



BIG BOOST TO SHIPPING SECTOR

500 pax capacity ship 'Nalanda' inducted into service

PORT BLAIR, OCT 27/--/ The Lt Governor, Admiral D. K Joshi (Retd) on Thursday commissioned the 500 capacity new passenger ship 'Nalanda' in the Shipping fleet of the Directorate of Shipping Services. At an official ceremony held at Haddo Wharf today, the formal induction of the Nalanda was done. The induction of the newly procured vessel will not only boost the shipping sector in the islands but will also provide big relief to the residents of islands who have been facing shortage of ships for commuting between islands.

Addressing the gathering, the Lt Governor described the induction of the newly acquired State of the Art vessel as a historic occasion and stated that in the last 5 years, about Rs. 90,000 crores has been invested for various infrastructure development and connectivity projects in A&N Islands. He said that Rs 1300 crore has been earmarked for the expansion plan of the shipping fleet which is one of the components of the Rs. 90,000 investment plan. Under this, two 500 pax vessels viz. Sindhu & Nalanda have been inducted and two 1200 pax vessels are under different stages of construction at Cochin Shipyard Ltd., the Lt. Governor remarked.

The Lt. Governor mentioned that the vision of Hon'ble Prime Minister is to improve connectivity and infrastructure facilities in A&N Islands so that the country can acquire a leading position among the developed countries and the A&N Administration is committed to achieve this vision. The Lt. Governor informed that a



Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between A&N Administration and CSL i.e. CANSRU (CSL-Andaman Nicobar Ship Repair Unit). He said, many initiatives under the different components of the MoU have been taken up, which include enhancement/upgradation of the entire workforce, infrastructure & hardware upgradation of the Marine Dockyard in A&N Islands. This will help in further improving the shipping sector, which is the lifeline of these Islands, the Lt. Governor added. Informing about the various infrastructure developments in Isles, the Lt. Governor disclosed about the coming up of an



International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT) at Campbell Bay which is also part of the Rs 90,000 crore investment plan in A&N Islands. He said, in the month of September, 2022 an amount of Rs.70,000 crore has been approved by the Ministry for different projects in A&N Islands and ICTT is also a part of the component. The proposed development of Green Field Deep Sea Port at Atlanta Bay in Diglipur will pave the way for A&N Islands to become a hub for Ship Repair & Ship Construction in Bay of Bengal, he said. In his address, the Chairman & Managing Director, Cochin Shipyard Ltd., Mr. Madhu S. Nair said, the construction of the vessel is due to sheer passion and commitment of the workers, engineers and team work of the Cochin Shipyard Ltd. This 'State of the Art' vessel is one of the best in the world, he said. Apart from these two 500 pax-cum- 150 ton cargo, Sindhu and Nalanda, the CSL is also constructing two 1200 pax vessels for A&N Administration, the CMD said. He also informed about the CSL's engagement with A&N Administration for ship building as well as to revamp the ship repair ecosystem in A&N Islands. Earlier, welcoming the chief guest and others present on the occasion, the Secretary (Shipping), Shri Kishore Kshirsagar Lakshman said, the Vessel Nalanda like its sister ship MV Sindhu which was inducted last year can carry 500 passengers and 150 tons of cargo. The addition of this ship in DSS fleet will bolster our capacity to provide services in the inter-island route as well as in the mainland route. The Shipping Department is committed towards providing services in different Islands, the Secretary said. To ensure

an uninterrupted shipping service, the Secretary said that the Shipping Department is committed to provide better services with the mantra 'Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas'. After inducting the vessel, the Hon'ble Lt Governor, took a walk around the vessel Nalanda and inspected passenger amenities available onboard. This all-weather vessel, has a length of 91 Mtr and can cruise at a speed of 16 Knt. The vessel is not only equipped with machinery of latest technology but also offers modern passenger amenities, with 12 Pax deluxe cabins, 32 Pax 1st Class Cabin and 36 Pax 2nd Class Cabin. The vessel also has 346 Bunks and 74 seats for passengers. The vessel also has 40 separate exclusive berths for unaccompanied ladies travelling onboard. The induction of this vessel will prove to be an important milestone which will not only enhance the operational capabilities across the Islands but also contribute in promoting safe and comfortable journeys for the passengers. The vessel on her maiden voyage will sail to Little Andaman with passengers tomorrow (Oct.28) at 1000 hrs from Haddo Wharf. The Chief Secretary (I/C), Smt. Nandini Paliwal, Adhyaksha ZPSA, Smt. Pramila Kumari, Chairperson, PBMC, Smt. Kavitha Udhaya Kumar, DGP, Mr. Neeraj Thakur, Senior Officers from Civil Administration & Defence, representatives of Cochin Shipyard Limited and SCI, staff of Directorate of Shipping Services were present on the occasion.

GSSS Ramnagar grapples with shortage of teachers



KURMA RAO

DIGLIPUR, OCT 27/--/ Students of Govt. Senior Sec School, Ramnagar under Diglipur Tehsil has been suffering due to shortage of teachers in the School. Due to transfer of two teachers i.e. GTT Social and GTT Science and two PST Teachers from Govt. Secondary School, Ramnagar to other nearest Schools, the studies of the students have been hampered.

Raising the issue with the Secretary, Education department, the Pradhan GP Ramnagar under Diglipur Tehsil urged him for an immediate solution to transfer these teachers back to their actual place of posting or provide substitute teachers in their place so that the studies of students is not hampered due to shortage of teachers. He further said that his Gram Panchayat has already brought in the notice of the higher authorities regarding the difficulties faced by the students and their parents due to shortage of teachers in the schools under Gram Panchayat Ramnagar. He urged the Secretary of Education to resolve the issues within a period of 15 days.

Left with no option, auto drivers, local youth take up repair of village road

KARTIK

MAYABUNDER, OCT 27/--/ Even as the Union Government has set an ambitious target to connect villages across the country with motorable roads, a crucial village road at Harinagar under Mayabunder Tehsil has failed to garner the attention of the authorities till date. Pockmarked with numerous craters and potholes, this village road at Harinagar Panchayat has been rendered almost unmotorable causing untold hardships to villagers. Despite repeated pleas to the concerned authorities, no action has been initiated to undertake the repair of this road stretch.

After finding that despite repeated pleas, no government agencies had been initiating action for repair of this village road, the auto drivers and local youths of Harinagar village came forward and started the repair work of this road in Ward No-1. Accordingly, all the potholes and craters in this road were filled by the local youth, along with the auto drivers.



Public transport vehicles like autos etc deny ferrying commuters on the broken stretch for fear of breakdowns. Private vehicle owners, who commute on the stretch, suffer frequent tyre rips and punctures and burn holes in their pockets for costly repairs. Many have also suffered injuries negotiating the tattered stretch.

Former CS arrives to appear before SIT

ROOPALALL

PORT BLAIR, OCT 27/--/ The former Chief Secretary, Mr. Jitendra Narain arrived Port Blair on Thursday to appear before the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing an allegation by a woman that she was gangraped by the former CS and others. According to sources, the former CS will be appearing before the SIT on Friday. The SIT is probing an allegation by a woman that she was gang-raped by the former CS and others.

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MCD polls will be fought on garbage issue, will clean Delhi in 5 years if AAP wins: Kejriwal

NEW DELHI, OCT 27 --/ Chief minister Arvind Kejriwal visited the Ghazipur landfill site Thursday and said the upcoming MCD polls will be fought on garbage issue as he promised to clean Delhi in five years if his AAP wins the civic body election. Ahead of Kejriwal's visit, drama ensued at the Ghazipur landfill site and roads leading to the area as scores of BJP supporters staged a protest, showed black flags and raised slogans against him. In turn, AAP workers also raised slogans against the BJP. Roads leading to the Delhi-Uttar Pradesh border near Ghazipur

witnessed traffic jams because of protests by both parties. Addressing the media at the landfill site, Kejriwal alleged the BJP in its 15-year rule in Delhi's three erstwhile municipal corporations gave three garbage mountains and filled the entire city with waste. "Ghazipur garbage mound is the mountain of BJP's bad deeds and corruption in civic bodies. The MCD poll will be fought on the issue of garbage. "BJP leaders abuse your son (Kejriwal), your Shravan Kumar who took you on pilgrimage. Will you tolerate this? Give them a reply in the upcoming MCD polls," the Delhi chief

minister said. About BJP workers protesting his arrival at the landfill site, he alleged the saffron party "don't let anyone visit here." "They deployed police personnel to protect this garbage mountain. All evil forces have conspired against us (AAP). They delayed MCD polls and segregated wards hoping that they will get seats. Let me tell them that this time even BJP supporters won't vote for them," Kejriwal claimed. The chief minister also alleged that the BJP "gobbled up Rs 2 lakh crore" during their 15-year rule in the civic bodies. "They claim that I did not give money to the MCD. In the

last 15 years they gobbled up Rs 2 lakh crore of which 1 lakh crore was given by



the Delhi government," Kejriwal alleged. Addressing the public at the landfill site, he accused the BJP of failing to clear the garbage mounds in Delhi in

the last 15 years and appealed to the public to entrust their faith in AAP in upcoming MCD polls.

Hitting out at Union home minister Amit Shah, Kejriwal said: "Earlier this month Shah abused me and alleged that the Delhi government did not give money to MCD but I want to ask him how much they have given to the civic bodies ever since BJP formed government at the Centre." "All they do is abuse me. They are only concerned about money. We have to win hearts. I am a magician and I know to win hearts. The Congress has been reduced to zero in Delhi and soon there will

come a day when BJP will become zero too. In future all BJP supporters will come to the AAP," he said. Kejriwal appealed to BJP supporters and workers to rise above party lines and for once think about Delhi and vote for AAP. "On my way here BJP supporters protested and showed me black flags. I want to tell them to protest against me if you want but for once please vote for Delhi and give your vote to AAP and we will clean the city in five years," the AAP national convener said. Kejriwal also appealed to the public to give him a chance in MCD in upcoming polls. (PTI)

Cong seeks white paper from Centre on 'plight of Kashmiri Pandits'

NEW DELHI, OCT 27 --/ The Congress on Thursday attacked the BJP over the alleged exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from south Kashmir's Shopian district and demanded that the Modi government release a white paper on the plight of the minority community during its eight-year rule.

The Opposition party also hit out at the BJP-led Centre over the targeted killings of Kashmiri Pandits in Jammu and Kashmir and said the government must apologise for it. As terrorists carried out a number of targeted killings recently, 10 Kashmiri Pandit families left their village, Choudharygund, in Shopian out of fear and reached Jammu, according to residents. Members of the minority community, who have since been camping in Jammu, ruled out any plan to return to the Valley. However, authorities in Shopian have attempted to put on a brave face by claiming no exodus of Kashmiri Pandits has taken place from the district. Addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters here, Congress' media department head Pawan Khera said that when the first migration of Kashmiri Pandits took place in 1989, V P Singh's government was in office with the BJP's support.

"In 1986, when the first riot against Kashmiri Pandits took place, Rajiv Gandhi's government was in office at the Centre. Kashmiri Pandits walked from the national stadium to Rajiv Gandhi's office, he heard them and Ghulam Mohammad Shah's government was brought down," Khera said. The BJP only talks of zero tolerance but what it actually means was shown by Rajiv Gandhi, he claimed. Slamming the Centre, Khera said 70 ministers of the government are carrying out an outreach programme in Kashmir and asked if any of them visited a camp of Kashmiri Pandits. "What is this outreach when you cannot reach out to the Kashmiri Pandits living in the camps there," he asked. Citing an order, the Congress leader also alleged that Kashmiri Pandit employees are being "threatened" to return to work against their wishes.

There have been 30 targeted killings of Kashmiri Pandits from January to October this year, he claimed. "We demand a white paper from the Modi government on the plight of Kashmiri Pandits. In the last eight years, all that has been done and not been done by this government should come out in that white paper," Khera said. "You (the government) will have to answer for the 80 killings. How is this normal, answer this," he added. Asked about Union minister Kiren Rijiju's article titled '75th Anniversary of Five Nehruvian Blunders on Kashmir', Khera said those leaders of the BJP who are students of "WhatsApp nursery" need to revisit their history classes. "If all that they are saying is true, how is it that during the Manmohan Singh era targeted killings stopped and 75 per cent of the people would participate in the democratic process of elections in the state? We would be happy to get the answer to that," he said. The BJP leaders have no idea of contemporary history of the country, he said. (PTI)

Kerala Guv is a disgrace to the Constitutional position he holds: Cong

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, OCT 27 --/ The Congress on Thursday launched a scathing attack on Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan, calling him a "disgrace to the Constitutional position he holds" and expressed doubts whether the ongoing fight between the Left government and the Raj Bhavan in the southern state is a "shadow boxing bout like previous ones."

The Congress' national leadership hit out at the Governor after a row over his letter to the chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan seeking action against finance minister K N Balagopal. "The Kerala Governor is an all-party man. He has been in many political parties in his career. He is frankly a disgrace to the Constitutional position he holds much like his counterpart in Maharashtra and other states", AICC general secretary (media and communication) Jairam Ramesh told PTI. The party national leadership's statement referring to Khan's associations with various other political parties before coming closer to the BJP came a day after a row erupted in Kerala over Khan's letter to the chief minister seeking "constitutionally appropriate" action against finance minister Balagopal for making a speech "undermining India's unity," and the latter turning down the demand firmly.

"But this could well be a shadow boxing bout like previous ones," Ramesh said in a communication to PTI. With regard to the fight between the CPM-led LDF government and the Governor over various issues, the state Congress leadership had often stated that the duel between them was a fake encounter to fool the people. The ongoing fight between the Governor and the Left government escalated further after Khan informed Vijayan that "a minister who deliberately violates the oath and undermines the unity and integrity of India cannot continue to enjoy my pleasure." "In these circumstances, I am left with no option but to convey that finance minister Balagopal has ceased to enjoy my pleasure", the Governor had said in an unprecedented action. (PTI)

Shah attacks former Haryana CMs over regional bias, says Khattar curbed corruption, lawlessness



Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation, Amit Shah at the inauguration and foundation laying ceremony of various development projects, in Faridabad. Haryana CM Manohar Lal Khattar (extreme Left) is also seen

FARIDABAD, OCT 27 --/ Union home minister Amit Shah on Thursday accused previous Haryana chief ministers of favouring their own regions and said in Manohar Lal Khattar, the state has after a long time got a chief minister who is undertaking its all-round development.

The Manohar Lal Khattar government has curbed corruption and lawlessness in Haryana, Shah added. He alleged that the Bhopinder Singh Hooda-led Congress government was marked by corruption and also hit out at the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) regime led by Om Prakash Chautala, without taking his name. The home minister said: "Remember Haryana eight years before. When one government was formed, corruption used to be rampant and during another government's time 'goondaism' (hooliganism)

used to rise. "But the Khattar government did not allow corruption and ended 'goondaism'." Addressing a Jan Utthan rally, Shah said the Khattar government had worked to change Haryana during its eight years and added that a long time after Independence, the state had got a chief minister who worked for its all-round development.

"Earlier, chief ministers either used to be of Sirsa or Rohtak, they were not of Haryana. But Khattar is the chief minister of the entire Haryana," he said. Former chief minister and INLD President OP Chautala belongs to Sirsa, while Hooda is from Rohtak. Sharpening his attack on Hooda, Shah said: "When Hooda's 3-D government was in power... One sees 3D film, but in the entire country, only Hooda showed a 3D government. "In this, there were the 'darbaris' (courtiers), 'damaad'

(referring to Sonia Gandhi's son-in-law Robert Vadra) and 'dealers'. Later, a BJP government which undertook development was formed in its place," Shah stated.

The home minister also praised Khattar for being a "true gentleman" and said when the BJP won majority in the 2014 polls in Haryana, Shah, as BJP chief, asked Khattar to be the chief minister. Khattar, however, gave him a list of 15 names of leaders who could be the chief minister instead of him.

While the BJP achieved a simple majority on its own in Haryana for the first time in 2014, it fell short in 2019 and formed a government in alliance with the Jannayak Janta Party. Earlier in the day, Shah laid the foundation stone of the Haryana Orbital Rail Corridor and inaugurated three other projects worth Rs 6,629 crore. (PTI)

Coimbatore blast probe handed over to NIA

NEW DELHI, OCT 27 --/ The Centre on Thursday decided to hand over to the NIA the probe into the recent blast near a temple in Coimbatore, officials said. The decision came after Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin recommended an investigation by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) into the

Sunday blast in which an engineer was killed. "The Union home ministry decided to hand over the Coimbatore blast case to the NIA," an official said. The Tamil Nadu government said the decision to recommend the probe handover to the Central anti-terror agency was taken as there is involvement of factors

"extraneous to the state" and "possible international links". On Sunday, a car loaded with two gas cylinders exploded near a temple in Coimbatore. It was being driven by one Jameesha Mubin, a 29-year-old engineering graduate. Mubin had attempted to get past a police check post near the temple, but fled after failing to do so, state police

chief C Sylendra Babu told reporters on Monday. Police have arrested five people who had been in contact with Mubin, and charged them under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Mubin was under the NIA radar in 2019 in the aftermath of the Easter bomb blasts in Sri Lanka, but no case was filed against him, police said. (PTI)

Gujarat Assembly polls: BJP begins process for selection of candidates

AHMEDABAD, OCT 27 --/ The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Thursday initiated a process to collect feedback from party workers at the local level in Gujarat for selection of candidates for the upcoming state Assembly polls. Elections for the 182-member Gujarat Assembly are due in December, and the state is likely to witness a three-cornered fight - among the BJP, Opposition Congress and the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) - this time. Beginning Thursday, a three-member team of observers appointed by the BJP for each of 33 districts and five major cities in Gujarat

started meeting party workers. The process will go on for three days, during which the teams will take into account the views of the ticket aspirants from every constituency, party members said. As part of the process, a report will be prepared by the observers on the basis of the feedback, which will be submitted to the state BJP. It will form the basis for the selection of candidates for the upcoming polls, they added. A total of 38 teams, which include current and former ministers, Members of Parliament (MPs), senior office-bearers at the national, state and district levels, among others, have been

formed for the purpose, the party leaders said. "From today, the state BJP began the process of interacting with party workers invited here for allocation of tickets. Workers gathered today to give their opinion for Dholka, Dhandhuka and Daskroi Assembly seats in Ahmedabad district. The observers appointed by the state BJP will hear the workers one by one as their turn comes," BJP's Ahmedabad district president Harshad Giri told reporters.

Jamnagar city BJP president Vimal Kagathara said as per the process followed by the BJP, a panel

of three observers will complete the task of taking the opinion of party workers for the two seats of Jamnagar. Liked the last election, the BJP will win both the seats in Jamnagar through micro planning, he said. Party workers gathered in large numbers to meet the observers, with some of them expressing willingness to contest the elections. Vadodara Mayor Keyur Rokadia said the collection of feedback by observers is a smooth democratic process carried out by the BJP. "As part of this, three observers are visiting here. They will interact with party workers from different Assembly

No case of new Omicron sub-variants reported in Karnataka: Health minister

MYSURU, OCT 27 --/ Karnataka health minister K Sudhakar on Thursday said there is no need to worry about new Omicron sub-variants, as they have not been reported in the state.

All necessary precautionary and preventive measures are being taken by the administration, especially in the border districts, said the minister, who also advised people to take the booster dose of



K Sudhakar

the coronavirus vaccine at the earliest. "There is no worry as such, as other than in Maharashtra, where one case has been reported, the new variants have not been identified in the state. There is no need for worry, but we are cautious," Sudhakar said. Speaking to reporters here, he said the state government has already issued guidelines; instructions and details have been shared with administrations in the border districts, and accordingly precautionary measures are being taken.

With the festive season as well as the reporting of new Omicron sub-variants such as BQ.1, BA.2.3.20 and XBB in the country, the state's health department has issued a Covid advisory to the public. It also asks people with symptoms like fever, cough, cold, sore throat and breathing difficulty to compulsorily get tested and isolate themselves until they receive the results, and those with breathing difficulty should urgently seek medical care, preferably in a hospital, among others.

Asked whether wearing of face masks will once again be made compulsory, he said: "We have not reached such a situation, but things are being studied and analysed. It will also be discussed with the Technical Advisory Committee on Covid." "There is no need for worry, but my advice to the people is to take a preventive third dose of vaccination at the earliest," he added. (PTI)

Union minister seeks probe by CBI or SC judge into 'attempt to lure' TRS MLAs

HYDERABAD, OCT 27 --/ Union minister G Kishan Reddy on Thursday refuted the allegations that the BJP was trying to lure legislators of the ruling TRS in Telangana into its fold, and demanded an inquiry by CBI or a sitting judge of the Supreme Court, into the whole episode.

Speaking to Reporters on the TRS claims that the BJP was resorting to clandestine method to entice its legislators thus trying to destabilize the state government, Reddy said the imminent defeat in Munugode bypoll is haunting Kalvakuntla family (Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao's family). Calling it a 'big conspiracy' by TRS party, he alleged that they resorted to this kind of new game as their defeat is imminent in Munugode by-poll. If the TRS government has purity of mind, I request that the case be handed over to the CBI. I am asking whether the state government is ready for this? I am giving two options. Either you get it inquired by a Supreme Court sitting judge or hand over to the CBI as this case is an interstate issue.

The Union minister alleged that the script, direction and actors in the whole episode have been supplied by Pragathi Bhavan, the CM's official residence and camp office. Reddy wondered why details such as quantum of cash found at the scene, its source and who gave it, have not been revealed so far. The minister ridiculed that the four MLAs were worth Rs 400 crore and sought to know what the BJP would gain if those legislators joined it. The Cyberabad police detained three people and registered an FIR against them alleging that they tried to coax four TRS legislators into defecting the party.

As per the FIR copy, Rohith Reddy, one of the four TRS MLAs alleged that the accused offered him Rs 100 crore and in return the legislator has to leave TRS and contest as BJP candidate in the next Assembly elections. They also offered him civil contract works from the Union government besides higher positions and monetary benefits. The accused also threatened that if the TRS law maker does not heed, then ED and CBI cases will be filed against him. They also warned that the TRS government in the state will be toppled. (PTI)

segments and collect their feedback. They will also get a sense of the political situation at the ward level, so that the process of selection of candidates is carried out smoothly. I am here as part of the same," Rokadia told newsmen. A corporator from Vadodara said: "I am here to claim my candidature on the basis of my capability. I am connected to the people of the locality through my social work, and have won the civic body polls. Whoever is the candidate, we will win all the seats in Vadodara." Ministers Jagdish Panchal, Brijesh Merja, Manisha Vakil, Harsh Sanghavi, former ministers

Bhupendrasinh Chudasama, Atmaram Parmar, Ganpat Vasava, MPs Ranjan Bhatt, Geeta Rathwa, Bharti Shiyal, among others, are members of the teams of observers. After collecting the data, these 38 teams will submit the names of ticket seekers to the party's state leadership, who will then shortlist and make a panel of three names each for every seat and send it to the central parliamentary board of the party.

The parliamentary board will then clear the names, sources in the party said. In the 2017 Assembly elections, the BJP had won 99 seats, while the Congress had bagged 77 seats. (PTI)



Mr. Madhu S Nair, CMD, Cochin Shipyard Limited called on Admiral D K Joshi (Retd.), Lt Governor of A&N Islands on Thursday. During the meeting, they discussed operationalisation of CANSR (Cochin Andaman & Nicobar Ship Repair Unit) and realization of its fullest potential given that new major Greenfield ports & International Container Transhipment Terminal are also in pipeline for development.



Mr. Vinod Sevan Lal Chandrakar, Parliamentary Secretary, Govt. of Chhattisgarh, MLA - Mahasamund Assembly & Mr. Vikas Upadhyay, Secretary-All India Congress Committee (AICC), MLA, Raipur West, on visit to A&N Islands called on Admiral D K Joshi (Retd.), Lt Governor of A&N Islands today at Raj Niwas to discuss the 3rd National Tribal Dance Festival 2022 to be held at Raipur & participation of Andaman & Nicobar Administration contingent.

Hall tickets for combined recruitment exam released

PORT BLAIR, OCT 27/--/ In continuation to the Vacancy Notice dated 01.08.2022, the Hall Tickets for the combined recruitment written examination for filling various Group C posts under the A & N Administration scheduled to be held on

20.11.2022 in two shifts has been released and will be available online w.e.f. 27.10.2022 from 4pm onwards. Accordingly, the applicants may visit the Portal: <https://karnic.andaman.gov.in> and <https://andaman.nic.in> for downloading the Hall Tickets.

Covid-19 guidelines for travellers

PORT BLAIR, OCT 27/--/ In supersession to earlier orders and circulars issued from time to time by A&N Administration regarding COVID management in A&N Islands following are the COVID-19 protocols to be followed for travellers in A&N Islands with immediate effect:

*All asymptomatic children below 12 years of age are exempted from the RT-PCR test to travel to A&N Islands by sea/air route.

*People above 12 years of age intending to travel from mainland who are not vaccinated / partially vaccinated against COVID-19 will have to undertake RT-PCR test in mainland within 48 hours before commencing such journey to A&N Islands. They will also be tested at Point of Entry.

*All asymptomatic passengers undertaking journey to inter-island sectors are exempted from any type of COVID-19 testing irrespective of their vaccination status.

*All symptomatic passengers travelling from mainland or travelling to inter-island sectors must undergo RT-PCR testing within 48 hours of commencement of journey irrespective of their age group and vaccination status.

Exposure visit for NCS students to ICAR-CIARI



PORT BLAIR, OCT 27/--/ An educational trip was conducted for 65 students representing Class IX & X of Navy Children School (NCS), Port Blair, along with five faculty on the ongoing R & D activities in organic farming, soil water conservation and watershed management, Integrated Farming System, Specialty flowers & Dragon fruits at Garacharma Research Complex of ICAR-CIARI, Port Blair on 26th and 27th October 2022.

Dr. Sirisha Adaml, Scientist (Land & Water Management Engineering) dwelt in length and gave practical exposure on the subject viz Organic

Farming, Integrated Farming System & Water Shed management. Beside the students were informed about the role of Agricultural Economics in production system by Dr. R. Jaya Kumaravaradan, Scientist (Agricultural Economics), and on the IoT of computer application in agriculture by Mr. D. Karunakaran, Scientist (Computer Application in Agriculture), Dr. V. Baskaran, Principal Scientist (Floriculture) exposed the students on the importance of specialty flowers, & dragon fruits. Earlier Dr. S.K. Zamir Ahmed, Principal Scientist (Agricultural

Extension) welcomed and introduced the Institute and its role in furthering agriculture in these Islands, beside he stressed on building up scientific temperament, and becoming the ambassador of ICAR-CIARI hereafter.

The students expressed their happiness on the knowledge gain due to exposure to ICAR-CIARI and interacted with the team of Scientists to get their doubts cleared. They also showed interest in seeing

the other activities during future visit.

The two days visit was coordinated by the team, of Social Science comprising of Dr. S.K. Zamir Ahmed, Principal Scientist & In-charge, Social Science, Dr. R. Jaya Kumaravaradan, Scientist, Shri. D. Karunakaran, Scientist, along with Shri Ali Akbar, Technical under the plan & guidance of Dr. Eaknath B Chakurkar, Director, ICAR-CIARI, Port Blair.

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Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

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There is hardly any personal defect which an agreeable manner might not gradually reconcile one to

Jane Austen

‘GM mustard neither Swadeshi nor safe’

The permission for environmental release of genetically modified mustard has not gone down well with green experts. In fact, Sangh Parivar too has opposed the move, joining their objections after the approval given by the Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee under the Union Environment Ministry. They fear that the commercial cultivation of GM mustard could have an adverse impact on human health and food security. Surprisingly, the Sangh Parivar too has opposed the move, claiming it is “neither Swadeshi, nor safe”. RSS-affiliate Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM) has also urged the government to take cognizance of the committee’s action when it knows there is so much opposition to GM mustard introduction.

The GEAC, the country’s regulator for genetically modified organisms, recommended the environmental release of mustard hybrid DMH-11 for its seed production and testing as per existing ICAR guidelines and other extant rules/regulations before commercial release. The transgenic mustard hybrid DMH-11 has been developed by the Centre for Genetic Manipulation of Crop Plants (CGMCP) at Delhi University. The government has so far approved (in 2002) only one GM crop, Bt cotton, for commercial cultivation. Those supporting commercial cultivation of GM crops say its benefits include greater food security due to increased yields, reduced costs for food production, reduced need for pesticides and resistance to pests and disease.

Kavitha Kuruganti, the founder of the Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture, said: “The claim that GM mustard will increase yield is not supported by the data submitted by the crop developers to the regulator.” Kuruganti, who is a member of the Coalition for GM-free India, said Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav had earlier voiced his views against GM crops. “It is the regulator which has given a green signal. The minister should not approve it,” she said. In a statement, the Coalition for a GM-Free India said: “This compromises biosafety in serious and objectionable ways, and we ask the government not to move forward in allowing this dangerous herbicide tolerant food crop in India.” The coalition had recently written to Yadav that GM mustard uses the pretext of creating hybrid technology in a plant like mustard but in effect is a herbicide tolerant crop. The entire biosafety assessment of GM mustard so far has not taken this fact into account. Also ignored in the regulatory tests is the fact that a deadly herbicide like glufosinate will be used along with this GMO (there is adequate evidence of adverse impacts of this herbicide on health and environment for this to have raised warning bells for our regulators; this includes the emergence of ‘superweeds’).

GM mustard is a herbicide tolerant and toxic hybrid that will dramatically increase the presence of toxic chemicals in our food and soil and hence, impact health, said Rohin Kynar, Senior Agriculture Campaigner, Greenpeace India. But, the president of the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences Dr T Mohapatra has welcomed the government’s decision saying the GM mustard is likely to play an important role in driving the country towards self-sufficiency in edible oil production. Another BT Cotton in the making.

Congress has to do a lot to take on BJP in Himachal

REFLEX ACTION

Sushil Kutty

Most times we forget there is also Himachal Pradesh in the Union. Tucked between Punjab and the high Himalayas, largely Hindu-dominated with a burgeoning Muslim-led demographic change. This is a state nestling in the lower reaches of the Himalayas, a paradise on earth largely gone unnoticed because the pure-driven snow hasn’t so far been shaken and stirred by the rip-roar of too many contentious issues.

Or, are we wrong? Himachal Pradesh these days is preparing for another assembly election. And November 12 is the Election Commission-set date for a good day of voting. Right now, sturdy men of the hills are lugging electronic voting machines to nooks and crannies of Himachal Pradesh in preparation of November 12 and what the day holds for the idyllic state with a rugged exterior. And, unlike the multi-polar of most plains-states, Himachal Pradesh, as usual, will witness a bipolar contest between the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Congress, though for several tantalizing days, it did look like the broom-wielding Aam Aadmi Party would make it three-cornered fight with a potential Punjab-like sweep with the “jhaadu”.

But only witches hitchhike by broom! And, with apologies to AAP convener Arvind Kehriwal, Himachal Pradesh is the land of “devis” and “devtas”. The Delhi Chief Minister had recently let it out that he shares ‘Janmashtami’ with Lord Krishna and had been sent to rid Modi’s home-state Gujarat of the ‘Kans’ who have been depriving Gujarat of state of the art Delhi-model government schools. Himachal Pradesh has no such schooling problems and, therefore, can do without a Manish Sisodia! But the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Congress aren’t sitting idle because there is no AAP in the fray to fray

nerves. AAP or no AAP, nothing will dent the three-decade old Congress-BJP electoral rivalry with both parties forming governments every consecutive five years. However, like happened in Kerala, where the CPM-led LDF found favour with the electorate for a second straight term, surprising the Congress-led UDF, Himachal Pradesh too could reward the BJP with another five years in office. That said, the electorate cannot be trifled with. Electoral democracy quite often does let one slip through. The hilly terrain is natural for bouncers. And AAP can come from behind to hit both the contenders.

So, every passing night is bringing Himachal closer to D-day. At least one Opinion Poll has predicted a winning lead for the BJP with the AAP dredging the bottom, and the Congress sandwiched. AAP’s promised freebies may or may not find traction, but that is conjecture. What runs through the heads of the electorate is hard to pinpoint in a fluid state. That beingsaid, the bitter cold months in the hill-state could do with an excise minister of the right proof. AAP’s Manish Sisodia has the gift to set the bar high. Sisodia is New York Times-endorsed set against the perennially-trolled in bold letters Modi. AAP, if it does a ‘Punjab’ in Himachal, will be the toast of more than half of India, and feted in columns and pictures by the Western media. Kejriwal will join Sisodia in the ‘NYT Hall of Fame’.

Meanwhile, the BJP is flaunting the past five years’



People queue to purchase sweetmeats from a shop in north Kolkata for Bhaifonta ceremony--Arijit Ganguly

Indian economy has potential for high growth but job generation too low

After International Monetary Fund recognized India as a bright spot in a gloomy world economy in view of the impending recession, high inflation and none too comfortable geo-political situation. It is true that India is better off than other major economies where the slowdown and economic woes are much more. This does not give us solace as Indian economy too is slowing down though not as rapid and drastic as other major economies. The future is bright but there are major economic woes which need immediate fixing that too through big ticket structural reforms. Immediate short-term prospects of the economy is not that bright as is made out to be as there are cracks in macro-economic fundamentals which were otherwise strong for quite a while now.

Ever since demonetization in 2016, India’s growth story had taken a hit with the economy slowing down quarter after quarter and during Covid Pandemic, it took a further hit as all the economies in the world, slipping into the negative territory. This year the economic recovery was quite rapid unlike other major economies earning kudos from IMF and World Bank. But structural weaknesses have come to the fore making the picture gloomy in the short-term. In the long-term, India could become a \$25 trillion economy when it completes 100 years of independence in 2047, but all economic indicators paint a gloomy picture in the next few years. The problems are many.

To begin with, the immediate problems are jobless growth, inflation, sliding rupee, depleting foreign exchange reserves, widening current account deficit, slowing exports growth, poor infrastructure, tardy and

delayed implementation of projects, poor health of power companies and bad state of affairs of public enterprises. There are too many problems in the plate and these needed to be fixed to get back to high growth path on a sustained basis. India is needed to have high growth every year in the next couple of decades to ensure that poverty is eradicated and most of the working age population is gainfully employed. With majority of the 1.3 billion population being youth, it is necessary that India achieved a real growth of 6.5 to 7 per cent annually, which meant that GDP growth would have to be at least 8-9 per cent annually.

To elaborate this gloomy scenario, Consumer price index surged to 7.4 per cent in September as against 7 per cent in August. According to Crisil CPI inflation is expected to remain elevated above RBI tolerance band of 6 per cent and with food inflation accelerating, there is bound to be more hardship to particularly poor sections of the society. Steepening and broadening decline in Index of Industrial Production is not a good news for the economy. IIP declined 0.8 per cent on year in August compared to 2.3 per cent growth in the previous month. This marked the third successive month of IIP slowdown, and the first month of decline since February 2021.

Manufacturing sectors drove the decline in IIP. Export oriented sectors were hit by slowing global growth. Domestic-oriented sectors too

witnessed falling activity. Crisil, analyzing this data, is of the view that downside risks to the industrial outlook are expected to increase with intensifying global slowdown over the next 12 months. The hit to agricultural incomes from uneven monsoon could hurt domestic demand prospects. Overall the industrial outlook looks bleak in the immediate future, which meant more job losses, hurting poor, lower and upper middle class.

CMIE emphasized that headwinds of high inflation and high interest rates to dampen the festive spirit this year. It also felt that growth projections were being lowered because the estimates projected earlier were too optimistic. But the month of October has started off well with some positives in the economy.

CMIE feels there are some good news with regard to unemployment rate, which fell to 6.4 per cent in August 22. This is the lowest unemployment rate in India since August 2018. According to Mahesh Vyas of CMIE, this is a “bonanza” because it comes along with an increase in the labour participation rate. This meant that employment as gone up and the rewards are spread across rural and urban regions. This may be music to ears, but the fact is that jobs are still scarce commensurate with the requirement and hence it will be quite a while before the job market gets back its buoyancy that existed before demonetization in 2016. Notes economist, Pronab Sen is of the view

that India needed to have a real GDP growth of 6.5 per cent at least to ensure adequate jobs are created to meet the growing demand. At the moment “we are not there” as real growth is around 4-4.5 per cent, he rued.

Another positive development, according to CMIE is that consumer sentiments at 30-month high as it vaulted by an impressive 7 per cent in September. Household expressed greater propensity to spend and also were quite gung-ho about their future wellbeing. Both the index of current economic conditions and the index of consumer expectations increased handsomely during the month. Vyas said this is promising as India have changed track in recent months.

Yet another good news is private sector investment. Indian private corporate sector has increased its interest in setting up new productive capacities. New private corporate investment announcements have risen to Rs 4.6 trillion in 2022. But public enterprises investments are not that encouraging. This meant Industrial outlook is not firing on all cylinders.

There are some positives in an overall gloomy economic scenario. There are some signs of recovery but there is a long way to go. Continued efforts to push structural reforms is the key that India returned to high growth path when World economy recovered from the recessionary, inflationary and difficult geo-political scenario. India is certainly a bright spot. But if global recession persists longer than expected and geo-political scenario worsens in months to come instead of improving India’s economic appletart could face problems. So there is need to keep our fingers crossed. (IPA)

Conventional Crossword

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ACROSS

1 Large crowd
3 Tumbled
6 Golf club
7 Early freshness
9 Fissure
10 Wrath
11 Be adjacent to
13 Dull blue
16 Replenish
18 Hospital room
19 Liable
20 Australian river
21 Droop
23 Direction
24 Ice cream holder
25 Acceptance

DOWN

2 Mannequin
4 United
4 Way out
5 Fate
6 Dialect
8 Falter
9 Ill-mannered
12 Swathes
14 Country
15 Company of eight
17 Earnings
18 Caution
20 Dry, of champagne
22 Respectful fear

SUDOKU:3678

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Yesterday's Solution3677

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

Yesterday's Cross Word Solution1686

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Looking forward to key UNSC counter-terrorism meet in India: US

UNITED NATIONS, OCT 27 /--/ Ahead of the 2-day UNSC counter-terrorism conference to be hosted by India, the US has described it as an important meeting to strengthen bilateral ties between the two countries to combat the global menace. India for the first time will be hosting the special meeting of the United Nations Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) which will discuss the overarching theme of Countering the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes'. Senior American diplomat Chris Lu is set to visit India as the head of the US delegation which will attend the meeting in Mumbai and New Delhi from October 28-29. Ahead of the key meeting, Lu, the US Representative for UN Management and Reform tweeted, "Looking forward to representing @USUN at this important #UN counter-terrorism convening, as well as strengthening the ties between the US and India." "Ambassador Lu will address issues of counterterrorism, as well as the important relationship between the two countries," the media note by United States Mission to the United Nations said on Wednesday. The inaugural session of the special UNSC meeting on counter-terrorism will be held in Mumbai followed by diplomatic discussions to be held in New Delhi. The meeting will begin with a soft opening session and tribute to the victims of terrorism in Mumbai on 28th October, through a solemn ceremony at Hotel Taj Mahal Palace, Sanjay Verma, secretary (West), ministry of external affairs said in New Delhi. "Ambassador Lu will participate in a wreath-laying ceremony in honour of the victims of the 26/11 terrorist attack," the media note said. Six Americans were among the 166 who were killed in India's deadliest 26/11 terror attacks carried out by a group of 10 Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists from Pakistan in various places in Mumbai. "Ambassador Lu will also meet with graduate students from the Indian Institute of Democratic Leadership to hear their aspirations and discuss the essential role public service plays in a democracy," the note added. India, a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, is currently holding the chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. The UN Security Council established the Counter-Terrorism Committee in the wake of the 9/11 terror attacks by adopting resolution 1373 of 2001 concerning countering terrorism. (PTI)



TMC's All India general secretary Abhishek Banerjee taking photo from his sister Agnisha, on Thursday

Most non-BJP CMs holding home portfolios skip MHA meet

SURAJKUND, OCT 27 /--/ Most of the non-BJP chief ministers holding the charge of their home departments on Thursday skipped the 'Chintan Shivir' of home ministers of all states organised by the Centre here. Non-BJP chief ministers holding the home portfolios who did not attend the meeting on Thursday include Mamata Banerjee (West Bengal), Nitish Kumar (Bihar), Naveen Patnaik (Odisha), M K Stalin (Tamil Nadu) and Ashok Gehlot (Rajasthan). Only two non-BJP chief ministers, Punjab's Bhagwant Mann and Kerala's Pinarayi Vijayan, attended the conference being chaired by Union home minister Amit Shah. While Mann belongs to the Aam Aadmi Party, Vijayan is from the CPM. Congress ruled Chhattisgarh's home minister Tamradhwaj Sahu attended the meeting but another opposition-ruled state Telangana's home minister Mohammad Mahmood Ali did not attend it. The non-BJP states were mostly either represented by a cabinet minister or a minister of state holding charge of the home department or senior officials. BJP chief ministers Basavaraj Bommai (Karnataka)

Pak committing atrocities against people in PoK, will have to bear consequences: Rajnath

SRINAGAR, OCT 27 /--/ Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday said Pakistan is "committing atrocities" against people in its occupied Kashmir and will have to bear its consequences. Hinting at retrieving Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), the minister said the goal of overall development in the twin Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh will be achieved "after reaching Gilgit and Baltistan" -- parts of PoK. "We have just begun our journey of development in Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. We will achieve our goal when we reach Gilgit and Baltistan," Singh said addressing the 'Shaurya Diwas' event -- enactment of landing at Srinagar by Indian Air Force on this day in 1947. Referring to the "atrocities" committed by Pakistan against the people in PoK, the defence minister said the neighbouring country will have to "bear its consequences". Accusing

Pakistan of shedding crocodiles' tears in the name of human rights, Singh said: "The pain of the people of Pakistan-Occupied-Kashmir also troubles us and not just them." "The 'tandav' of terrorism that Jammu and Kashmir has seen in name of Kashmiriyat cannot be described," he said while asserting that terrorism has no religion and the only aim of terrorists is to target India. He claimed that in the last few years "some so-called intellectuals have cried human rights violations when actions were taken against terrorists". Singh said the Centre's decision to abrogate Article 370 on August 5, 2019, ended the discrimination against the people in Jammu and Kashmir. "The discrimination against the people of Jammu and Kashmir was ended under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on August 5, 2019," the defence minister said, adding,

"Syama Prasad Mookerjee's 'yajna' of Jammu and Kashmir's full integration was achieved on August 5." The Army hosted 'Shaurya Diwas' at the old airfield of Srinagar (Budgam airfield) to mark the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the 1 Sikh Regiment at the old airfield of Srinagar in 1947 to protect Jammu and Kashmir from Pakistani forces. It was the first military operation of Independent India, a move that changed the course of the 1947-48 War. The first of the Indian Army soldiers dispatched for the mission had landed at the airfield on October 27, 1947, to repulse Pakistani forces. At the venue, huge cut-outs of Brig Rajinder Singh, Brig Mohd Usman, Maj Somnath Sharma and Maqbool Sherwani were mounted. Usha Parmar, the octogenarian daughter of Brigadier Rajinder Singh and family members of other martyrs also attended the event. (PTI)

Tackling borderless crimes collective responsibility of states & Centre: Shah

SURAJKUND, OCT 27 /--/ It is the collective responsibility of states and the Centre to effectively tackle trans-border crimes, Union home minister Amit Shah said on Thursday and asserted that the Narendra Modi government has recorded success on all fronts of internal security.

Shah was addressing a 'Chintan Shivir' organised here with the objective to prepare an action plan for the implementation of 'Vision 2047' and 'Panch Pran' announced by Prime Minister Modi during his Independence Day speech. The government has also amended the Foreign Contributions (Regulations) Act (FCRA) that was being misused by some NGOs to conduct anti-national activities, religious conversion, political opposition of development projects and creating obstacles in development works, the home minister said. "In our Constitution, law and order is a state subject...but we can be successful against trans-border or borderless crimes only when all states sit together to ponder over them, make a common strategy and (make) efforts to curb them," Shah said on the first of the two-day 'Chintan Shivir' (brainstorming session).

It is the collective responsibility of states to effectively tackle crimes being committed from across the country's border or states' borders, and also deal with regional crimes to make society free from fear, the home minister said. The 'shivir' can become a good platform to discuss strategies to counter cyber crimes, narcotics and cross-border terrorism, among others, and to exchange good practices in law and order, Shah said. On the FCRA and some NGOs misusing it, he said, "In 2020, the government took strong action to stop foreign funding of such

NGOs by amending the FCRA." While addressing the 'shivir', which is being attended by state home ministers and senior police officials, Shah said the Modi government has recorded success on all fronts of internal security be it Jammu and Kashmir, the North-East or narcotics smuggling. "Our internal security is considered strong," Shah said and also noted that "35,000 police and CAPF (Central Armed Police



Forces) personnel have laid down their lives to keep the unity and integrity of the country intact". He said all the areas considered hot spots from the security point of view have been cleared due to synergy and cooperation between states and the Centre. There is a 74 per cent dip in terror attacks and 90 per cent decrease in terror-related killings since 2014, Shah said, adding that this is a "big achievement". "We have entered long-term agreements with insurgent groups like NLFT, BODO, Karbi Anglong which have given a platform for the surrender of 9,000 insurgents to ensure long-term peace in North-East," he said. Shah said the country has made big strides in tackling Left Wing Extremism (LWE), recording a decrease of 77 per cent in naxal violence and 87 per cent in lives claimed by it after 2014. "Once upon a

time, the red corridor between Pashupati Nath to Tirupati was notorious. States and the Centre have successfully fought this fight and achieved success... In 2014, 113 districts were affected by LWE, now it has come down to 46. It's a big success," he said. Shah said a new era has started in Jammu and Kashmir after the abolition of Article 370. "During 37 months after August 5, 2019, terror incidents have reduced by 34 per cent as compared to numbers recorded in 37 months preceding the date. Sixty-four per cent less deaths have been reported and civilian deaths in terror incidents have gone down by 90 per cent during the period," the home minister said. The minister said that Jammu and Kashmir had received a total investment of Rs 19,000 crore till 2019 since Independence while in last three years an investment of Rs 57,000 crore has been made. This shows that the Union Territory has moved ahead on the path of success, he said. "We have made important changes in the NIA (National Investigation Agency) and UAPA (Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act) to give more powers to the agency," Shah said. "The agency has been given extra-territorial jurisdiction. The agency has also got powers to seize properties of a terrorist. We have decided that every state will have a NIA unit to develop a strong anti-terror network," he said. The minister said a large number of proposals to amend the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) have been received. "In a very short time, we will come up with new draft of CrPC and IPC before the Parliament," Shah said. Prime Minister Modi will address the 'Chintan Shivir' through video conferencing on October 28. (PTI)

Modi speaks to Sunak, both PMs agree on early conclusion of FTA

NEW DELHI, OCT 27 /--/ Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday spoke to new British Premier Rishi Sunak with the two leaders agreeing on the importance of early conclusion of a comprehensive and balanced free trade agreement between the two countries.

It was their first conversation since Indian-origin Sunak took charge as British prime minister on Tuesday. Sunak also tweeted his thanks to Modi and said he is excited about what the two "great democracies" can achieve as they deepen their security, defence and economic partnership in the months and years ahead. Modi tweeted: "Glad to speak to Rishi Sunak today. Congratulated him on assuming charge as UK PM. We will work together to further strengthen our Comprehensive

Strategic Partnership. We also agreed on the importance of early conclusion of a comprehensive and balanced FTA."

Sunak responded: "Thank you Prime Minister Narendra Modi for your kind words as I get started in my new role. The UK and India share so much. I'm excited about what our two great democracies can achieve as we deepen our security, defence and economic partnership in the months & years ahead." India and Britain launched negotiations for the free-trade agreement (FTA) in January with an aim to conclude talks by Diwali but the deadline was missed due to a lack of consensus on issues. Sunak, in his previous role as Chancellor of the Exchequer, had expressed support for the FTA as he saw enormous opportunities for both countries in the fintech and insurance sectors. (PTI)



UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak celebrates Diwali festival at 10 Downing Street in London

Kharge demands answers from PM, FM on declining forex reserves, falling rupee

NEW DELHI, OCT 27 /--/ Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge demanded answers from the prime minister and the finance minister on Thursday over a sharp decline in India's foreign exchange reserves in the first half of the financial year and alleged that the rupee is amongst the most depreciated currencies in the emerging markets.

Alleging that India's forex store dipped faster than its peers, Kharge claimed that there was a decline of USD 85 billion in the forex reserves in the first half of the fiscal. The Congress president also shared a chart showing a fall in the foreign exchange reserves as compared to other countries and also highlighting the Indian rupee falling by 10.2 per cent against the British pound strengthening by 20.2 per cent, Euro strengthening by 16 per cent and the Australian dollar by 15.3 per cent. "India's forex reserves declined by nearly \$85 billion in the first half. In emerging markets, the Indian rupee is amongst the most depreciated currencies. Would the finance minister or the PM have anything to say on this?" Kharge asked on Twitter. (PTI)

Bengal celebrates Bhai Phota; Sovan, Mukul at 'Didi's house

KOLKATA, OCT 27 /--/ Bhai Phota was celebrated with usual enthusiasm amid festive fervour in West Bengal on Thursday as sisters prayed for the long lives of their brothers.

After two years of muted celebrations due to the pandemic, the festive spirit was visible on the streets as long queues were seen outside sweet shops, while restaurants in Kolkata and nearby towns also recorded high footfall. Cinema halls and multiplexes recorded housefull shows as people sought to make the most of the day with which the nearly-a-month-long festivities that started during the Durga Puja are usually considered to conclude. On the occasion, women prepare lavish Bengali meals for their brothers who break their fasts after the rituals, while many also visit restaurants for the customary lunch. At the India-Bangladesh border in



—File photo

Dakshin Dinajpur, women celebrated Bhai Phota with BSF personnel. Leaders of different political parties were also seen in a festive mood as they reached out to the people on the occasion. State minister Sobhandeb Chatterjee, TMC MPs Sougata Roy and Mimi Chakraborty, TMC MLA Tapas Roy, BJP's vice-president Dilip Ghosh and Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari took part in the Bhai Phota rituals. The most notable political development during the day was former Kolkata mayor Sovan Chatterjee visiting chief minister Mamata Banerjee's residence in Kalighat to get 'phota' from her.

Chatterjee had joined BJP in 2019 following a fallout with Mamata, but quit the Opposition party in 2021 after its defeat in the assembly elections. "My ties with 'Didi' are decades old. She affectionately calls me Kanon as her

younger brother," Chatterjee, who was accompanied by his friend Baisakhi Banerjee, said. Veteran politician Mukul Roy, who returned to TMC from the BJP last year, was also given 'phota' by the chief minister at her residence. Leader of Opposition Suwendu Adhikari tweeted, "Greetings to all the sisters and brothers on the special occasion of Bhai Phonta or Bhai Dooj. May God bless you all with happiness and strengthen your sacred sibling bond." Bengali superstar Prasenjit Chatterjee, and actors Dwitipriya Roy and Pallabi Chatterjee were among those seen participating in the rituals. Bhai Phota is celebrated by some on 'Pratipad' and some on 'Dwitiya', just after Kali Puja. Many big-budget community Kali Puja committees in Barasat, Madhyamgram and Naihati in North 24 Parganas district immersed their idols during the day. (PTI)

Kashmir issue should be resolved by India, Pak through dialogue, consultations: China

BEIJING, OCT 27 /--/ China on Thursday said India and Pakistan should resolve the Kashmir issue through dialogue and consultations and avoid taking "unilateral actions" that could further complicate the situation.

Replying to a question on the Kashmir issue raised by a Pakistani journalist, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning

during a media briefing here said that China's position on the issue of Kashmir has been "consistent and clear". This is an issue left over from history between India and Pakistan and should be properly managed in a peaceful way in accordance with the UN charter, relevant Security Council resolutions and relevant bilateral agreements," Mao

said. Relevant parties should avoid taking unilateral actions that could further complicate the situation but rather engage in dialogue and consultations to resolve the dispute and maintain peace and stability in the region," she said. India has previously rejected third party intervention on the Kashmir issue, saying that matters related to the Union

Territory of Jammu & Kashmir are entirely its internal affairs. "Other countries including China have no locus standi to comment. They should note that India refrains from the public judgment of their internal issues, the Ministry of External Affairs had said in March this year. Relations between India and Pakistan have been strained over the Kashmir

issue and cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan. Bilateral ties nosedived after India abrogated Article 370 of the Constitution, revoking the special status of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcating the state into two Union Territories on August 5, 2019. Following India's decision, Pakistan downgraded diplomatic ties with New Delhi and

expelled the Indian envoy. Trade ties between Pakistan and India have largely been frozen since then. India has repeatedly told Pakistan that Jammu and Kashmir was, is and shall forever remain an integral part of the country. India has said it desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan in an environment free of terror, hostility, and violence. (PTI)

Iran leaders try to link protests to gun attack killing 15

DUBAI, OCT 27 /--/Iran's supreme leader and its president tried Thursday to link the nationwide protests roiling the country to an Islamic State-claimed gun attack on a famous mosque that killed 15 people. The comments by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Ebrahim Raisi come as Iran's theocracy has been unable to contain the demonstrations, sparked by the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini after her detention by the country's morality police.

The protests, the most serious unrest to grip Iran since its 2009 Green Movement demonstrations, have grown to encompass anger over Iran's cratered economy and its theocracy as well. Over 200 people have been killed amid a crackdown in Iran, with thousands others arrested by police, activists say. On Wednesday, a gunman opened fire on worshippers at Shiraz's Shah Cheragh mosque, the second-holiest site in Iran.

State media said at least 15 people had been killed in the assault, which authorities initially attributed to multiple gunmen. Footage released Thursday by authorities showed the gunman walking near the mosque with a large backpack, then later moving into the mosque with a Kalashnikov-style assault rifle. Barefoot worshippers inside try to flee as the man opens fire, then hunts those hiding behind whatever they could find. Blood could be seen on the mosque's floor. Riot police later captured the man, who authorities have yet to identify.

The Islamic State group late Wednesday claimed responsibility for the attack on its Amaq news agency. It said an armed IS militant stormed the shrine and opened fire on its visitors. In a speech Thursday, Raisi described the ongoing protests as riots that allowed for the shooting in Shiraz.

However, there is no evidence linking extremist groups to the widespread, largely peaceful demonstrations that have been repeatedly targeted by a heavy-handed security force crackdown in the country. The enemy wants the riots to pave the way for terrorist attacks. The enemy is always the enemy, Raisi contended. They go to a holy shrine of a son of the prophet, our third-most important shrine, his majesty Shah Cheragh, and open fire at innocent worshipers. For his part, 83-year-old Khamenei blamed the attack on a plot of the enemies.

We all have duties to deal a blow to the warmongering enemy and its treacherous and foolish cohorts, Khamenei reportedly said. All our people ranging from the security bodies and the judiciary body and activists in the field of media must be united against the wave that disregards and disrespects people's lives, their security and their sacred things. (AP)

22nd Amendment to Constitution falls short of public protest demands: Lanka's lawyers' body

COLOMBO, OCT 27 /--/The 21st Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution adopted last week does not place adequate checks and balances on the powers of the executive president, the country's influential lawyers' body said on Thursday.

The Bar Association of Sri Lanka (BASL) in a statement said the Amendment to the Constitution was caused by the pressure brought on by the months-long protest movement which forced the resignation of the then president Gotabaya Rajapaksa in July. The necessity to amend the Constitution arose as a result of the public outcry that sprung up throughout the country in response to the present economic crisis. It has been perceived that the causes of the crisis include the lack of checks and balances on the powers of the executive, including the executive presidency, it said. Sri Lankan lawmakers on October 21 approved the much-anticipated 22nd Amendment to the Constitution, setting the stage for empowering the Parliament over the executive president. The 22nd Amendment was originally named 21A and meant to replace the 20A.

The bill was introduced a couple of months back as a means to support stability in Sri Lanka and quell the unrest ignited by the nation's greatest financial crisis in decades. The BASL said that the 21A "regrettably does not completely restore the status quo" which prevailed prior to the 20A. It is essential that the Constitutional Council and the Independent Commissions which will be reconstituted under the 21A will be independent, impartial and be institutions that will help restore confidence in Sri Lanka and its Institutions," the statement said.

The BASL reiterates that it is imperative that those appointed to the Election Commission, the Public Service Commission, the National Police Commission, the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka, the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption, the Finance Commission and the Delimitation Commission be persons who have not only the requisite qualifications and abilities but also be those whose appointments receive wide acceptance.

Sri Lanka's Civil society was critical of the amendment as it was not the comprehensive reforms sought by the protest movement for a system change in the island. However, the 22nd Amendment was passed with the required two thirds majority in the 225-member assembly with cross party support. It will restore powers of Parliament which were taken under the executive president by former president Gotabaya Rajapaksa through the 20th Amendment of 2020. Rajapaksa had reversed the 19A which had empowered parliament over the presidency. The 22nd Amendment seeks to empower independent commissions to depoliticise administration as part of the wide-ranging reforms required to the Constitution first adopted in 1978.

The adoption of the 22nd Amendment in Parliament is seen as a triumph for President Ranil Wickremesinghe, who had pledged constitutional reforms to appease the demand from the street protesters. However, the opposition parties maintain their support was based on the need to formulate reforms, a key requisite to ensure Sri Lanka gained international support in handling the worst economic crisis in decades. (PTI)

Will build a Britain where our children, grandchildren can light their Diyas: PM Sunak

LONDON, OCT 27 /--/ Extending Diwali greetings to everyone, Britain's newly-appointed Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has vowed that he will do everything to build a Britain where children and grandchildren can light their Diyas and look to the future with hope.

Sunak, 42, attended a Diwali reception at 10 Downing Street here on Wednesday night, a day after making history by becoming Britain's first Prime Minister of Indian origin. "Brilliant to drop into tonight's Diwali reception in No10. I will do everything I can in this job to build a Britain where our children and our grandchildren can light their Diyas and look to the future with hope," he said in a tweet with a picture of himself attending the Diwali reception at his official residence.

Sunak, Britain's first Indian-origin Prime Minister, took office on Tuesday with a pledge to fix the "mistakes" his predecessor Liz Truss made which left a blackhole in government finances and the markets in turmoil. He became the new UK prime minister after meeting King



Rishi Sunak

Charles III at Buckingham Palace. Sunak on Tuesday unveiled his top team in place with key Cabinet appointments and decided to keep the new Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, in place for economic stability and brought back Indian-origin Suella Braverman as Home Secretary.

He has pledged to govern with "integrity" and has tried to unite the Conservatives by including people from different wings of the party in his top team. In his statement from 10 Downing Street, Sunak said that he has been elected for the mistakes of his predecessor. "I want to pay tribute to my predecessor Liz Truss. She wasn't wrong to want to improve growth in this country.

It is a noble aim and I admired her restlessness to create change but some mistakes were made, not born of bad intentions but mistakes nonetheless," he said. He said he will earn the trust of Britons and asserted that his government will have integrity, professionalism and accountability at every level. "I stand here before you ready to lead our country into the future, to put your needs above politics, to reach out and build a government that represents the very best traditions of my party. Together we can achieve incredible things," he said.

Sunak, a former investment banker-turned-politician, is the youngest British prime minister in 210 years. He is also Britain's first Hindu Prime Minister. Sunak's victory in the Tory leadership race came at the end of a dramatic few days in Westminster after Truss resigned last Thursday in the wake of a disastrous tax-cutting mini-budget and several policy U-turns. (PTI)



French President Emmanuel Macron (R) welcomes German Chancellor Olaf Scholz upon his arrival at the Elysee Palace in Paris

Gen Bajwa was given 'lucrative offer' in March amidst political turmoil in Pak: Army

ISLAMABAD, OCT 27 /--/ Pakistan's ISI chief Lt Gen Nadeem Ahmed Anjum said on Thursday that Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa was given a "lucrative offer" in March by the then government amidst the political turmoil, as the powerful top spy launched a veiled attack on ousted premier Imran Khan at an unprecedented press conference.

"I am aware that you are surprised by my presence," Lt Gen Anjum told reporters in the first-ever media interaction by any ISI chief in Pakistan's history. The press conference came as the country was grappling with different versions about the killing of journalist Arshad Sharif in Kenya and indirect allegations against the armed forces. Sharif was shot dead at a police checkpoint at an hour's distance from Nairobi on Sunday night, creating a storm in the country. The Kenyan police later said it was a case of mistaken identity during a search for a similar car involved in a child abduction case. "As chief of this agency (Inter-Services Intelligence or ISI), I cannot remain silent when they are targeted for no reason," he said, nearly seven months after the government led by cricketer-turned-politician Khan was ousted after a no-confidence motion was passed by the National Assembly amidst political turmoil and allegations of US interference.

Lt Gen Anjum said the nation had given him the responsibility to take secrets to the grave. "But when needed and when necessary, I will bring those facts to light". He said the officers, including the Quetta Corps commander, killed in Lasbela areas of Balochistan in a helicopter crash were mocked. He said words like "neutral and janwar" were used against the army to illustrate that the institution was indulging in sedition. These words were also being used because the institution refused to bend to an "unconstitutional and illegal act", the ISI chief said in hard hitting words. He, however, didn't explain the illegal acts.

Lt Gen Anjum said that in March there was "a lot of pressure" but the institution and the army chief Gen Bajwa decided to limit the military to its constitutional role. In March, Gen Bajwa was given a "lucrative offer" for an indefinite extension in his tenure, he said. "It was made in front of me. He (Gen Bajwa) rejected it because he wanted the institution to move forward from a controversial role to a constitutional role," the ISI chief said, without naming former premier Khan. Bajwa, who is on a three-year extension, is set to retire next month. "Last year, the establishment decided that it would restrict itself to its constitutional role [...]. The army had an intense discussion and we reached the conclusion that the

country's benefit lies in us restricting ourselves to our constitutional role and remaining out of politics, he said. Recalling that the army chief was called a traitor and his family was also targeted, the ISI chief asked, "If you see him as a traitor, then why do you meet him through the backdoor?" "You meet quietly at night through the backdoor and express your unconstitutional wishes but call [the army chief] a traitor in broad daylight. That's a big contradiction between your words and your actions, he said, in a veiled attack on former prime minister Khan.

He confirmed that slain journalist Sharif was in contact with the military establishment even when he was out of the country and Pakistan was not convinced about the story of his killing. "Perhaps we and the government are not fully convinced. That's why the government has formed a team that will head to Kenya, he said. Sharif, a former reporter and TV anchor with ARY TV, and known for his proximity to former prime minister Khan, had fled to Kenya after he was booked on charges of sedition and peddling anti-state narrative by Pakistan's security agencies earlier this year. Khan, who came to power in 2018 with promises to create a Naya Pakistan, apparently lost support of the powerful Army after he refused to endorse the appointment of the ISI chief last year. (PTI)

UN report: Climate pollution reductions 'highly inadequate'

NAIROBI, OCT 27 /--/The world, especially richer carbon polluting nations, remains far behind and is not doing nearly enough -- not even promising to do enough -- to reach any of the global goals limiting future warming, a United Nations report said.

That highly inadequate inaction means the window is closing, but not quite shut yet, on efforts to keep future warming to just a few more tenths of a degree from now, according to Thursday's Emissions Gap report from the United Nations Environment Programme. Global and national climate commitments are falling pitifully short, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said Thursday. We are headed for a global catastrophe. The world is weaning itself from fossil fuels too slowly, the report and experts said.

The report confirms the utterly glacial pace of climate action, despite the looming precipice of climate tipping points we're approaching, said climate scientist Bill Hare, head of Climate Analytics that also examines what countries are promising and doing about carbon emissions in its own analysis.

Instead of limiting warming to 1.5 or 2 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees or 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels, the global goals set by 2015 Paris agreement, the way the world is acting now, warming will hit 2.8 degrees (5 degrees Fahrenheit) by the year 2100, the UN report said. Countries concrete pledges would bring that down to 2.6 degrees (4.7 degrees Fahrenheit). It's already warmed 1.1 degrees (2 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times. In all

likelihood we will pass by 1.5, UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen told The Associated Press in an interview. She didn't say when she thinks that would happen. We can still do it, but that means 45 per cent emissions reductions by 2030. It's really about understanding that every little digit (tenth of a degree of warming) that we shave off is a lesser catastrophic outlook, Andersen said. The emissions gap is the difference between the amount of carbon pollution being spewed between now and 2030 and the lower levels needed to keep warming to 1.5 or 2 degrees.

Guterres said the emissions gap is a by-product of a commitments gap. A promises gap. An action gap. Stanford University climate scientist Rob Jackson, who chairs the independent Global

Carbon Project that tracks carbon dioxide emissions around the world but wasn't part of the UN report, said another decade of fossil emissions at current rates and we'll zip past 1.5C.... The way things are going though we'll zip past 1.5C, past 2C and -- heaven help us -- even 2.5 or 3C. We're failing by winning too slowly, Jackson said in an email. Renewables are booming and cheaper than ever. But COVID stimulus plans and the war in Ukraine have disrupted global energy markets and led some countries (to) revert to coal and other fuels. This can't continue in a safe climate. In 10 days, yearly international climate negotiations will begin in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, and in the run up to the United Nations conference, several reports highlight different aspects

of the world's battle to curb climate change. Wednesday, a different UN agency looked at countries' official emission reduction targets. Thursday's Emissions Gap report looks at what countries are actually doing as well as what they promise to do in the future in various pledges.

The G20 nations, the richest countries, are responsible for 75 per cent of the heat-trapping pollution, Andersen said, adding clearly the more those G20s lean in, the better we will be. The report said G20 members are far behind in delivering on their promises to reduce emissions. Taking out the special cases of Turkey and Russia, current policies by G20 nations fall 2.6 billion metric tons a year short of the 2030 goal, the report said. Both Turkey and Russia's targets for 2030

have higher pollution levels than current policies project and using their projections would make the G20 emissions gap artificially low, the report said. It's critical that China, as well as the US and other G20 countries, actually lead, Andersen said. She hailed the newly passed 375 billion American climate- and inflation-fighting law as an example of action instead of just promises.

The report said that by 2030 the US law should prevent 1 billion metric tons of carbon emissions, which is much more than other nations efforts made this year. What we're calling for is an accelerated pace because there are good things happening out there in a number of countries, but it's just not fast enough and it's not consistent enough, Andersen said. (AP)

MAJOR UPSET

ZIMBABWE STUN PAKISTAN

Raza the hero again as Pakistan slip from 88 for 3 to finish two short of target of 131



CONTRASTING EMOTIONS: Brad Evans and Regis Chakabva jump for joy while Shaheen Afridi sinks to the ground after being run-out last ball

PERTH, OCT 27 /--/Zimbabwe punched above their weight and stunned Pakistan by one run in a nail-biting T20 World Cup match here on Thursday. Defending a modest 131, Zimbabwe stifled the Pakistani batters and picked up wickets at regular intervals to stop their fancied rivals at 129 for eight. Pakistan-born all-rounder Sikandar Raza turned the match on its head in the middle overs with figures of 3 for 25 from his four overs, which included the wickets of Shan Masood (44), Shahdab Khan (17) and Haider Ali. Right-arm pacer Brad Evans returned with figures of 2/25, while Blessing Muzarabani (1/18) and Luke Jongwe (1/10) also picked up wickets, to help their side to an incredible win. It was Pakistan's second defeat in as many matches after the four-wicket loss to arch-rivals India in another thrilling contest.

For Zimbabwe, it was their first win from two matches. The African side had earlier split points with South Africa following a washout. For the second time in the tournament, star Pakistani openers -- skipper Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan -- failed to provide a good start. Babar looked tentative before he was squared up by a seaming fuller length delivery from Evans. An over later, Rizwan played on to the stumps a Muzarabani delivery while trying to cut a ball, which was too close to his body. Iftikhar Ahmed, who scored a brisk fifty against India, didn't last long either, leaving Pakistan reeling at 36 for three in 7.4 overs. But Shan Masood held one end up and together with Shadab Khan, shared 52 runs for the fourth wicket to take Pakistan forward. Leg-spinning all-rounder Raza had other plans, as he brought Zimbabwe back into the contest with three quick wickets, including two in the 14th over. Raza first initiated a mishit from Shadab as he was holed out at long-off and then sent back Haider Ali for a duck. Raza's best moment came in his next over when he got the wicket of Masood, who was brilliantly stumped by Chakabva, as Pakistan slumped to 94 for six in 15.1 overs.

NEW DELHI, OCT 27 /--/ The BCCI's decision to bring women cricketers' match fees at par with men has been expectedly lauded by the fraternity but experts say it is only one step towards making the sport gender equal and more inclusivity will be achieved when the inaugural Women's IPL gets underway in March. The match fees will go up drastically with an ODI appearance fetching Rs 6 lakh, six times the existing structure.

Playing a Test match will give the women cricketers Rs 15 lakh, which is almost four times more than previous four lakh. The numbers support the rapid growth of women's cricket in India in the last five years but if one looks at the central contracts of men and women, there is still no comparison. A male cricketer in the A category commands a Rs 5 crore contract while it's Rs 50 for women. "It is a welcome step, it is a positive step but we are still far from reach gender parity if one looks at the central contracts of men and women. I am sure the BCCI will look into that in the future," said former India pacer Amita Sharma who represented the country in five Tests, 116 ODIs and 41 T20s.



While only the cream of women's cricket will be rewarded with a massive increase in match fees, former players and captains see the upcoming Women's IPL as the game changer. "I congratulate the BCCI on bringing the women match fee at par

step at a time," former India captain Diana Edulji said. "Having said that, the players will be expected to improve their performance even further. The expectations will increase naturally," she added. The first WIPL edition will have at least five teams with each having a squad size of 18 including 12 Indians and six foreigners, taking the number of local players to a substantial 60. The BCCI is yet to disclose the minimum base price but a player is expected to earn at least Rs five lakh for a season. It may sound nothing compared to the astronomical figures seen in the IPL but the fact that the female domestic cricketers earn between Rs 10000-20000 per game, the additional income will make a huge difference. "Domestic players will be benefiting a great deal from the Women's IPL. The ultimate success of any initiative is when the cake is distributed among a wide group compared to a few. "The Women's IPL will be a game changer and I am sure the BCCI will look into other areas also. Who would have thought five years ago that we would have equal match fee and there will be a Women's IPL," said another former captain Shantha Rangaswamy. (PTI)



Virat Kohli
Not Out
Runs : 62
Balls : 44
4's : 3
6's : 2

Suryakumar Yadav
Not Out
Runs : 51
Balls : 25
4's : 7
6's : 1

Three half-centuries and clinical bowling were the highlights of a strong performance against Netherlands

India go top of Group 2 with commanding victory

SYDNEY, OCT 27 /--/ Suryakumar Yadav bullied an inexperienced attack as the Indian team not for once took its foot off the pedal to thrash Netherlands by 56 runs for its second win in the T20 World Cup here on Thursday. A target of 180, riding on half-centuries from skipper Rohit Sharma (53 off 39 balls), Virat Kohli (62 not out off 44 balls) and Surya (51 not out off 25 balls), was good enough for the Dutchmen who were never in the contest once India's powerplay overs ended. The 'Orange Brigade' huffed and puffed its way to 123 for nine in 20 overs as the relative slowness of the track post the Bangladesh-South Africa game effected its approach.

The Netherlands was the fourth team to bat on the track, and although there wasn't any considerable wear and tear, it slowed down enough for Axar Patel (2/18) and Ravichandran Ashwin (2/21) to tighten the noose on the opposition batters. On expected lines, Mohammed Shami (2/9), Arshdeep Singh (2/37) and Bhuvneshwar Kumar (1/27) had an easy day at the office. Most of the Netherlands batters are not used to consistently playing an attack of this quality. Indian origin opener Vikramjit Singh (1), whose roots are in Punjab's Cheema Khurd, didn't look like he belonged to this level before

Bhuvneshwar Kumar ended his painstaking stay with a perfectly pitched length ball. Once Ashwin and Axar were pressed into the attack, there was no chance that the Dutchmen would make a match of it. Axar didn't even turn a single delivery but the fast and tight wicket-to-wicket lines was good enough. When India batted, Suryakumar once again provided the final flourish with a breathtaking knock and overshadowed senior pros Kohli and Sharma. The Indian batting save all but one fired in unison as skipper Rohit became the pace setter, while the team's No. 1 batter Kohli played the role of an anchor to perfection and also ended as the game's top-scorer. Kohli conjured two vital partnerships -- 73 for the second wicket with Rohit and 95 for the unbroken third wicket with Surya -- as KL Rahul's (9 off 12 balls) second successive failure stuck out like a sore thumb. But Rahul can consider himself a touch unlucky as right-arm seamer Paul van Meekeren's delivery angled into his pads and seemed like missing the leg-stump, but he was advised against taking the review by the skipper. To be fair, the Netherlands bowlers did a reasonable job during the powerplay, when India scraped to 32 for one. India were 67 for one at the halfway stage, but after Surya came in, the Dutch

bowling unit looked intimidated, and once Kohli started putting pressure there was no escape. The back-10 yielded as many as 112 runs, courtesy Surya, who again hit some breathtaking shots including a lofted extra cover drive and a lap scoop over deep fine leg. With as many as seven boundaries and a six off the last ball in his kitty, Surya showed why he is India's most important batter in the format.

After opting to bat, Rohit initially struggled with his timing and left-arm seamer Fred Klaassen was unlucky that Tim Pringle made a hash of an easy catch when the Indian captain had mistimed a pull-shot. But once he connected a hook shot and then drove through the cover point region, he found some rhythm going his way, as the fifty came off 35 balls. His innings had four boundaries and three sixes. While Rohit attacked, Kohli was happy to let him take the lead but remained alert while taking the singles and converting the ones into twos. Once Rohit was dismissed, Kohli showed some aggression as his running between the wickets put pressure on the Netherlands attack. Kohli's fifty came off 37 balls, with three fours and two sixes. But he ran the opposition ragged before allowing Surya to pounce on them for a delicious run-feast. (PTI)

When I get out in nets during simulation, I don't bat again: Suryakumar

SYDNEY, OCT 27 /--/ Suryakumar Yadav firmly believes that he can push the boundaries when it comes to mastering the art of handling pressure in match simulation, something that has given him fantastic results in past one year. Surya has caused mortal fear among the global bowlers' union with an insane strike-rate of near 178 in 36 games and 11 fifty-plus scores (1 century and 10 half-centuries). But if you find Surya's swivel off his hips to send the ball into the deep mid-wicket stand amazing, do know that there is a method to his madness, like the 25-ball 51 not out in India's 56-run win against

the Netherlands in the T20 World Cup here on Thursday. Asked about his preparation that brings about this manic consistency, Surya said: "What I do is to try and put a lot of pressure on myself whenever I am going for a few practice sessions or playing a match scenario. "So, for example, if I am targeting a few balls, and I have to (suppose) get 'N' number of runs, if I get out, I just come out. That day, I don't go in to bat again."

The simulation helps him prepare better for the match. "The same thing I'm been reflecting when I go into the games, and my plans have been very clear. What

shots I have in my kitty, I just go out and express that. I won't do anything out of the box. It has been helping me, and hopefully try and

do the same thing in the coming games," he elaborated. "It feels really good to have numbers around, but at the same

time, what I have been doing in the last few years is just eating fruits of that hard work maybe," the contented smile said it all. (PTI)

GAME NOTES

Rossouw, Nortje dazzle as SA defeat Bangladesh in T20 World Cup

SYDNEY, OCT 27 /--/ Rilee Rossouw's belligerent century was complemented by a fiery spell from Anrich Nortje (4/10) as South Africa trounced Bangladesh by 104-runs in T20 World Cup here on Thursday. Rossouw showcased his



Rilee Rossouw brought up centuries in back-to-back T20I innings

batting prowess, blasting the first century of the ongoing showpiece with a 56-ball 109, while Quinton de Kock struck a fifty to power South Africa to an imposing 205 for 5. Nortje then returned with his best T20 figures as the bowlers rallied to bowl out Bangladesh for 101 in 16.3 overs. Chasing a 200 plus total, Bangladesh openers looked up for the task. Soumya Sarkar (15) and Najmul Hossain (9) pilled 26 runs off the first two overs, including 17 of the first Kagiso Rabada (1/24) over.

Wade tests positive for COVID, but likely to play against England

MELBOURNE, OCT 27 /--/ Wicketkeeper Matthew Wade on Thursday became the second Australian player to test positive for COVID-19, a day ahead of the defending champions' crucial T20 World Cup match against England. The 34-year-old, who is the only wicketkeeper in the 15-member squad, is showing mild symptoms but is expected to feature in the match against England at the MCG. (PTI)

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