there." The court's three liberal justices, on the other hand, were sympathetic to the Biden administration's arguments. Justice Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan, made clear they believed that Texas and Louisiana, which joined Texas in suing over the directive, weren't even entitled to bring their case. The case is the latest example of a Republican litigation strategy that has succeeded in slowing Biden administration initiatives by going to GOP-friendly courts. Kagan picked up on that during arguments, saying that Texas could file

its suit in a courthouse where it was guaranteed to get a sympathetic hearing and that one judge stopped "a federal immigration policy in its tracks."

In a separate ongoing legal dispute, three judges chosen by then-President Donald Trump are among the four Republican-appointed judges who have so far prevented the administration's student loan cancellation program from taking effect. The states said they would face added costs of having to detain people the federal government might allow to remain free inside the United States, despite their criminal records. Federal appeals courts had reached conflicting decisions over DHS guidance. The federal appeals court in Cincinnati earlier overturned a

district judge's order that put the policy on hold in a lawsuit filed by Arizona, Ohio and Montana. But in the separate suit filed by Texas and Louisiana, a federal judge in Texas ordered a nationwide halt to the guidance and a federal appellate panel in New Orleans declined to step in. In July, the court voted 5-4 to leave the immigration policy frozen nationwide. Conservative Justice Amy Coney Barrett joined the court's three liberals in saying they would have allowed the Biden administration to put in place the guidance.

At the same time, the court said it would hear arguments in the case in late November. The justices have several questions to sort through, whether the states should have been permitted to file their challenge in the first place, whether the policy violates immigration law and, if it does, whether it was appropriate for the Texas-based judge to block it. (AP)

10 terrorists killed by security forces in Pak's Balochistan

QUETTA, NOV 29 /--/ Security forces on Tuesday killed 10 suspected terrorists during an exchange of fire in the restive Balochistan province of Pakistan, a statement from the military's media wing said.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the terrorists were killed in an intelligence-based operation to clear a militant hideout in Hoshab area of the province. The terrorists were linked to

armed attacks on security forces and civilians, including the planting of improvised explosive devices on the Gwadar-Hoshab (M-8) road. "As security forces were in the process of establishing blocking positions after identification of 12-14 terrorists' locations, they opened fire onto the security forces. During the ensuing heavy exchange of fire, 10 terrorists have been killed while one terrorist has been apprehended in injured condition. (PTI)

French product, the baguette was said to have been invented by Vienna-born baker August Zang in 1839. Zang put in place France's steam oven, making it possible to produce bread with a brittle crust yet fluffy interior. The product's zenith did not come until the 1920s, with the advent of a French law preventing bakers from working before 4 am. The baguette's long, thin shape meant it could be made more quickly than its stodgy cousins, so it was the only bread that bakers could make in time for breakfast.

The "artisanal know-how and culture of baguette bread" was inscribed at the Morocco meeting among other global cultural heritage items, including Japan's Furu-yu-odori ritual dances, and Cuba's light rum masters. (AP)



Christian Pulisic helps USA down Iran 1-0 to secure knockout stage berth



TODAY'S MATCH
GROUP F:
Croatia vs
Belgium - 8:30
PM IST
GROUP F:
Canada vs
Morocco - 8:30
PM IST
GROUP E:
Japan vs
Spain - 12:30
AM IST
GROUP E:
Costa Rica vs
Germany -
12:30 AM IST

DOHA, NOV 30 /--/ Christian Pulisic fired the United States into the last 16 of the World Cup on Tuesday as the Americans

downed Iran 1-0 in their politically charged grudge match. Chelsea star Pulisic bundled home the do-or-die Group B game's only goal on 38 minutes to set up a second round clash with Group A winners the Netherlands on Saturday. "The first half we showed what we can do, soccer wise, the second half we showed what we could do determination wise," US coach Gregg Berhalter said after the win. "The guys grinded, gave every single ounce and we are undefeated going into the next round." Pulisic left the field at half-time after sustaining a heavy knock

while scoring his match-winning goal. "I can't say enough positive things about Christian," Berhalter said. "With this new injury it's stressful. I think I have less hair on my head now. But we'll take it and move on and go battle against Holland." The victory was no less than Berhalter's youthful side deserved in what was only the third international football clash between the bitter ideological rivals. The build-up to a pulsating showdown had been marked by steadily escalating tension, with Iran's Football Federation on Sunday demanding FIFA sanction US Soccer for posting a

modified version of their country's flag on social media. But despite an electrifying atmosphere at Doha's Al Thumama Stadium, the game played out without controversy as the US avenged their 1998 World Cup defeat to Iran to send the Asian qualifiers crashing out of the tournament. Iran's fans had roared their team onto the field at the start of the game amid a deafening cacophony of air-horns and cheers from the crowd of 42,127. But despite the intimidating reception it was the Americans who looked more comfortable. US captain Tyler Adams and Juventus' Weston McKennie controlled proceedings in midfield to leave Iran struggling to gain foothold. The US signalled their attacking ambition after only two minutes, Pulisic surging forward menacingly before being dispossessed. That was a shape of things to come as they laid siege to the Iranian goal. Valencia midfielder Yunus Musah shot over the bar and Pulisic just failed to get enough power on a header after a cross from Antonee Robinson. Fullback Sergino Dest was a constant threat down the right flank for the Americans, whipping a cross over in the 17th minute that Iran goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand could only parry. After sustained US

pressure, the breakthrough finally came in the 38th minute. A brilliant crossfield pass from McKennie picked out Dest down the right. The AC Milan defender headed back across goal and Pulisic was on hand to bravely finish. There was alarm for US fans with Pulisic needing sustained treatment after a heavy collision with Beiranvand but it was the Iranians and their noisy fans who were left winded by the goal. The crowd instantly became more subdued and the US twice came close to doubling their lead before half-time. Josh Sargent and Tim Weah combined well with a dazzling counter-attack but the final ball went astray. Then in injury time McKennie's sublime pass found Weah who finished brilliantly past Beiranvand only to be ruled just offside. Knowing that an equaliser would send them into the second round, the Iranians stepped up the pressure in the second half. But substitute Saman Ghoddos squandered two gilt-edged chances to get his team into the match, heading over from close range before blazing a shot over the bar on the 65th minute with the whole goal to aim at. Saeid Ezatolahi curled a long-range shot over the bar soon afterwards as the Americans continued to live dangerously. (AFP)

New Zealand win series against India after rain washes out final ODI

CHRISTCHURCH, NOV 30 /--/ A sloppy India lost the three-match ODI series against New Zealand 0-1 after rain washed out the third and final game here on Wednesday. Chasing 220, New Zealand were cruising at 104/1 in 18 overs, 50 runs ahead of the Duckworth-Lewis par score, when rain interrupted the game yet again in the white-ball series. Kane Williamson and Co, needing just 116 runs from as many as 32 overs, though had to be content with a 'no result' as the game was two overs short to be technically called complete. Having won the first ODI in Auckland by seven wickets, New Zealand thus sealed the series 1-0. The second match in Hamilton, too, was abandoned after two stoppages. Overall, only two matches in the six-ball white-ball series produced result, exposing the poor planning on part of the concerned authorities. (PTI)

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