

Liquor price hike fails to deter tipplers

ROOPA LALL

PORT BLAIR, OCT 14/--/ With the UT administration increasing the excise duty, prices of IMFL liquor brands have been hiked by upto 275%. The revised rates have come into effect in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands from 8th August 2022. The price hike is applicable only for Indian-Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) while the price of beer, which the consumption of which is very high in the islands, has remained unchanged.

As per information gathered by EOI from sources, 38 liquor firms are registered to supply liquors to the UT of Andaman & Nicobar Islands by the Excise department. About 203 different liquor brands are registered and sold in the islands. The prices of liquor were last hiked in the year 2016. Thereafter, the

prices have been hiked now in 2022 as per the Excise policy of the UT Administration. The price hike is implemented in the islands from 8th August 2022. Despite prices of all brands of liquor almost doubling, the prices of liquors in the A&N Islands are still the cheapest compared to other UTs.

The Excise department of the UT administration has increased upto 275 % excise duty in all bands of IMFL, except beer

While 180 ml of ordinary brandy, rum and whisky has witnessed a hike of Rs 20, prices of other liquor, including 375 ml of premium and medium-variety liquor as well as scotch whiskey have also gone up. Meanwhile, the hike in the prices of IMFL brands has not deterred tipplers as a

good crowd of tipplers can be seen outside the liquor outlets in the city. When asked about the hike in liquor rates, Palni said it doesn't affect. "I love liquor and whatever be the price, I will buy liquor at higher rates too", he said.



Isles's boy attempts to scale Mt DeoTibba in Kullu



PORT BLAIR, OCT 14/--/ R Vineeth, a local boy, has created history by becoming the first mountaineer from Andaman & Nicobar Islands to attempt to scale Mt. DeoTibba located in Kullu District, Himachal Pradesh at a height of 6001 mtrs above sea level on 10th Oct 2022. Vineeth's attempt to scale Mt. DeoTibba is considered to be a technical peak with moderate level difficulty. It is the 2nd highest peak of the PirPangal range. R Vineeth, along with other team members from various parts of India and abroad climbed 5670 mtrs and were unable to proceed further due to heavy snowstorm and rain. Henceforth, the summit was left incomplete by 331 mtrs. Born on 28th Sept 1997 to Mr Ramachandran and Smti R Pandiyan Kumari in Port Blair, the Islands boy completed his schooling in commerce stream in 2015 and had his interest in mountains since his early childhood and started his expeditions in 2019. In his early days, he explored a lot of mountains in Himalayan ranges in alpine style.

DC(N&M Andaman) conducts revenue camp court at Mayabunder

KARTIK

MAYABUNDER, OCT 14/--/ A revenue camp court with the motto 'Jan Bhagidari-EkPrayas' was held on Thursday under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner, N&MA at Panchayat Bhavan, Harinagar to resolve the pending revenue and other grievances of villagers of Harinagar, Swadesnagar & Basantipur Panchayats. The Assistant Commissioner (HQ), Tehsildar, Mayabunder, Pradhans & PRI members, Executive Engineer (PRI), Assistant Engineer (APWD) & Revenue officials were present on the occasion. During the revenue camp court, cases pertaining to change of

names in RoR, pendency of online applications viz. No dues, Valuation & Earth cutting permissions etc,



pending cases of updation of land records, hearing and disposal of Mutation cases and Sub-division of land were resolved. On the spot directions were issued to the Revenue

Officers to resolve the grievances of the villagers. Thereafter, the DC(N&MA) held a meeting with the Officers of APWD & PRI and cleared pending estimates of developmental works. Further, field visits were carried out to Duke nagar & Loukinallah area and on the spot directions were issued such as APWD to prepare estimates for construction of concrete bridge, setting up of water pump to resolve drinking water crisis at Loukinallah. Revenue officers to set apart land for construction of rural road & Health Sub centre at Duke nagar, which will be taken up in the upcoming meeting of the District Health Society.

Encroachment removed from Phoenix Bay



PORT BLAIR, OCT 14/--/ As part of zero tolerance towards encroachment on government land, the District Administration carried out an encroachment eviction drive on Friday at Phoenix Bay under the

Port Blair Tehsil. During the eviction drive, fresh encroachment committed in the shape of plantation and fencing were removed at Phoenix Bay village and restored to an area of 500 sqmtrs into the Govt. khata. The general public

is once again cautioned to refrain from encroaching Govt. land. In case of any inquiries or information regarding such illegal activities and encroachment, the general public can communicate with the

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Himachal to go to polls on Nov 12

Gujarat not announced

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ Himachal Pradesh will go to polls on November 12, the Election Commission said on Friday but did not announce the poll schedule for Gujarat citing past precedence. Addressing a press conference here, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said the counting of votes for Himachal Pradesh polls will take place on December 8 and elaborate arrangements have been made to ensure maximum participation of voters in the "festival of democracy". In the elections to the 68-member assembly with over 55 lakh eligible voters, the BJP will seek to overturn the three-decade convention of no ruling party returning to power by defeating the main opposition Congress in the hill state. However, the Commission refrained from announcing the poll schedule for the Gujarat assembly which has a tenure till February 18, 2023. "The

Election Commission goes by convention in announcing poll schedules. It has decided to go by the convention which was last followed," Kumar told reporters when asked about keeping the announcement for Gujarat in abeyance. Kumar asserted that polls in one state will not affect elections in the other as "there is a gap of 40 days" in the qualifying dates of the state assemblies of Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat. The term of the Himachal Pradesh assembly ends on January 8, 2023. However, it is still possible to hold Gujarat elections in the November-December period so that the votes could be counted on the same day as was the case in 2017. Some opposition leaders pointed out that announcing Gujarat elections later could allow the incumbent government to roll out more welfare schemes before the model code of conduct kicks in. "Obviously this has been done to give more time to the

PM to make some mega promises & carry out more inaugurations. Not at all surprising," AICC General Secretary Jairam Ramesh said. In 2017, the Commission had announced elections to Himachal Pradesh on October 12 and to Gujarat on October 25. The counting of votes was held on December 18. According to the poll schedule for Himachal Pradesh on Friday, the notification for the election will be issued on October 17 and the last date for filing of nominations will be October 25. The scrutiny of nominations will be held on October 27 and the last date for withdrawal of nominations will be October 29. Kumar said the polls will be held on November 12 and the counting of votes will be held on December 8. "When we come for Gujarat we will tell you this," Kumar said when asked whether the counting of votes for Gujarat

will also be held on December 8. The CEC also cited the weather in Himachal Pradesh as one of the reasons for the early announcement of elections in the hill state. Over 55 lakh voters are eligible to exercise their franchise for 68 assembly seats in Himachal Pradesh. There are 1.86 lakh first-time voters, 1.22 lakh aged 80-plus and 1,184 voters who are above 100 years of age. Himachal Pradesh has a 68-member assembly and the BJP had won a clear majority by winning 44 seats in the 2017 elections. The Congress managed to win 21 seats, Independents bagged two seats and the CPI(M) emerged victorious on one seat. In percentage terms, the BJP won 48.79 per cent of the total valid votes, followed by the Congress (41.68 per cent) and Independents (6.34 per cent). The BJP and Congress have given alternate governments in the hill state for over three decades. (PTI)



Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar with his wife at Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram on Friday

Chidambaram says Aadhaar, DBT introduced during UPA regime, BJP cites data to mock him for claiming 'credit

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ A day after IMF praised India's Aadhaar and Direct Benefit Transfer programmes, ex-finance minister P Chidambaram credited the Congress with introducing them as the BJP asserted it was the Modi government which expanded the schemes to benefit a huge number of people. The ruling party mocked Chidambaram for linking the two schemes' successes with the previous UPA government, saying by this logic the Congress will claim credit for all poverty alleviation programmes as it had given "Garibi Hatao" (eliminate poverty) slogan while doing nothing about it from the days when Indira Gandhi was prime minister. In a tweet, the Congress leader noted that the International Monetary Fund praised India's Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) scheme as a logistical marvel and also the innovative use of Aadhaar. He added, "Before the BJP rushes to claim credit for DBT and Aadhaar, please recall when they were introduced and by which government. Aadhaar was launched on 28-1-2009. DBT was introduced on 1-1-2013. Both by the UPA government." BJP leader and Union minister Bhupendra Yadav posted an old video of Chidambaram making a speech in Parliament in which he appeared to question the Narendra Modi government's thrust on digital transactions and hit out at him. "Surprising how the same man who stood in Parliament to mock Digital India has the audacity today to claim credit for DBT and Aadhaar because IMF praised the moves," Yadav said.

In his speech, often cited by BJP leaders, the former finance minister is wondering how traders in village fairs are expected to have PoS (Point of Sale) machines and internet connection to receive payments for the sale of potatoes and tomatoes. Yadav tweeted, "The single biggest reason for the success of DBT scheme is the opening of bank accounts under the Jan Dhan Yojana of the Narendra Modi government. Over 45 crore accounts have been opened as of April 2022 under the scheme empowering the same poor who your government deliberately wanted to keep poor." BJP IT department head Amit Malviya tweeted, "Will the former, out on bail, FM, 'honestly' tell who deserves credit after looking at some stats? 2013-14: 43 districts covered and Rs 28 crore paid through DBT. 2014-22: Over 750 districts covered and Rs 25,66,000 crore paid through DBT. Merely "introducing" a mechanism isn't enough." "Truly transparent and honest approach of the Modi government led to the introduction of JAM trinity (Jan Dhan Bank Accounts, Aadhar, Mobile), Aadhar Payments Bridge, expansion of NPCI/UPI, Digital India Mission caused the DBT and Payments Revolution in India which has earned the praise of all," he added. The IMF has described India's deployment of a direct cash transfer scheme and other similar social welfare programmes as a "logistical marvel", saying there is a lot to learn from the country which is one of the most inspiring examples of the application of technology to solve complicated issues. It also praised the Aadhaar scheme. (PTI)

Disclosing minor rape victim's identity: Offence by Rahul Gandhi survives, NCPCR tells Delhi HC

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) told the Delhi high court on Friday in spite of Twitter's claim about taking down Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's alleged tweet revealing the identity of a minor Dalit girl, raped and murdered last year, the offence of making such disclosure survives. A bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Subramonium Prasad was hearing a petition seeking registration of an FIR against Gandhi for allegedly revealing the identity of the minor victim by publishing a photograph with her parents on Twitter. Makarand Suresh Mhadlekar, a social activist, had moved the high court last year claiming that by posting the photograph with the parents of the child victim, Gandhi violated the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, which prohibit the disclosure of identity of minor victims of sexual offences. Senior advocate Sajjan Poovayya, representing Twitter, submitted on Friday before the court that nothing survived in the petition as the tweet in question has been geo-blocked and is presently not available in India. He also informed that initially Gandhi's entire account was suspended by the social media platform but it was later restored. (PTI)

SC declines urgent hearing on plea on firecrackers, says people must have invested in this business

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ The Supreme Court on Friday refused to accord urgent hearing on a plea relating to ban on firecrackers, saying Diwali is round the corner and people must have invested money in the firecracker business. "Sorry. We would not list that matter now. Diwali is

round the corner. You come in the nick of time. People must have invested money in firecrackers business. You should have come two months earlier," a bench comprising Chief Justice U Lalit and Justice Hemant Gupta said. "We would not be able to deal with this matter. Otherwise, look at the

consequences of this. Any injunction and those people are out of business," the bench told the counsel, who mentioned the matter for urgent listing. The counsel told the bench the matter pertains to this year's firecracker ban in Delhi and some other states. "Sorry. It will be done after Diwali," the bench said.

The apex court had on Thursday refused to accord urgent hearing to a plea against an order banning storage, sale, and use of all types of firecrackers in the national capital till January 1, 2023. The top court had asked the lawyer, who had mentioned the matter on Thursday and sought urgent hearing, to approach the

Delhi High Court. The Delhi High Court had earlier deferred hearing on the plea of green cracker merchants against the blanket ban on firecrackers till January 1. On October 10, the apex court had refused to stay the Delhi government's order banning storage, sale, and use of all varieties of firecrackers till

January 1 to check pollution levels in the national capital, saying it did not want to add to the air pollution. The top court had last year clarified there is no blanket ban on the use of firecrackers and only those fireworks which contain barium salts are prohibited. (PTI)

AAP's support base increasing in Gujarat with BJP targeting Italia: Gopal Rai

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ Delhi environment minister Gopal Rai on Friday defended AAP Gujarat unit chief Gopal Italia on the row over his alleged derogatory remarks and hit out at the BJP leaders, alleging they keep insulting the country throughout the year and hurl abuses on anyone they want.

Replying to questions at a press conference, he said the release of Italia's videos and his detention by Delhi Police here on Thursday only shows how scared the ruling BJP is of the growing support base of the AAP in Gujarat ahead of the assembly polls in the state. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also surrendered as the BJP has nothing else to say after ruling Gujarat for 27 years, he said. BJPians are insulting the country 365 days round the year... They hurl abuses on anyone they want but their videos are not released, Rai said when asked for his reaction on purported videos where Italia was seen making derogatory remarks against prime minister Modi, and mocking his 100-year-old mother. The purported videos have not been released by Italia but by the BJP, the senior AAP leader said. I think they have kept more



Gopal Rai

Italia's video would not have been released by the BJP, he added. The senior AAP leader lashed out at the BJP over the release of Italia's videos and asked why the BJP doesn't release videos of the dismal school education system in Gujarat, the unemployment scenario, and mothers of those killed in police firing

during the OBC quota stir. They think that voices can be suppressed by repressive actions. But as many repressive actions, they are taking, the support base of Arvind Kejriwal and the Aam Aadmi Party is increasing. They detained Italia yesterday and Aam Aadmi Party supporters increased, Rai said, adding Gujarat wants change and this change is going to take place.

Italia was on Thursday detained here for more than 2.5 hours by the Delhi Police after he appeared before the National Commission for Women (NCW) in connection with his alleged comments against Modi amid protests by AAP members outside the women panel's office. Italia claimed that he was "threatened and treated indecently" by NCW chairperson Rekha Sharma after he appeared before her "as he is a Patidar and his community members have come out in support of the Kejriwal-led party" ahead of the elections. The BJP on Friday sharpened its attack on the AAP after its Gujarat chief Italia was heard purportedly mocking the prime minister's mother in a video, and said people of the state will make it pay for "abusing" her. (PTI)

Gyanvapi mosque case: Varanasi court rejects plea for carbon dating of 'Shivling'

VARANASI, OCT 14 /--/ A Varanasi court on Friday rejected the plea for carbon dating of what is claimed to be a 'shivling' in the Gyanvapi mosque premises, a government counsel said. District Judge AK Vishvesha turned down the Hindu petitioners' plea seeking scientific investigation and carbon dating of the 'shivling', citing Supreme Court directives for its safe keeping so that no tampering can be done, said government counsel Rana Sanjiv Singh. After completion of hearing of the Hindu side and the mosque committee on Tuesday, the district court had decided to pronounce its verdict on October 14. The court said in view of the SC rulings and keeping public sentiments in mind, the carbon dating cannot be allowed and the "wazookhana" will remain sealed, said Shivam Gaur, lawyer from the Hindu side.

Four of the five Hindu parties had sought carbon dating of the 'Shivling' found during a court-mandated videography survey of the mosque premises close to the "wazookhana", a small reservoir used by Muslim devotees to perform ritual ablutions before offering Namaz. The mosque management committee claims that the structure is not a 'shivling' but a part of the "wazookhana" reservoir system. Advocate Mumtaz Ahmed, who appeared for the Muslim side, had earlier said they have told the court that carbon dating cannot be done. If the object gets damaged in the name of carbon dating, it amounts to defiance of the Supreme Court order, he had said. The Muslim side had also contended that the SC had asked the Varanasi district magistrate to keep the object safe and in such a situation, getting it examined cannot be

justified. The Muslim side had also opined that the original case is about the worship of Shringar Gauri while the structure in the mosque has nothing to do with it. In such a condition, neither any investigation can be done by the Archaeological Department nor a legal report be called after conducting a scientific investigation, they had said. On the other hand, the Hindu petitioners had contended that the 'shivling' found in the "wazookhana" was part of the case property while putting forward their arguments in favour of carbon-dating of the structure. The Gyanvapi mosque is located next to the iconic Kashi Vishwanath temple and the case in the Varanasi court has revived claims that the mosque was built on a portion of the Hindu structure demolished on the orders of Mughal emperor Aurangzeb. (PTI)

Kerala human sacrifice: CPM says accused are not its active members

PATHANAMTHITTA, OCT 14 /--/ The ruling CPI(M) has denied reports that two of the three accused in the human sacrifice case are its active members, terming them as "baseless." CPI(M) District Secretary K P Udayabhanu said the couple, accused in the double murder case, are not party members nor do they have any post in the party or its associated organisations. "The reports that the accused in the double murder case are active members of the CPI(M) are baseless. They are not party members nor do they have any responsibility in the party or in any of its associated organisations as claimed by the media houses," Udayabhanu said in a statement on Thursday. Three persons -- Bhagaval Singh (68), a massage therapist and his wife Laila (59), along with prime accused Mohammed Shafi (52), were arrested after details of the gruesome murders came out on October 11. Hours after the news of the double murder at Elanthoor near here came out, the Congress and the BJP attacked the ruling CPI(M).

Without directly mentioning media reports that Singh was a local activist of the CPI(M), Leader of Opposition in the state assembly V D Satheesan had said it was significant that one of the killers was an active worker of a political party, which claims to be progressive. State BJP chief K Surendran had alleged that one of the killers was a CPI(M) activist and there was also the intervention of radical religious groups in the crime. "The accused is said to have held significant posts in the Marxist party in the area. As per the local information, he is currently holding the charge of the party's 'karshaka sangham'. You can also see his Facebook posts praising Chief Minister Vijayan and Health Minister Veena George during their poll victories," Surendran had claimed. The CPI(M) said it was a fake propaganda spread by the BJP and the Congress to tarnish the image of the party which is in the forefront fighting against irrational beliefs and superstitious practices. (PTI)

Congress will restore old pension scheme if voted to power in Himachal: Priyanka Gandhi

SHIMLA, OCT 14 /--/ Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Friday promised to restore the old pension scheme for government employees in Himachal Pradesh if the Congress was voted to power in the Assembly elections. 'The AICC general secretary made the announcement while addressing the 'Pariwarta Pratigya Rally' at Thodo Maidan in Solan district and added that the old scheme was withdrawn by the BJP government at the Centre. Elections to the Himachal Pradesh Assembly will be held on November 12, the Election Commission of India announced on Friday.

Gandhi said she guaranteed that the decision to restore the old pension scheme and create one lakh jobs would be taken in the first meeting of the new Congress Cabinet. Two lakh employees in the state have been sitting on a 'dharna' (sit-in) to demand restoration of the old pension scheme for



two months but no government representative met them, she said. Gandhi also alleged that 63,000 posts were lying vacant in the state but unemployed youths had not been provided jobs. She promised that five lakh jobs would be provided to unemployed youths in five years and announced a monthly allowance of Rs 1,500 to women to help raise the standard of living. "This is the time to change, otherwise you will not get anything in the next five years," she said. "If you vote the Congress to power, Himachal Pradesh will grow."

Gandhi also hit back at the BJP for claiming that Himachal would buck the trend of changing governments every five years and said the ruling party changed the trend by not making any development. The Congress leader also addressed the increasing trend of drug addiction in the state and said a policy would be created and de-addiction centres opened in every district. Primary health centres will also be strengthened to provide better health care facilities to people. Gandhi added that she made her house in Himachal as her grandmother (former prime minister Indira Gandhi) wanted to build a house and retire there but was martyred before she could. (PTI)

ANTCC President takes up health related issues with Secretary (Health)

PORT BLAIR, OCT 14/--/ The President, Andaman Nicobar



Territorial Congress Committee (ANTCC), Mr. Rangalal Halder has raised an issue on behalf of residents concerning the requirements of Senior Male Doctors and Senior Lab Technician in the Community Health Centre, Rangat. In his letter addressed to the Health of Secretary, Mr. Halder has demanded for providing adequate health care benefits and best of the Medical treatments by appointing permanent Chief Medical Officer, Senior Doctors and a Senior Lab Technician in the CHC Rangat.

He pointed towards the health workers who are unable to provide health-care benefits to the patients due to the lack of Medical officers who can guide and supervise them. He further requested the Health Secretary to undertake a visit to look upon the problems & difficulties faced by the local residents and accordingly appoint Medical Officers, Lab Technicians and Medical Staff in CHC, Rangat at the earliest.

Public hearing for preparation of ICRZ for Rutland on 19th Oct

PORT BLAIR, OCT 14/--/ The public hearing for preparation of Draft Island Coastal Regulation Zone (ICRZ) Plan for Rutland Island will be held on 19th October 2022, at 10.00 am at the APWD Guest House, Rutland. Regarding this, suggestions were invited from public and other stakeholders and also soft copies of the Maps were made available in the Office of the Chairman, ANCZMA (Chief Secretary, A&N Administration), Member Secretary, ANCZMA [PCCF(CRZ&FC)], Van Sadan, Haddo, Deputy Commissioner (South Andaman / Nicobar), Assistant Commissioner (South Andaman / Kamorta), Tehsildar (Ferrargunj / Katchal / Kamorta), Member Secretary (Pollution Control Committee), Director (Tribal Welfare), Divisional Forest Officer (South Andaman / Nicobar Division) and Range Officer (Manglutan / Kamorta).

114 MBBS seats allotted to ANIIMS for 2022-23

Out of 114 MBBS seats allotted to ANIIMS, 97 seats is for allotment as State quota while 17 seats for All India quota



PORT BLAIR, OCT 14/--/The Andaman & Nicobar Islands Institute of Medical Sciences (ANIIMS), Port Blair has been approved 114 MBBS seats by Ministry of Health & Family welfare (MoHFW), Govt. of India and Andaman & Nicobar Administration for the academic year 2022-23. NEET-2022 qualified students will be admitted through All India quota counselling and state quota counselling. Out of the total approved 114 seats, 17 seats of All India quota will be filled by online counselling by Medical Counselling Committee (MCC), and rest of the 97 seats will be admitted under state quota (10 EWS plus 87 Category seat).

The Applications have been invited from NEET eligible candidates for admission to ANIIMS. The applicants can apply through Common Admission Online Portal (www.collegeadmission.andaman.gov.in). Only NEET-2022 qualified students from Andaman and Nicobar Islands can apply for the above mentioned 97 seats of state quota. Remaining 17 seats of All India quota will be filled through online counselling by the Medical Counseling Committee (MCC).

The tentative timeline for the Admission process is as follows:-

Event	Date and day
Submission of duly filled application form starts on	14 th October, 2022 from 10.00 am
Last date of submission of application form	20 th October, 2022 till 5.00pm
Publication of Provisional merit list	21 st October, 2022 at 5.00pm
Appeal & Grievance	22 nd October, 2022 till 5.00pm
Display of Final Merit list	25 th October, 2022 at 5.00pm
01 st Round of Counseling & verification of documents	27 th and 28 th October, 2022 from 9.00am onwards
02 nd Round of Counseling & verification of documents	14 th November, 2022 from 9.00am onwards
Mop up Counseling	08 th December, 2022
Commencement of Academic session for the MBBS year 2022-23	15 th November, 2022

For queries, if any, candidates can contact the Admission Cell of ANIIMS (03192-230258). For detailed information, refer to the prospectus which will be uploaded shortly in ANIIMS website <http://andsswl.and.nic.in/aniims>

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Rozgar-evam-Swarozgar Mela held at Tushnabad

PORT BLAIR, OCT 14/--/ The Model Career Centre (Employment Exchange) in association with the Directorate of Industries and A&NI Khadi & Village Industries Board organised a Rozgar-evam Swarozgar Mela in the Community Hall of Gram Panchayat Tushnabad on Thursday. Mr. Balwan Singh Jaglan, Secretary (Labour, Employment and Training) was the chief guest. While addressing the gathering, he elucidated that the main objective of the Rozgar-evam Swarozgar Mela is to facilitate a platform between the private employers and jobseekers and also to extend platform between self-employment implementing departments and unemployed youth who wish to set up self-employment ventures for their livelihood.

Mr. Radhey Shyam Meena, Director (RD) who was the guest of

honour expounded that the Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India has launched several self-employment schemes such as Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) for the



benefit of rural youth and requested all the participants to avail self-employment schemes. Mr. K. Srinivasa Rao, Director (Employment & Training) and Mr. Rajendra Pal, Block Development Officer also spoke on the occasion. The Pradhan and PRI members of Tushnabad, Chouldari,

Ferrargunj, Namunagar, Collinpur and Mithakhari were also present. Mr. Anand Amrit Raj, Pradhan, Tushnabad welcomed the gathering and acknowledged the efforts of the Department for organizing Rozgar and

Swarozgar Mela and appealed the gathering to utilise the self-employment schemes being offered by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, Industries, A&N Khadi & Village Industries Board, DDU-GKY Training Partners, CRISIL Foundation Organisation SBI and job being offered by Private Employers.

Altogether 300 prospective rural youth from Tushnabad, Chouldari, Ferrargunj, Namunagar, Collinpur and Mithakhari Gram Panchayat benefited from the programme. The vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. Sindhupati Raja, Nodal Officer (PMFME), Directorate of Industries.

Secretary (Fisheries) visits Deep Sea Fishing Harbour site at Mayabunder

PORT BLAIR, OCT 14/--/ For inspection of the proposed site for construction of Deep Sea Fishing Harbour at Mayabunder, North and Middle Andaman, Mr. G. Sudhakar, Secretary (Fisheries), A&N Administration, alongwith Dr. K. Gopal, Joint Director (Fisheries) visited Mayabunder from Oct. 8 to 10, 2022. During the visit, the Secretary (Fisheries) held meetings with PRIs and interacted with the fisher community at Mayabunder, Karamatang and Tugapur.

On 8th October, the Secretary (Fisheries) visited the proposed site of Deep Sea Fishing Harbour and its adjacent site for the establishment of Sea Food Cluster and directed the Assistant Director of Fisheries (N&M) to conduct a preliminary survey alongwith the Revenue staff to identify the area and position of the land and to take suitable action for allotment of the land in favour of the Department of Fisheries.

The Secretary (Fisheries) also attended the interactive meetings in APWD Guest House, Mayabunder, Karamatang Village and Fish Landing Centre, Pokadera. During interaction with the fishers, the Secretary (Fisheries) motivated and urged the fishermen to avail the benefits of Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada



Yojana (PMMSY) under which subsidy is extended to various components including Ice Plants, Cold Storages, Deep Sea Fishing Vessels, Insulated and Refrigerated Trucks etc. During the meeting, the fishermen put forth their demands pertaining to extension of Jetty from 50 to 80 meters, extension of Fish Landing Centre, Pokadera, installation of HDPE Jetty near the fishing village, Mayabunder, supply of Essential Fishery Requisites by the Department, supply of fencing material to protect the freshwater fishes from flood and other climatic disaster, compensation against loss of fishing crop due to flood etc. The Karen fishermen of Karamatang village have shown interest towards Installation of Ice Plants. The Secretary (Fisheries) advised them to install 2 MT Ice Plant by availing subsidy under PMMSY. The

Secretary (Fisheries) assured the fisher community to look into their issues and directed the Assistant Director of Fisheries of the Zone to conduct camps and motivate unemployed youth in availing the benefits of PMMSY. In a meeting held at Zilla Parishad, Mayabunder, the Adhyaksha, Zilla Parishad requested to empower Zilla Parishad in selection of beneficiaries under the UT Plan Scheme. The Pradhan, Rampur demanded compensation for fishermen during lean and cyclonic periods. The Secretary (Fisheries) has assured the PRIs to look into the matter and suggested identification of suitable site for culture of mud crab in Pokadera and also to identify best unemployed youth of the village, so as to provide them skill development training in the field of aquaculture like shrimp and prawn farming, seabass farming, mud crab fattening etc.

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The world is governed more by appearances than realities, so that it is fully as necessary to seem to know something as to know it

Daniel Webster

SC split over hijab shows divide in society

The Supreme Court's split verdict on wearing hijab perhaps reflects the division in the wider society on issues concerning secularism and the minorities. For now the ban on hijab will continue in Karnataka schools as the apex court hearing the petitions challenging the Karnataka High Court's order upholding the ban imposed by the state government gave a split verdict. Justice Hemant Gupta dismissed the petitions challenging the high court's order, while Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia said that "wearing hijab is a matter of choice" and struck down the order. Because of their divergent views, the Bench has referred the matter to the Chief Justice of India "for appropriate directions" like whether the case should be heard by a three-judge or larger bench. The Karnataka High Court had ruled that a prescribed school uniform does not violate either the right to freedom of speech and expression or the right to privacy as enshrined in the Constitution under Article 21. Allowing the appeal Justice Dhulia said, "One thing which was topmost (priority) for me was education of girl child. A girl child in (many) areas does household work and chores before going to school and are we making her life any better by doing this (banning hijab)."

The insistence on wearing hijab by a section of Muslim girls is in stark contrast to Iranian women's defiance against hijab which is supposed to be mandatory as per Islamic law, though the Karnataka High Court ruled that it is not a "part of essential religious practice in Islam". It seems that what is religiosity for one set of Muslim women is a curtailment of women's freedom for another. Even in India there are Muslim women who prefer to go without hijab. The issue is why a head-scarf that does not interfere with the uniform cannot be a matter of choice without being a target of hostile discrimination; and whether the hijab is going to be used to deny girl students their right to education.

The split verdict has given rise to the question of whether matters on which opinions could be sharply divided and have significant political implications should be placed before Division Benches of even number.

Telangana CM has finally gone national

REFLEX ACTION

Sushil Kutty

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao's Telangana Rashtra Samithi turned national on Dussehra and is now the 'Bharat Rashtra Samithi' with Rao its prime mover and shaker, also the man who will replace Narendra Modi if a "BRS-led Opposition" wins big in 2024. With that K Chandrashekar Rao announced his decision to challenge Prime Minister Narendra Modi to a 2024 duel.

Denying Modi a third consecutive term is the sole reason for the Bharat Rashtra Samithi coming to the fore. KCR plans to build a vote-bank of farmers, Dalits, minorities and migrant workers, to trounce Modi. Note that TRS became BRS on the "auspicious day" of Dussehra when good triumphed over bad, and Ravanna burned across Telangana. The Election Commission was to be notified of the makeover on Thursday, Oct 6. But at least one TRS leader jumped the gun and distributed a quarter bottle of XXX Rum with a "live chicken" each to a long queue of male KCR supporters. The BRS like the AAP will rely on the freebie-culture to extend its national footprints. As a fledgling TRS, K Chandrashekar Rao had made his stand in Telangana with a slew of handouts.

That said, the name-change and nationwide exposure will not put an end to the freebies despite allegations that "24-hour free electricity" had put Telangana under tremendous financial strain. This was the most irritating refrain going around in Hyderabad after TRS shed skin and BRS broke cover. In the 18-20 months to come, BRS aims to bite the BJP in the rear and ensure Prime Minister Narendra Modi bolts the national stage. The BRS view is that after

2024 Modi should not be seen in the vicinity of the central vista. Everybody in Telangana knows that KCR covets a national role. KCR renamed TRS at an "auspicious hour", and KCR wanted to appease the gods. KCR has blind belief in astrologers. In time, he wants 'Bharat' also to know this. For now, the TRS was in the pink of health to make its national debut.

That said, there are rules for gaining national recognition. The "national party" tag comes with conditions. For example, AAP is still waiting for gaining its national colours! The BRS will not get the "national party" tag easily. The AAP already rules two states. And a third might be within grasp. To be declared national party, the BRS has to be recognized as "state party" in a minimum of four states. It also has to win six per cent of the votes in any four states and four Lok Sabha seats. The party could also win two per cent Lok Sabha seats in three states to become national. The BRS now has presence only in Telangana. But KCR can hope to become Prime Minister. There is no rule that says that BRS should be a national party for KCR to become Prime Minister.

KCR's outreach to neighbouring states, and his bonhomie with several ruling chief ministers of regional party-held states can help catapult BRS to national party status. Getting 2 percent Lok Sabha seats in three states isn't so farfetched if the ruling

parties of friendly states helped. KCR has been working to a plan and that makes him a dangerous customer for Modi and the BJP. For over a year, the Telangana CM has been plotting his moves to checkmate Modi. His biting rhetoric against the BJP, Modi in particular, was scaled to plan. The series of no shows at Modi events in Hyderabad and not turning up at the Hyderabad airport to receive Prime Minister Modi, protocol bedamned, is now a nauseating routine for the BJP.

The media are using terms like "with an eye on 2024" to describe 'BRS' and the timing of the party resolution announcing TRS's metamorphosis. The BRS wants to get ready for 2024. For that it has to get national exposure; and not only aim to fight and win 2024 Lok Sabha elections, but also contest assembly elections slated for 2023. The Telangana Chief Minister is a shrewd politician; somebody with the reputation to get done what he sets out to do. Like carving a state out of a bigger state. If TRS and KCR has been continuously ruling Telangana, it's because Telangana owes its birth to TRS and KCR.

A scalding tongue is another KCR trait that grabs quick attention. He has made it clear on several occasions that he cannot suffer Modi! KCR also packs a lot of energy in his willowy frame. He has an enemy not only in the BJP, but the Congress is also not a friend. Chandrababu Naidu is a fierce critic. The long and short of it is, KCR's Bharat Rashtra Samithi faces challenges galore, but if the job of making BRS a national party is cut out for KCR, it could also be said that KCR is cut out for the job of turning BRS into an all-India party. (IPA)



Devotees purchase ornaments used to adorn Goddess Kali idols, in Kumartuli--Arijit Ganguly

Conventional Crossword							
1	2	3	4	5		6	7
9						10	
11						12	
				13		14	
15	16		17				
						18	19
21		22		23			20
24				25	26		27
28				29			
30				31			

ACROSS		DOWN	
1	Love apple	1	Timorous
6	Passing craze	2	Metal-bearing rock
9	Angry	3	Mediterranean
10	Habitual abode	4	republic
11	Confused fight	5	Consumed
12	Monkey	6	Swarm
13	Drawn into error	7	Young horse
15	Expensive	8	Electrical unit
18	Region	9	Exploit
21	Further group	14	Mineral spring
24	By way of	16	Tempt
25	Entertain	17	Cereal
28	Book of the Bible	19	Reddening cosmetic
29	Light beer	20	Ward off
30	Sheltered side	21	Egg-shaped
31	Thoroughfare	22	Dislike intensely
		23	Preservative
		26	Spoil
		27	Bishop's territory

SUDOKU :3666								
			3	1		4	2	
			8				6	3
6	4		2		7		8	
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9								6
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	7		1		3		4	2
4	3				2			
	9	8		7	4			

Yesterday's Solution 3665								
7	3	9	6	4	5	1	2	8
1	2	6	7	9	8	5	4	3
8	5	4	3	2	1	9	7	6
6	9	3	8	5	7	4	1	2
4	1	5	9	6	2	8	3	7
2	7	8	4	1	3	6	9	5
9	8	2	1	7	6	3	5	4
5	6	1	2	3	4	7	8	9
3	4	7	5	8	9	2	6	1

Yesterday's Cross Word Solution 1674								
B	L	U	E			S	T	O
E			N				I	R
G	R	I	S	T		R	E	A
G		T	E	A	S	E		C
A	L	E	R	T		P	A	L
R	U	D	E			D	O	V
P			N	O	I	S	E	T
R	I	F	E			N	E	R
O	N	E				S		E
D	E	N	Y			T	E	R

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Sangh Parivar still treating Muslims as second class citizens

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh under the stewardship of Mohan Bhagwat has completely transformed; from an NGO claiming to undertake social work to a political outfit. Obviously with this modification the basic approach of the RSS to the prevailing issues and ideas have also undergone significant variation. The first such variation is witnessed in RSS making a surreptitious shift on the issue of deification of an individual.

RSS has been sturdily opposed to the concept and policy of creating the visible personality cult within BJP and the government.

But speech of Mohan Bhagwat delivered on the occasion of celebration of Shashtra puja and observing the Dussehra utsav, explicitly underlined that for protecting its stake in the politics and for enjoying the benefits of the power, it has conveniently shifted its alignment to worshipping the individual and giving greater space to him than the organisation. This is nothing but the worst form of dilution of the RSS's Hindutva policy.

This dichotomy got clearly manifest in the change of approach and attitude towards the Modi and his government. Only three days back to the Dussehra celebration, the powerful general

secretary, Hosabole, next to Bhagwat in the organisation, had openly reprimanded the Modi government for its non-performance. But in sharp contrast Bhagwat urged the RSS rank and file to look at the Modi government as the harbinger of change and taking New India into a new future.

Nonetheless this nature of varied opinion raises the question about the dilution of the so called "ideological" posture of the RSS, it also points to vertical split in the hierarchy of the organisation on the issue of extending support to Modi. It gives the impression that all office bearers are not in sync to the notion and ideas nursed by Bhagwat. No doubt this split in the RSS will question its credibility and moral authority. In fact the RSS suffering with this malaise has been visible in Modi's adventure of violating its directives and working against the set policies.

The RSS chief is also known for his double speak. In the past he had said the DNA of Hindus and Muslims are same; the Muslims are the part of the Indian society and Muslims do not face any

threat. But he never tried to give a shape to his sermons. The fact is RSS continues to treat the minorities and Muslims as the second class citizens. Even on the occasion of Dussehra celebration in Nagpur, in a discreet manner in his speech, he tried to convey that the Muslims have been posing threat to the country.

He said that community-based population imbalance is an important subject and should not be ignored. What does it imply? RSS has always been accusing Muslims of not checking the birth rate. It has also been using this to scare the Hindus that the days are not far when the Hindus will turn minority in their own homeland. Bhagwat's speech belies the demographic findings which say that both Hindu and Muslim population has been under check.

This is the second time in a row that the perceived population imbalance has figured prominently in the annual Vijaya Dashami speech of Bhagwat. He virtually goaded the Narendra Modi government to come up with a

population policy. The difference between the Hindu and Muslim total fertility rates, which 30 years ago was 1.1, has come down to 0.3 since Muslims are adopting family planning much faster than the Hindus. Despite this Bhagwat flagged the issue raising the fear of the country's division.

In this regard the remarks of the AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi ought to be mentioned; "If Hindus & Muslims have same DNA then where's the imbalance? There is no need for population control as we've already achieved replacement rate. Muslims have sharpest decline in fertility rate." True enough Bhagwat has taken a leaf out of the incidents that have been happening around the world. He has been encouraging fear-mongering over population.

Raising concerns over inequality, he said "unless temples, water sources and cremation grounds are open to all Hindus, till such time the talk of equality will be a mere pipe dream". But this again was a tactical ploy to hide behind the façade of equality. Significantly he confessed that Hindus have their rights. What does it imply? Obviously it is a part of RSS design to deny the status of Dalits and adivasis and bring them into the fold of Hindus. (IPA/To be continued)

FOCUS

Arun Srivastava

Ferry schedule to Rangat resumed

PORT BLAIR, OCT 14/--/ In view of increase in passenger traffic between Port Blair and Rangat via all ports and as off the situation being normalised from COVID pandemic and to facilitate the commuters this Directorate has decided to resume the ferry schedule to Rangat via all ports. Now, the ferry service between Port Blair and Rangat will be available on every Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday i.e. 04 days in a week. The ferry services will be operated as per the following schedule with effect from 17th October .2022.

1. PORT BLAIR TO RANGAT:

DAY	ROUTE	DEPARTURE TIME FROM PORT BLAIR
Monday	Rangat via Shaheed Dweep, Swaraj Dweep, Strait Island, Kadamtala & Long Island.	0700 Hrs
Wednesday	Rangat via Shaheed Dweep, Swaraj Dweep, Strait Island & Long Island.	0700 Hrs
Friday	Rangat via Swaraj Dweep & Long Island.	0615 Hrs
Saturday	Rangat via Shaheed Dweep, Swaraj Dweep, Strait Island & Long Island.	0700 Hrs

2. RANGAT TO PORT BLAIR:

DAY	ROUTE	DEPARTURE TIME FROM RANGAT
Tuesday	Port Blair via Long Island, Kadamtala, Strait Island, Swaraj Dweep & Shaheed Dweep.	0700 Hrs
Thursday	Port Blair via Long Island, Strait Island, Swaraj Dweep & Shaheed Dweep.	0700 Hrs
Friday	Port Blair via Long Island & Swaraj Dweep.	1300 Hrs
Sunday	Port Blair via Long Island, Strait Island, Swaraj Dweep & Shaheed Dweep.	0700 Hrs

Sailing of MV Swaraj Dweep revised

PORT BLAIR, OCT 14/--/ Due to insufficient booking of passenger tickets the sailing schedule of the vessel MV Swaraj Dweep to Chennai on 11th October 2012 was cancelled. However, now the sailing programme of the vessel has been revised. The revised sailing programme of MV Swaraj Dweep is as follows:

REVISED SCHEDULE OF MV SWARAJ DWEEEP							
ARRIVAL	DAY	PORT	DEPARTURE		VOY. NO	TIME (in Hrs)	REMARKS
--	--	PORT BLAIR	18.10.2022	TUE	1012	1600	
21.10.2022	FRI	CHENNAI	23.10.2022	SUN	1013	1600	
26.10.2022	WED	PORT BLAIR	28.10.2022	FRI	1014	1000	
31.10.2022	MON	VIZAG	01.11.2022	TUE	1015	1600	
04.11.2022	FRI	PORT BLAIR	--	--	--		

Passenger tickets for Chennai sector will be issued to the general public from 15th October 2022 onwards at STARS Ticketing Counters. Further to inform that, Chennai bound passengers those who have cancelled their tickets for earlier schedule i.e. for 11.10.2022 are advised to purchase a fresh ticket to avail the above sailing.

Complainant wants FIR cancelled in Gurugram mosque ransacking incident

GURUGRAM, OCT 14 /--/ Two days after a mosque was allegedly ransacked by a mob, the main complainant has asked police not to act on the FIR as the Hindu villagers have given their assurance that such an incident will never happen again.

The complainant, Subedar Najar Mohammad, said that the community does not want any police action in the matter, as the villagers have given the Muslims in the village their assurance that such an incident will not recur. The differences between the two communities were resolved in the panchayat on Thursday night, according to the application Mohammad wrote to police. Inspector Ajay Malik told PTI that police had received an application requesting cancellation of the FIR against the accused. "But the process of cancellation of the FIR will be decided only by the court, he said. Friday prayers were offered peacefully in the mosque. However, police were deployed around the mosque as precaution as members of all four Muslim families of the village attended the prayers. A panchayat meet was held Thursday night to restore peace

between Hindus and the four Muslim families of the village at the sarpanch's office. The meet lasted for one and a half hours and concluded with assurances by the villagers to the Muslim families of peace and brotherhood, police said. Both communities said things have gone back to being as amiable as they were before, and there is no issue between them now. In his application to cancel the FIR, Mohammad said that a compromise had been struck between the two communities and he did not want any police action. We have no grievances. The matter was settled in the panchayat.

The villagers assured us that such an incident will not be allowed to happen in future. We do not want any police action. There is peace and brotherhood in our village, Mohammed said in his application. A mob of more than 200 people had on Wednesday night allegedly ransacked a mosque here in Bhora Kalan village, and had assaulted the people praying inside threatening to expel them from the village. An FIR in the matter was filed by the police on Thursday. (PTI)

Fine particle pollution linked mortality in India may be lower than thought: Study

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ Exposure to high levels of fine air pollution particles (PM2.5) in India may have a smaller impact on mortality than previously estimated, according to the first such study to cover the whole of the country.'

India has among the highest levels of air pollution in the world, with most people living in areas with fine particulate matter levels (PM2.5) well above the safe limit by the World Health Organization (WHO). The findings of the Million Death Study (MDS), published in the journal Environmental Health Perspectives, linked concentrations of PM2.5 derived from satellite-based measurements and deaths in over 7,400 small areas covering a total population of 6.8 million.

The researchers quantified the relationship between PM2.5 exposures over several years to the subsequent mortality risk, focusing on the leading killers of adults: respiratory disease, heart disease, stroke and overall mortality. Their analyses adjusted for risk factors that make these

diseases more common such as smoking, urban or rural residency, and education. Because these diseases and PM2.5 tend to cluster in some areas but not others, they also adjusted for spatial clustering. Analysing over 200,000 deaths at ages 15-69 years, the researchers found a nine per cent excess risk in stroke deaths for every 10 microgrammes per cubic metre increase in PM2.5 exposure. However, there were no excess risks for respiratory or heart disease and for total mortality (after excluding stroke), they said. Study results were broadly similar in different age groups and in areas with higher or lower use of household solid fuel -- which itself is the major contributor to PM2.5 exposure as measured by satellites.

In contrast to these direct observations, earlier estimates of air pollution deaths in India used complex models that assumed much higher mortality risks from PM2.5 exposure, the researchers said. "Measuring the health effects of air pollution is

complicated,' said study lead author Professor Patrick Brown, from the University of Toronto in Canada. "There are so many things to tease out to establish if a relationship with deaths is true or just noise in the data. Even the modest excess risks we found for stroke might reflect the uncertainty that is inherent in these types of epidemiological studies, Brown said.

The researchers noted that direct studies like the Million Death Study (MDS) are far preferable to extrapolating from models, many of which take reports from non-Indian settings and apply them to India.

Earlier models have probably overstated the extent to which air pollution kills adults in India, they said. "Most existing studies on air quality and health are done in high-income countries, where PM2.5 exposures are far lower and disease patterns are substantially different than in low and middle-income countries such as India," said study co-author Professor George D'Souza, Dean of St. John's

SAI to conduct selection trials for football on Oct 20 & 21

PORT BLAIR, OCT 14/--/ The Sports Authority of India (SAI) is implementing the Sports Promotional Schemes across the country to identify talented sports persons and nurture them to excel at National and International competitions. With the above aim, SAI is establishing a SAI Training Centre at Modern Sports Complex, Lapathy, Car Nicobar in the disciplines of football, athletics, weightlifting and cycling.

The first selection trials will be in the discipline of football in the age group of 10 to 18 years on Oct. 20 & 21, 2022 at 9.00 am at SAI Training Centre, Modern Sports Complex, Lapathy, Car Nicobar for inducting 30 girls in the residential scheme. The selection trial dates for other disciplines will be intimated soon.

Those sportspersons, who belong preferably to Andaman and Nicobar Islands and fulfill the criteria, are eligible for the selection trials. The selection will be based on age verification, medical fitness, skill tests of specific discipline, STC battery of tests etc.

The facilities provided under SAI, STC residential scheme include free lodging, free boarding/ diet (Rs 300/- per day), sports kit, competition exposure, educational expenses, medical and insurance & miscellaneous expenses (Rs 12000/- per annum).

The sportspersons willing to attend the selection trials in the discipline of Football (girls) have been asked to report at SAI Training Centre, Modern Sports Complex, Lapathy, Car Nicobar on Oct.20 & 21 along with the documents viz. Original Birth Certificate, Aadhaar Card, Sports Certificate and four passport size photos. For further details or enquires regarding selection trails email at saiandaman88@gmail.com or contact the coaches viz. Shri Mohammed Sadique, Centre In-Charge, STC Port Blair, Ph. No. 9531879321 and Shri F E Andrew, Chief Coach (Football), STC Car Nicobar, Ph. No 9940261980.

College, Bengaluru, India.

"That needs to change," D'Souza said. The results are one of many insights being generated by MDS one of the largest studies of premature mortality in the world. The study, covering deaths from 2001 to 2014, is a long-running effort to better understand the causes of mortality in countries such as India, where the vast majority of people die at home without a death certificate. Launched by Professor Prabhat Jha at Dalla Lana School of Public Health, The University of Toronto, it has helped governments and health providers to better allocate scarce public health funding. Despite the good news, the researchers said there are many reasons to act on air pollution in India.

PM2.5 may not be the big killer in India as has been touted, but action to reduce PM2.5 exposure is still necessary, said Jha. "Air pollution worsens child lung health and lowers the quality of life, and that is sufficient justification to act," he added. (PTI)

Delhi Fire Services 'fully prepared' to ensure trouble-free Diwali

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ As the national capital gears up to celebrate Diwali, the Delhi Fire Services is putting in place elaborate plans to ensure a trouble-free "festival of lights".

From cancelling leaves of staff to deploying fire-fighting equipment at 30 spots across the city, the fire department on Friday said it was "fully prepared" to tackle any fire-related emergencies. Diwali, which falls on October 24, is celebrated on a large scale in the national capital. The festivities, however, begin a day earlier. Despite a complete ban on crackers, the department had received over 152 fire-related calls on Diwali in 2021. The number was, however, 25 per cent lower from 2020 and the lowest in 15 years, fire officials said. The fire services control room usually responds to the maximum number of calls on Diwali and fire-fighters need to be on their toes at all times to deal with

emergencies, they said. This year, around 2,900 fire-fighters will be on duty to tackle emergencies. As per the arrangements, the fire department will deploy water tender each at 22 busy locations from 5 pm to midnight on October 23 and 24. These spots have been selected based on an analysis of yearly fire-related calls during Diwali so that a water tender can quickly reach any location in case of a fire and check its spread, a senior fire official said.

The areas identified for the deployment of water tenders are Bara Tooti Chowk, Tilak Nagar, Central Market in Lajpat Nagar, Lal Kuan Chowk, Lahori Gate, Nangloi, South Extension, Sonia Vihar, Mehrauli, Ghitorni Metro station, Alipur police station, Rani Bagh Market, DTC Depot Katran Market, Gandhi Nagar Market, Mahipal Pur Chowk, Sangam Vihar, Mundka metro station, Dera Goan Mor, Azad Market

Chowk, Jaipur Golden Hospital, Paper Market Gazipur, and Yamuna Vihar. Besides water tenders, motorcycles fitted with fire-fighting equipment will be deployed at five other locations with narrow and congested lanes. These include Ambedkar Nagar, Chandni Chowk, Sabji Mandi Ghanta Ghar, Paharganj Shiela Cinema, and Gandhi Nagar. The department will deploy other vehicles fitted with fire-fighting equipment at spots such as Connaught Circus, Geeta Colony, and J Road. Delhi Fire Service Director Atul Garg said, "We are fully prepared to deal with any fire-related emergencies this Diwali. Our department has been doing extra deployment at different locations to reduce travel time." The fire stations and appliances have also been kept ready to meet any eventuality. We have chosen 30 locations where fire-fighting vehicles with equipment and staff

will be deployed to tackle any emergencies more efficiently and quickly."

Garg added that all senior officers had been directed to ensure the maintenance and upkeep of fire vehicles under their jurisdiction and to carry out inspections of fire stations for the availability and operability of a maximum number of fire units and equipment. "Casual leave, earned leave, and day-off of officers and staff have been cancelled for October 23 and 24 to ensure that we have maximum fire-fighters to deal with any fire-related emergencies," Garg added. The officials said fire-related calls usually went up on Diwali, mainly due to the bursting of firecrackers, not taking adequate precautions while lighting earthen lamps or candles, and not checking for loose wiring while putting up decorative lights and overloaded extension boards causing short-circuits. (PTI)

Army command hospital to organize 2-day national level combat trauma care programme in Udhampur from today

JAMMU, OCT 14 /--/ A two-day national level Continuous Medical Education (CME) programme has a theme of Combat Trauma Care: Emerging Trends will commence at Army command hospital in Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, a defence spokesman said. The command hospital, northern command, is organizing the two-day programme on October 15 and 16 at Dhruva auditorium, in order to deliberate upon the recent developments in the field of management of combat trauma, the spokesman said. He said the event will be

attended by the top brass of the medical directorate of Army Medical Corps along with several eminent speakers from the civil as well as delegates from the medical fraternity of all three services and senior officers from northern Command.

The initiative will not only pave the way for learning of advanced medical protocols and patient management systems, but also give an excellent exposure to the medical staff of the Command Hospital, the spokesman said. The command hospital, northern command, is a multi-specialty flagship hospital

of the Army and plays a special role in management of trauma of all kinds especially those in the category of battle casualties and battle accidents.

The spokesman said the event will also focus on enhancing the skills and knowledge of specialists and medical officers in the command zone on the subject of combat trauma and its effective management since several new combat casualty care concepts have been introduced as a result of experiences from the recent war and conflicts, research on the subject and advent of newer concepts. Besides guest lectures on the

relevant topics, a workshop also has been planned which will impart hands-on training in life-saving interventions to delegates especially regimental medical officers who are the first responders to trauma in the operational zone, the spokesman said.

The final objective of the conclave is to sharpen the knowledge and skills of medical officers and specialists with a positive impact on outcome after sustaining trauma in the war, the spokesman said adding the event will definitely put across the causality management in the field areas in a new light for the entire medical staff. (PTI)

Rajasthan asked to pay compensation to children orphaned by Covid within 2 weeks

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ The Supreme Court on Friday directed the Rajasthan government to pay compensation to children orphaned by Covid-19 within two weeks.

A bench of Justices M R Shah and Sudhanshu Dhulia also ordered the state government to furnish particulars to the state legal service authority with respect to rejected applications of payment of ex-gratia assistance within two weeks.

It asked the Rajasthan State Legal Services Authority to look into these applications and take appropriate decisions within four weeks thereafter. "In so far as pending applications for compensation to orphans are concerned, we direct the state to make the payment to remaining applicants whose parents have died

due to Covid within two weeks," the bench said. The Rajasthan government informed the top court that 191 children, who became orphans due to Covid, have been paid ex-gratia out of the total number of 718.

On the issue of suicidal deaths, the counsel for the state government also apprised the bench that at district level 9,077 applications were received out of which 551 are pending, 8047 are sanctioned and 479 have been rejected. The top court had earlier rapped the Rajasthan government over its "unsatisfactory" affidavit enumerating steps on payment of ex-gratia to family members of those who died of Covid-19, and said it was not doing any charity.

The apex court was hearing a plea filed by advocate Gaurav Kumar

AAP appoints Punjab minister Harjot Singh Bains party's Himachal Pradesh in-charge

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ The AAP on Friday appointed Punjab School Minister Harjot Singh Bains in-charge of the party's political affairs in poll-bound Himachal Pradesh.

The party's decision comes on a day the Election Commission announced the schedule for the assembly polls in the hill state. The notification for the election in Himachal Pradesh will be issued on October 17 and the polling will be held on November 12. The counting of votes will take place on December 8. "Big announcement before Himachal elections. The AAP appoints Harjot Singh Bains as the 'prabhari' (in-charge) for Himachal Pradesh," the party tweeted from its official Twitter handle. After the poll panel's announcement, the Aam Aadmi Party said it is ready for the Himachal Pradesh elections and fully confident of getting the people's mandate. "We are

ready for the elections," AAP leader Durgesh Pathak said at a press conference when asked for his party's reaction to the announcement. He said teams formed by the party in every village of Himachal Pradesh have been "working hard" to reach out to the masses and convey the AAP's message to the electors. Pathak is an MLA from Delhi's Rajinder Nagar and a member of the AAP's political affairs committee, the highest decision-making body of the Arvind Kejriwal-led party. "I am fully confident that the way the Congress and the BJP have looted the state during their reins, the people of Himachal Pradesh will definitely give a chance to AAP this time after looking at the work done by the Kejriwal government in Delhi," Pathak said. The same "amazing work" is now being done by the AAP government in Punjab

under Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, he added. Politics in Himachal Pradesh has remained bipolar so far with the Congress and the BJP remaining the main contenders to the throne. The hill state, which is currently ruled by the BJP, is set to witness a three-cornered fight this time with the Kejriwal-led AAP joining the fray, riding on its stupendous victory in Punjab elections earlier this year. The AAP is gearing up to contest all seats in the assembly polls. Himachal Pradesh has a 68-member assembly and the BJP won a clear majority by winning 44 seats in the 2017 elections. The Congress managed to win 21 seats, Independents bagged two seats and the CPI(M) emerged victorious on one seat. According to the Election Commission, over 55 lakh voters are eligible to exercise their franchise in upcoming elections in the hill state. (PTI)

CITU congratulates BSNL Employees Union

PORT BLAIR, OCT 14/--/ CITU, Andaman & Nicobar State Committee congratulated BSNL Employees Union for scoring nearly 61% of polled votes in the Andaman & Nicobar Circle in the 9th Membership Verification of BSNL Employees, polling for which was held on 12th October 2022. CITU congratulated each staff member of BSNL who voted for the BSNL Employees Union. CITU hopes that the valiant struggle being conducted under the BSNLEU will continue in the coming days also.

Delhi: Man arrested for carrying around 103 kg firecrackers despite ban

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ A 29-year-old man was arrested for allegedly carrying firecrackers with an intention to sell them despite a ban on its sale and use, police said on Friday.

During patrolling in Sadar Bazar area's Teliwara Chowk on Thursday night, police noticed a man holding plastic bags. Upon checking the bags, they found firecrackers inside the bags, Deputy Commissioner of Police (north) Sagar Singh Kalsi said. On weighing, the firecrackers were found to be around 103 kg and Mohammad Mashrul was arrested, police said. The Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) had ordered a complete ban on the production, sale, and use of all types of firecrackers in the national capital till January 1, 2023. Mashrul, a resident of Bihar's Khagariya, revealed he had rented a godown in Sadar Bazar's Gandhi Market about a week ago, the DCP said. (PTI)

Electoral bonds scheme is absolutely transparent mode of political funding, Centre tells SC

Apex court to examine on Dec 6 whether batch of pleas should be referred to larger bench

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ The Centre told the Supreme Court on Friday that the electoral bonds scheme is an absolutely transparent mode of political funding and it is impossible to get any black or unaccounted money through it.

Electoral bonds have been pitched as an alternative to cash donations made to political parties as part of efforts to bring transparency in political funding. "The methodology of receiving money has been so transparent. We will explain step by step. Now it is impossible to get any black or unaccounted money. It is the most transparent system. To say it affects democracy does not hold water," Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Union of India, told a bench of Justices B R Gavai and B V Nagarathna. The apex court was hearing a PILs by NGO, Association for Democratic Reforms, Communist Party of India (Marxist) and other petitioners. Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the NGO, said this is a very interconnected issue which affects democracy. He said the matter should be heard urgently as electoral bonds are being issued just before every state election. Advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for one of the petitioners, said the issue should be heard by a larger bench. The apex court said

it would examine on December 6 whether a batch of pleas challenging laws permitting funding of political parties through the electoral bond scheme should be referred to a larger bench. It said this is an important matter which requires detailed hearing and sought assistance of the Attorney General and Solicitor General in the matter. Bhushan, appearing for the NGO, on April 5 had mentioned the matter before the then CJI N V Ramana, saying the issue was critical and needed an urgent hearing. The Supreme Court had agreed to list the NGO's plea for hearing but it did not come up before any court. Earlier, Bhushan had sought an urgent listing of the PIL from the apex court on October 4 last year seeking a direction to the Centre not to open any further window for sale of electoral bonds during the pendency of a case pertaining to funding of political parties and alleged lack of transparency in their accounts. The NGO, which had filed the PIL in 2017 on the alleged issue of corruption



and subversion of democracy through illicit and foreign funding of political parties and lack of transparency in the accounts of all political parties, had filed an interim application in March this year before the Assembly polls in West Bengal and Assam seeking that window for sale of electoral bonds be not reopened. The NGO, in its fresh application filed in the pending petition, had claimed that there is a serious apprehension that any further sale of electoral bonds before the upcoming Assembly elections, including in West Bengal and Assam, would further increase illegal and illicit funding of political parties through shell companies. On January 20 last year, the apex court had refused to grant interim stay on the 2018 Electoral Bonds Scheme and sought responses of the Centre and the Election Commission on an interim application by the NGO seeking stay on the scheme. The government notified the Electoral Bond Scheme on January 2, 2018. According to provisions of the scheme,

electoral bonds may be purchased by a person, who is a citizen of India or incorporated or established in India. An individual can buy electoral bonds, either singly or jointly with other individuals. Only political parties registered under Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and which secured not less than one percent of votes polled in the last general election to the House of the People or the Legislative Assembly of the State, are eligible to receive electoral bonds.

According to the notification, electoral bonds shall be encashed by an eligible political party only through a bank account with an authorised bank. The apex court had in April 2019 declined to stay the Centre's Electoral Bond Scheme 2018 and made it clear that it would accord an in-depth hearing on the pleas as the Centre and the EC have raised "weighty issues" having "tremendous bearing on the sanctity of the electoral process in the country". The Centre and the EC had earlier taken contrary stands in the court over political funding, with the government wanting to maintain anonymity of donors of bonds and the poll panel battling for revealing names of donors for transparency. (PTI)



(Top to Bottom) Cracks that have developed on the house at Madan Dutta Lane. Residents with their belongings as they "evacuate Bowbazar area after their houses developed" cracks owing to some water seepage during work in the East-West Metro tunnel — Photo : EOI

Interviews, exams to be held soon for filling up vacancies in state schools

KOLKATA, OCT 14 /--/ The West Bengal School Service Commission would soon begin the process of conducting interviews to fill up 1,585 posts at upper-primary level in state-run and state-aided secondary institutions, a top official said on Friday. The official said that a notification for filling up the posts would be issued in a few days, and interviews of those who have cleared the written exam were to be scheduled in the last week of the month. "The entire process, taking place after several years, will be conducted under the supervision of the Honourable High Court with transparency and fairness," he added. In another development, a notification for Teacher Eligibility Test (TET), scheduled to begin from November 11 to fill up over 11,000 posts in primary schools, was issued by the West Bengal Board of Primary Education on Friday. Around 500 TET and SSC candidates, who claimed they were not given a job despite cracking the tests in 2014 or 2016, had been staging an indefinite sit-in near Red Road for 579 days, demanding speedy appointment in primary and secondary schools. According to official records around 20,000 posts currently lay vacant in state-run, state-aided schools. Several key functionaries, including a former education minister, one former SSC chairman, an ex-SSC adviser, and an ex-primary board chairman, are among those who have been arrested by central agencies in connection with the large-scale recruitment irregularities in schools. (PTI)

Indian student stabbed multiple times in Australia; MEA demands strict action against perpetrators

SYDNEY, OCT 14 /--/ A 28-year-old Indian PhD student in Australia has been stabbed multiple times in the face, chest and abdomen by a man he had never met before, prompting India to demand strict action against the perpetrators.

The incident took place on October 6, as Shubham Garg walked along the Pacific Highway, Sydney, New South Wales Police Force said in a statement. Police have arrested Daniel Norwood and the 27-year-old suspect is charged with attempted murder after Garg, allegedly suffered multiple stab wounds to the face, chest and abdomen, the Daily Telegraph newspaper reported. Garg suffered multiple stab wounds to his face, chest, and abdomen. He sought assistance from a nearby house before being taken to Royal North Shore Hospital. The man underwent surgery and



28-year-old Indian PhD student Shubham Garg

remains there in a serious but stable condition, the NSW Police Force statement said. Garg was approached by an unknown man near the Pacific Highway Lane on Thursday. The unknown man allegedly threatened him while demanding cash, media reports said.

The man refused and was allegedly stabbed a number of times in the abdomen before the assailant fled, the reports said. Following extensive inquiries by detectives, a search warrant was executed on a home on the Pacific Highway at Greenwich at about 3.40 pm on Sunday. Norwood was arrested at the scene and was taken to Chatswood Police Station, where he was charged with one count of attempted murder after the alleged stabbing, the statement said. A number of items were

seized from the home and have been taken for forensic examination, it said. He was refused bail and appeared at Hornsby Local Court on Monday and will remain in custody with the next court appearance. The Police Media Unit advised the following to In The Cove, We can confirm the men are not believed to have known each other before the incident.

Meanwhile, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in New Delhi on Friday said that the High Commission in Canberra is in touch with the local authorities over the incident and expects action to be taken against the perpetrators. The Indian High Commission in Canberra and the consulate in Sydney are in close touch with the local authorities and a suspect is in custody. "It is a sad incident. He (Garg) is in a hospital and treatment is being done," Bagchi said. Garg's father Ramniwas Garg on Friday expressed concern over the racial attack on his son and has demanded a strict punishment to the culprit. The family has also requested for an urgent visa for one of its members to look after Garg in Australia. (PTI)

AT A GLANCE

Time for countrymen to give back to country: Defence minister

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Friday said that it is time for the countrymen to give back to the country, as he called on them to act as responsible riders and not free riders in the journey of the nation's growth. Singh said this in his address after launching a website -- 'Maa Bharati Ke Sapoot' (MBKS) -- at an event held at the National War Memorial complex here. It is our moral and national duty to help families of martyrs and injured soldiers as we can never repay what they have done for the country, he said. The website will enable citizens to contribute to the Armed Forces Battle Casualties Welfare Fund (AFBCWF). "When we help soldiers or their families, it should not be with a feeling of charity or favour, but with a feeling of gratitude," Singh said. AFBCWF is a tri-service fund, which is used for grant of immediate financial assistance of ex-gratia to the families of soldiers, sailors, and airmen who get killed or get grievously injured in active military operations, a senior Army official said. (PTI)

Expect call from EC if you have missed voting in polls

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ Missed out voting in elections? The Election Commission may soon reach out to you with a plea to cast your precious vote in the next round of elections. Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said on Friday that it had reached out to the industry, departments and organisations with more than 500 employees to appoint nodal officers to create awareness among the non-voting employees. "After the voting, these nodal officers will try and persuade these non-voting employees. We will try to reach out to them and say 'please try next time'. That is a kind of awareness that we will start," Kumar said at a press conference here. Election Commissioner Anup Chandra Pandey was also present at the press conference. He said the Commission was focusing its energies trying to address the issue of urban apathy towards the poll process.

Kumar said four metropolitan cities were among the 7-8 districts that had witnessed the least voting in the 2019 general elections. "We are focusing on urban apathy very, very seriously," the CEC said, adding that the chief electoral officers and district officers have been asked to focus on polling booths that have witnessed the lowest polling percentage in each constituency. Kumar said district electoral officers have been asked to personally visit such booths, find out reasons for lower turnout and address the difficulties faced by the people. He said the Commission has three broad objectives to hold free and fair, inclusive, accessible and inducement-free elections. The



Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar speaks during a press conference for the announcement of schedule of Assembly elections in Himachal Pradesh, in New Delhi

CEC said the Commission would also reach out to colleges and universities to increase their participation in the poll process. The Commission was also making efforts to ensure maximum voter participation, including that of young, urban, women, senior citizens, persons with disabilities (PwD) and third gender voters. "Special proactive steps have been taken to enrol PwDs and third genders, among other categories," the CEC said. (PTI)

Bomb threat: Aeroflot flight from Moscow makes emergency landing at IGI airport

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ A plane from Moscow carrying 402 people made an emergency landing in the national capital on Friday following a bomb threat, according to officials.

The Aeroflot aircraft operating flight SU 232 landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport here at 2.48 am. The passengers and crew were evacuated safely, they said. According to the police, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) received an e-mail warning of bombs on the flight on Thursday night. As the flight landed, its 386 passengers and 16 crew members were immediately evacuated, a senior police official said. The flight was checked and nothing has been found so far, the official said, adding that the aircraft has been isolated. "On Thursday around 11 pm, a threat message was



received at IGI Control Room social media site regarding bombs planted on board Russian flight no SU-272 arriving at IGI Airport. The flight landed at 2.48 am safely," one of the officials said. Full emergency was declared for the landing of the Boeing 777 aircraft that was being operated by Russian carrier Aeroflot, the official added. "The security related protocol was followed by the IGI police. All the passengers and their luggage de-boarded after proper checking and frisking. Further, the aircraft has also been thoroughly checked and no suspicious item has been found. Further action is underway," Deputy Commissioner of Police (IGI Airport) Tanu Sharma said. There have been at least two incidents of alleged bomb threat on flights in

the last few weeks. On October 3, the Indian Air Force had scrambled its fighter jets after receiving information of a bomb scare on a China-bound Iranian civilian plane that was flying over the Indian airspace. The aircraft did not land in India and later landed safely in China.

Earlier, on September 30, a Malaysia-bound flight was delayed over a false bomb alarm after a fight between two passengers onboard the plane at the IGIA. Four passengers allegedly involved in the incident were handed over to the local police. Among other incidents, on August 12, 2019, IGIA received a hoax bomb call for Terminal-2 that affected its operations for around 70 minutes. (PTI)

Korean student who stabbed Indian-origin roommate in US University, charged with murder

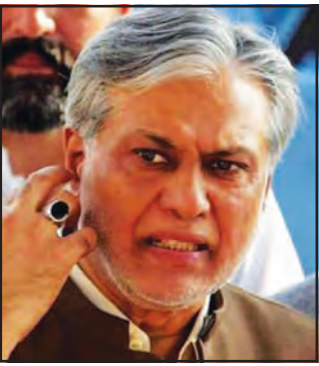
WASHINGTON, OCT 14 /--/ A Korean student, who allegedly stabbed his Indian-origin roommate to death in their dormitory at the prestigious Purdue University has been charged with murder, according to US media reports.

Ji Min Sha, a 22-year-old cybersecurity major from Seoul ruthlessly attacked Varun Manish Chheda on October 5 by stabbing him multiple times in the head and neck before he called authorities to report his 20-year-old roommate was dead, prosecutors argued, according to the Journal & Courier on Thursday. She was formally charged with murder on Thursday in the killing of Chheda, in what police called an unprovoked attack. Prosecutors allege that Sha "did knowingly or intentionally kill" Chheda, ABC News reported. Chheda from Indianapolis was found dead in McCutcheon Hall on the western edge of the campus last Wednesday. Purdue Police chief Lesley Wiete said last week that Sha called police early on October 5 and told them his roommate was dead in their first-floor dorm room on the campus in West Lafayette, which is about 104 kilometers northwest of Indianapolis. Officers who arrested Sha found him wearing clothes with blood on them, prosecutors said, and an autopsy found that Chheda had died of multiple sharp-force traumatic injuries. If convicted of the one count of murder, Sha could face anywhere between 45 to 60 years in prison.

The cybersecurity major is being held without bail, the Post reported. On Thursday, Sha claimed he was blackmailed by Chheda, when he was asked about the motive of his crime, adding that he was very sorry for having killed his friend. He also apologised to Chheda's family, the Journal & Courier reported. Last week, Sha appeared to mutter I love my family as he was hauled to jail. Police found Chheda in a chair and Sha covered in what appeared to be blood, according to WLFI, a television station in Indiana. They also observed what they believed to be blood spattered on the wall, along with a pool of blood and a folding knife on the floor. Sha allegedly admitted that the knife was his and that he had used it to kill his roommate. Chheda's friends have said they had been gaming with the victim when they suddenly heard him screaming. Indiana police described the crime as an unprovoked and senseless murder. (PTI)

Pak finance minister heckled at airport in Washington

ISLAMABAD, OCT 14 /--/ Pakistan finance minister Ishaq Dar was heckled by unidentified persons at the Dulles International Airport when he arrived in Washington to attend meetings with the global lending institutions and seek much-needed aid for the cash-strapped and flood-hit country. In a video that went viral on Twitter on Thursday, Dar, accompanied by Pakistan's Ambassador to US Masood Khan and other officials jeered at the airport. In the clips,



Ishaq Dar

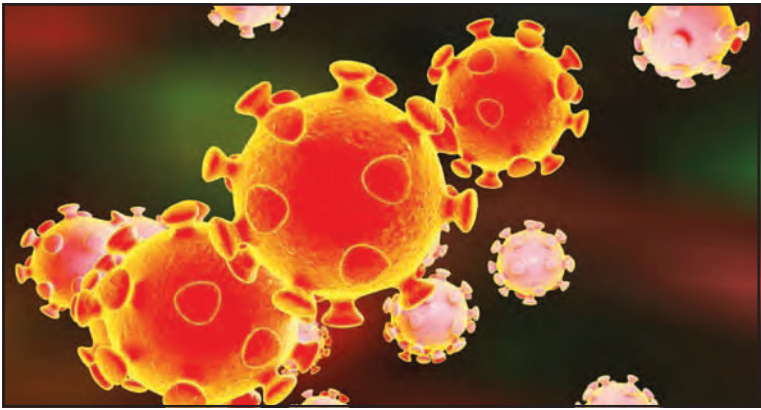
the hecklers can be heard chanting slogans of chor chor directed toward Dar. In one of the videos, a man can be heard shouting: You're a liar. You're a chor. In his retort, Dar says: You're a liar. Mani Butt, the president of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz party's Virginia chapter who accompanied Dar can be seen exchanging profanities with the hecklers, the Dawn newspaper. Dar, 72, recently took over as the finance minister of Pakistan from his predecessor Miftah Ismail. He is in the US to attend the annual meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Pakistan will seek new terms from international lenders after devastating floods hit the country. The death toll from the cataclysmic floods in Pakistan was close to 1,700. It has also displaced over 33 million people and caused economic damages to the tune of USD 40 billion, fanning fears that the country may not be able to meet its debt obligations.

This is not the first time Pakistani ministers have been jeered at public places on their trips abroad and even within the country. Last month, Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb was heckled at a coffee shop in London. Earlier, Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal was harassed by supporters of former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party at a restaurant. In April, a group of Pakistani pilgrims accosted, heckled and chanted slogans against Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his entourage at the Masjid-i-Nabwi in Madina during their three-day visit to Saudi Arabia. Pakistani politicians and other religious figures had condemned the incident and some had even blamed the supporters of Khan's PTI party. (PTI)

Symptomatic Covid infection linked with poor mental health: Lancet study

LONDON, OCT 14 /--/ Having symptoms of Covid-19 infection is associated with poorer mental health and lower life satisfaction, according to a study published in The Lancet Psychiatry journal.

The team, led by researchers at King's College London and University College London (UCL) in the UK, looked at the impact of Covid-19 infection on subsequent mental health and wellbeing. Data was taken from 11 longitudinal studies between April 2020 and April 2021, in which there were 54,442 participants with and without self-reported Covid-19. Researchers found that rises in psychological distress, depression, anxiety, and lower life satisfaction were associated with prior self-reported Covid-19. The associations with poorer mental health did not lessen over time after infection, highlighting the potential enduring impacts of the disease and the need for a longer follow-up process from healthcare providers. Self-reported Covid-19 was consistently



associated with psychological distress, regardless of whether people tested positive for antibodies to the virus. These effects of infection were felt similarly in different groups of gender, ethnicity and socio-economic circumstances.

The study suggests that the infection of Covid-19 might impact mental health most in older people as people with self-reported infection aged 50 years and older

showed a stronger association with poorer mental health. This might reflect that older people are more likely to experience more severe Covid-19 symptoms, greater worry around infection, and increased risk of blood vessel (microvascular) or brain (neurological) changes after infection, the researchers said. This contrasts to the effect of the pandemic overall on mental health, where previous studies have shown that women and adults aged 25-44

Rebels plot to replace Liz Truss with Rishi Sunak amid UK crisis

LONDON, OCT 14 /--/ Rebels on the backbenches of the UK's governing Conservative Party are on Friday said to be plotting to replace Liz Truss as party leader and prime minister with a so-called unity joint ticket team involving former leadership rival Rishi Sunak.

It comes as a YouGov poll for the The Times' found that almost half of Tory party supporters believe the party chose the wrong candidate in the leadership election. The YouGov poll found that among those who voted for the Conservatives at the last election, 62 per cent said that party members had made the wrong choice when the race was shortlisted between Truss and Sunak, compared with 15 per cent who said they had got it right. It has led panicked Tory members of Parliament to start considering alternatives in the candidates who secured the most votes within the parliamentary party

the British Indian former Chancellor, who was the frontrunner with his colleagues, and Leader of the Commons Penny Mordaunt, who came in third.

The government, meanwhile, is reeling from the impact of the controversial mini-budget at the end of last month, with UK Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng flying back from an International Monetary Fund (IMF) meeting in Washington a day earlier than planned. While further U-turns on the tax-cutting plans are expected following crunch meetings at 10 Downing Street, the Tory backbenchers are said to be weighing up the prospect of changing the party leader yet again. Given that Truss

technically cannot face a leadership challenge unless until 12 months unless the powerful 1922 Committee of backbench MPs vote to change their rules,



MPs are said to be considering the possibility of rallying behind a joint team of Sunak and Mordaunt where the former is the Prime Minister and the latter his Deputy.

Another option is for Mordaunt to take over as party leader and Prime Minister and

Sunak as Chancellor, given his track record in office at the Treasury and that he had warned of much of the turmoil that has since unleashed under Truss. A

coronation won't be that hard to arrange, a senior Tory was quoted as saying in The Times'. The party believes a pact is possible between Sunak, who lost to Truss in the party membership vote 57 to 43 per cent, and Mordaunt who came in third in the early stage of the voting among MPs and then threw her support behind Truss. However, former prime minister Boris Johnson loyalists have condemned such plotting as anti-democratic by disgruntled Sunak backers. No offence to Sunak or Mordaunt but government is not a game of spin

the bottle, where if you don't like the result you can just keep spinning again, tweeted Tory MP Nadine Dorries, a fierce Johnson loyalist. Those absurdly called grandee MPs (men) agitating to remove Liz Truss are all Sunak supporters.

They agitated to remove Boris Johnson and now they will continue plotting until they get their way. It's a plot not to remove a PM but to overturn democracy, she said. It comes a day after UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly fired a warning shot for rebels that it would be a disastrously bad idea to think about replacing Truss as the Tory leader, just over a month after she was elected by the party membership. I think that changing the leadership would be a disastrously bad idea, not just politically but also economically, and we are absolutely going to stay focused on growing the economy, he said. (PTI)

Russia to evacuate Kherson residents as Ukraine advances

KYIV, OCT 14 /--/ Russia has promised free accommodation to residents of Ukraine's partially occupied Kherson region who want to evacuate to Russia, a sign that Ukrainian military gains along the war's southern front are worrying the Kremlin.

The Moscow-installed leader of Kherson, one of four regions illegally annexed by Russian President Vladimir Putin last month, asked the Kremlin to organise an evacuation from four cities, citing incessant shelling by Ukrainian forces. Vladimir Saldo, the head of the Moscow-appointed regional administration, said a decision was made to evacuate Kherson residents to the Russian regions of Rostov, Krasnodar and Stavropol, as well as to the Crimean Peninsula, which Moscow annexed from Ukraine in 2014. "We, residents of the Kherson region, of course know that Russia doesn't abandon their own, and Russia always offers a hand, Saldo said on Thursday. Russia has characterised the movement of Ukrainians to Russia or Russian-controlled territory as voluntary, but in many cases those are the only evacuation routes residents of the occupied areas can or are allowed to take.

Reports have surfaced that some Ukrainians were forcibly deported to filtration camps with harsh conditions. In addition, an Associated Press investigation found that Russian officials deported thousands of Ukrainian children - some orphaned, others living with foster families or in institutions - to be raised as Russian. As

Ukrainian forces sustain counteroffensives in the country's east and south to recapture occupied areas, Russian troops have retreated from some areas they overran soon after invading the country in late February. The Ukrainian gains and an October 8 truck bomb explosion on a prized bridge linking Russia to Crimea have led to domestic criticism of the Kremlin's handling of the war and increased pressure on Putin to do more to turn the tide in Russia's favour.

The evacuation announcement came as Ukrainian forces pushed deeper into the Kherson region, albeit at a slower pace than a few weeks ago. Ukrainian forces reported retaking 75 settlements in the region in the last month, Ukraine's Ministry for Reintegration of Temporarily Occupied Territories said late on Thursday night. A similar campaign in eastern Ukraine resulted in 502 settlements in the Kharkiv region, 43 in the Donetsk region and seven in Luhansk region returning to Ukrainian control, the ministry said.

Putin illegally annexed Kherson, as well as the neighbouring Zaporizhzhia region and the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of eastern Ukraine last month following referendums in the four regions that Kyiv and the West denounced as a sham. Gen Valeriy Zaluzhny, the commander of Ukraine's armed forces, vowed on Friday that his forces would succeed in getting ours back. "No one and nothing will stop us, Zaluzhny said in a video message. We have buried the myth of the invincibility of the Russian

army. While reiterating calls for local residents to evacuate to Russia, Saldo's deputy, Kirill Stremousov, also insisted the evacuation preparations did not mean the Russian-installed officials anticipated Ukrainian forces taking all of the Kherson region. No one's retreating. ... No one is planning to leave the territory of the Kherson region, he said.

Early on Friday, Russia continued missile strikes on critical infrastructure that started Monday in retaliation for the explosion on the Moscow-funded bridge that links Crimea to the Russian mainland. In the last 24 hours, at least nine civilians were killed and 15 were wounded, the Ukrainian president's office reported Friday morning. The victims included seven people who died after a missile strike in the city of Mykolaiv, where a residential building was destroyed, the regional governor, Vitaliy Kim, said. Multiple Russian missile strikes shook the city of Zaphorizhzhia overnight. The capital of the annexed region remains in Ukrainian hands and has come under repeated bombardment as Ukraine pushes its southern counteroffensive. Several explosions were reported overnight at infrastructure facilities, causing fires, regional Gov, Oleksandr Starukh said.

There were no victims in preliminary reports, and further details about specific damage were unavailable. Starukh told Ukrainian state television that Russian soldiers remained unable to enter the city but their missiles remind us of the evil and grief that the army of the occupiers carries. (AP)

IMF mission expected to visit flood-hit Pak next month: Official

ISLAMABAD, OCT 14 /--/ An IMF team is expected to visit Pakistan early in November to start the next review of the country's current economic programme, a senior official of the global lending body has said. In its last review in August, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved the 7th and 8th tranches of USD 1.17 billion, of its USD 7 billion Pakistan programme which was signed in 2019. The global lender said that it would send a mission in November to Pakistan after the annual meetings as part of preparations for the next review, IMF's Director of the Middle East and Central Asia, Jihad Azour was quoted by Dawn newspaper on Thursday. At a media briefing in Washington, Azour extended support to the flood-hit country. We accelerated some of our disbursements to help Pakistan deal with recent shocks, such as the increase in prices of foods and commodities, he said. Hopefully, we will be fielding a mission in November, after the annual meetings, to Pakistan to start the process for the next review," Azour said.

The Fund has been very supportive of Pakistan. We have a programme with Pakistan that has been extended and increased in size. This is to help Pakistan deal with a confluence of shocks, starting with the Covid crisis where we provided additional flexibility, the IMF official said.

In a reply to questions regarding the Fund's plan for Pakistan given the economic devastation caused by the recent floods, Azour said the IMF is waiting for the World Bank and the UN Development Programme's ongoing evaluations of the flood damage to assess the situation and provide help accordingly. Based on this assessment, we will update our data and we will also (engage) with the authorities to see what their priorities are and how the Fund can help, the IMF official said, the Dawn newspaper reported. The IMF regional director spoke against 'untargeted subsidies' as regressive incentives that have proved to be counterproductive and urged Pakistan, and other countries, to relocate limited resources to those who need them. "This is something that it's not, I would say, part of the IMF conditionalities, this is part of what is needed in order to provide the right protection for those who need it at the time where inflation is very high," he said, according to the report. Pakistan's teetering economy is facing a balance of payments crisis, a ballooning current account deficit, and inflation hitting an all-time high of 27 per cent. The devastating floods, which left more than 1,600 dead and displaced more than 30 million people, added to Pakistan's forex woes, with an estimated loss of over USD 28 billion to the economy. In August, New York-based rating agency S&P Global revised Pakistan's long-term ratings from 'stable' to 'negative' given the spiralling inflation and tighter global financial conditions. (PTI)

Poor nations to demand climate justice, finance at UN summit

NAIROBI, OCT 14 /--/ The chair of an influential negotiating bloc in the upcoming United Nations climate summit in Egypt has called for compensation for poorer countries suffering from climate change to be high up on the agenda.

Madeleine Diouf Sarr, who chairs the Least Developed Countries group, told The Associated Press that the November conference known as COP27 should capture the voice and needs of the most climate-vulnerable nations and deliver climate justice. Sarr said the group would like to see an agreement to establish a dedicated financial facility that pays nations that are already facing the effects of climate change at the summit. The LDC group, comprised of 46 nations that make up just a small fraction of global emissions, negotiates as a bloc at the UN summit to champion the interests of developing countries. Issues such as who pays for poorer nations to transition to cleaner energy, making sure no communities get left behind in an energy transition and boosting how well vulnerable people can adapt to climate change have long been on the bloc's agenda. Developing nations still face serious challenges accessing clean energy finance, with Africa attracting just 2 per cent of the total clean energy investment in the last 20 years, according to the International Renewable Energy Agency. The UN weather agency recently estimated that global clean energy supplies must double by 2030 for the world to limit global warming within the set targets.

Sarr added that the bloc will push for funds to help developing countries adapt to droughts, floods and other climate-related events as well as urging developed nations to speed up their plans to reduce emissions. The group is particularly vulnerable to climate change because of their lack of ability to adapt to extremes, the UN weather agency said. We have delayed climate action for too long, Sarr said, pointing to the promised 100 billion a year in climate aid for poorer countries that was pledged over a decade ago. We can no longer afford to have a COP that is all talk. The climate crisis has pushed our adaptation limits, resulted in inevitable loss and damage, and delayed our much-needed development, added Sarr. (AP)

EU regulator recommends clearing Takeda's dengue vaccine

LONDON, OCT 14 /--/ The European Medicines Agency on Friday recommended the authorisation of a dengue vaccine made by the Japanese pharmaceutical Takeda that could provide a new tool for millions worldwide against the potentially fatal disease. The EU regulator said in a statement the vaccine should be cleared for anyone aged four and over, to prevent the four types of dengue. The viral disease causes more than 390 million infections globally every year, including up to 25,000 deaths, mostly in children. The benefits and safety of the current vaccine have been evaluated in 19 clinical trials that enrolled more than 27,000 people aged between 15 months and 60 years, the EMA said. Studies showed Takeda's vaccine was about 84 per cent effective in preventing people from being hospitalized with dengue and about 61 per cent effective in stopping symptoms four years after getting immunized. The most commonly reported side effects included headaches and muscle pain. There is no specific treatment for dengue, which is a leading cause of serious illness and death in roughly 120 Latin American and Asian countries. While about 80 per cent of infections are mild, severe cases of the mosquito-spread disease can lead to internal bleeding, organ damage and death.

The green light for the Takeda vaccine comes after Sanofi Pasteur's dengue vaccine triggered a public health crisis in the Philippines in 2017. The Dengvaxia shot was found to increase the risk of severe disease in people who had not previously been infected with dengue and was linked to the deaths of more than 100 children. Critics charged that the Sanofi vaccine was rolled out prematurely to about 800,000 children across the Philippines. Numerous scientists and officials were indicted for introducing the vaccine with undue haste, that prosecutors said resulted in homicide. The World Health Organisation had previously concluded the Sanofi Pasteur vaccine was safe, but later said children should only be immunised if they were tested first to ensure they had already had dengue.

The EMA said its endorsement of the Takeda vaccine means that a global unmet public health need is being addressed, explaining that countries beyond the EU should have confidence that the shot is safe and effective. (AP)

BCCI could lose Rs 955 crore if ICC doesn't get tax exemption from Govt for hosting 2023 World Cup

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ The BCCI could lose around Rs 955 crore (USD 116 million) if the central government sticks to its decision to levy 21.84 percent tax surcharge on ICC's broadcast revenue from the 2023 ODI World Cup, according to a Board report.

India is to host next year's 50-over showpiece in October-November. Tax surcharge refers to "an additional charge, fee, or tax that is added to the cost of a good or service beyond the initially quoted price". A surcharge is often added to an existing tax and is not included in the stated price of the good or service.

As per ICC norm, the host nation is required to get tax exemption from the government for hosting tournaments organised by the global body. Since India's tax rules don't allow such exemptions, the BCCI has already lost close to Rs 193 crore (USD 23.5 million) as the government didn't exempt tax surcharge for hosting the 2016 ICC T20 World Cup. The BCCI is still fighting that case in the ICC tribunal. "The next ICC major

men's event, which is the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023, is scheduled to be held in India in the month of October & November in 2023. The BCCI was obligated to deliver a tax exemption or a tax solution to the ICC for this event, latest by April 2022," stated the report circulated among state units ahead of the Board's October 18 AGM in Mumbai. "This time line was further extended by the ICC Board till 31st May 2022. At the start of this financial year, the BCCI had advised the ICC that in line with the tax order for the 2016 event, it was expected that a 10% (excluding surcharges) tax order could be obtained as an interim measure for the 2023 event within the required time frame. "The ICC has now received a 20% (excluding surcharges) tax order for its broadcast revenue for the 2023 event from the tax authorities in India." According to the BCCI document shared with the state bodies, the adverse impact on the Board's revenue from the ICC, if a 21.84 percent tax is paid, would be

USD 116.47 million. It is understood that the BCCI is still trying to negotiate and bring down the tax surcharge percentage to 10.92 percent from the existing demand of 21.84. If the BCCI can reduce the tax surcharge to 10.92 percent, then the revenue loss would be around Rs 430 crore (USD 52.23 million). "The BCCI is currently working with the Ministry of Finance, Government of India and have represented against this 20% (excluding surcharges) tax order at the very highest level and are hopeful that a 10% (excluding surcharges) tax order would be forthcoming shortly. "It is to be noted that any tax cost incurred by the ICC for the 2023 event in India will be adjusted with the BCCI's share of revenue from the ICC," the report further stated. The BCCI's share from the ICC's central revenue pool for the tenure 2016 to 2023 is USD 405 million (Rs 3336 crore approximately). The ICC is expecting USD 533.29 million (Rs 4400 crores approx) from the broadcasting revenue of the 2023 event in India. (PTI)



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World Cup 2022: FIFA open to compensation fund for migrant workers in Qatar

GENEVA, OCT 14 /--/ FIFA wants to help workers in Qatar get compensation for being injured while building projects for the World Cup, one of the football body's top officials told European lawmakers on Thursday.

Football federations in Europe have supported calls for a fund since Amnesty International said FIFA should contribute \$440 million toward reparations — matching the total prize money FIFA will pay to the 32 national teams playing in Qatar next month. Qatar has faced intense scrutiny of the physical and contractual conditions for hundreds of thousands of migrant workers who were needed in the tiny emirate since the World Cup hosting rights were won 12 years ago. Compensation is "certainly something that we're interested in progressing," FIFA deputy secretary general Alasdair Bell told a Council of Europe session on labor rights in Qatar. "It's important to try to see that anyone who suffered injury as a consequence of working in the World Cup, that that is somehow redressed," Bell told lawmakers from the 46-nation group at their meeting in Strasbourg, France.

FIFA was urged on Thursday to use its leverage with the World Cup host nation by the official who publicly criticized Qatar when global football leaders met in Doha this year. Ensuring compensation is paid should be a key target for FIFA to secure a positive legacy in Qatar after the World Cup, Norwegian football federation president Lise Klaveness told lawmakers. "It is difficult to frame it in but it is necessary, also for historical abuses, injuries and deaths," she said, adding that a lack of independent investigations of unexplained worker fatalities in Qatar was an "elephant in the room." FIFA's Bell agreed with Klaveness that a reparations fund "is not the simplest thing to put into place" and would need clear rules and oversight. "But this is certainly something that we're interested in progressing," he said. It was not specified on Thursday if compensation money should come from FIFA, Qatari authorities or the construction firms who employed the workers, many from south Asia and the Philippines. Qatar has set up a workers' support fund which, since 2020, has paid \$164 million in compensation to more than 36,000 workers from 17 different countries, Human Rights Watch said in August citing government data. Qatari authorities and World Cup organizers were also praised in Strasbourg for passing labor law reforms including a minimum wage. "It is not just fluff, it's real, and it is delivering some tangible benefits that have actually improved the lives of hundreds of thousands of people," Bell said. "The risk," he acknowledged, "is that once the spotlight is turned off after the World Cup it's really important that these changes remain and are built upon and hopefully even spread wider in the Middle East." Bell said it was also important for migrant workers to have access to a "safe haven" in Qatar to learn their legal rights — a project backed by the global soccer players' union FIFPRO that Klaveness also highlighted. (AP)

India start favourite against Sri Lanka in pursuit of 7th Asia cup title



Harmanpreet Kaur and team will be eyeing their seventh Asia Cup title.

SYLHET, OCT 14 /--/ A ruthless Indian team would look to reassert its supremacy and aim to win an unprecedented seventh Asia Cup title when it clashes with Sri Lanka in the final here on Saturday. The tournament brought to fore India's depth as the younger crop of players has shouldered the burden of taking the team to the final without any tangible contribution from skipper Harmanpreet Kaur and her deputy Smriti Mandhana. Such has been the impact of the Indian team, that skipper Harmanpreet played only four games (81 runs) and in total faced a only 72 balls in those matches. Even Mandhana, who led in three games, skipped one game and didn't need to contribute much. The biggest takeaway from a tournament like this is that Indian team's junior members could react to pressure situations in a perfect manner when they were thrown at the deep end of the pool. The most heartening aspect was how three 'seasoned' youngsters -- 18-year-old Shafali Verma (161 runs and 3 wickets), 22-year-old Jemimah Rodrigues (215 runs) and 25-year-old Deepti Sharma (94 runs and 13 wickets) put their hands up and carried the team through to the

summit clash. The only blip in an otherwise flawless campaign was a defeat against arch-rivals Pakistan due to some bizarre planning by coach Ramesh Powar and Harmanpreet. India won't get a chance to settle scores with Pakistan at least in this edition as Sri Lanka knocked them out in the semifinals. At least on paper, the summit clash is a complete mismatch as only one Sri Lankan batter (Oshadi Ranasinghe) has managed to scale the 100-plus strike-rate. Only two batters -- Harshitha Madavi (201 runs) and Nilakshi de Silva (124 runs) --- have accumulated 100 plus runs across matches. Even their most well-known woman cricketer Chamari Athapaththu has scored 96 runs at a below par strike-rate of 85 plus. In bowling, only left-arm spinner Inoka Ranaweera (12 wickets) has looked the part. To put it bluntly, the quality of competition in Asia Cup isn't great and India as a team, in terms of talent quotient as well as experience is a few lightyears ahead of the other neighbouring nations. Hence, Sri Lanka might find it extremely difficult to upset the Indian applectart although in the last edition in Malaysia, four years back, Bangladesh did shock the favourites

in the final. The Sri Lankan women enthralled the cricket lovers across the globe with a celebratory dance video (after beating Pakistan), which has since then gone viral. But if on Saturday, they could get past Harmanpreet's team, it will be an icing on the cake with its men's team having already won the Asia Cup, a month back. (PTI)

Squads:
India: Harmanpreet Kaur (captain), Smriti Mandhana (vc), Shafali Verma, S Meghana, Jemimah Rodrigues, Deepti Sharma, Richa Ghosh (wk), Dayalan Hemalatha, Sneha Rana, Radha Yadav, Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Renuka Thakur, Meghna Singh, Kiran Navgire and Pooja Vastrakar.
Sri Lanka: Chamari Athapaththu (captain), Nilakshi de Silva, Kavisha Dilhari, Achini Kulasuriya, Sugandha Kumari, Harshitha Samarawickrama, Madhushika Methananda, Hasini Perera, Odhadi Ranasinghe, Inoka Ranaweera, Anushka Sanjeevani, Kaushani Nuthyanga, Malsha Shehani and Rashmi Silva.

MATCH STARTS: 1 PM.

GAME NOTES

Shami picked as Bumrah's replacement in India squad for T20 World Cup

NEW DELHI, OCT 14 /--/ The BCCI on Friday named seasoned pacer Mohammed Shami as injured Jasprit Bumrah's replacement in the Indian team for the upcoming T20 World Cup in Australia. "The All-India Senior Selection Committee has named Mohammed Shami as Jasprit Bumrah's replacement in India's ICC Men's T20 World Cup squad. Shami has reached Australia and will link up with the squad in Brisbane ahead of the warm-up matches," BCCI secretary Jay Shah was quoted in a press release. That Shami would replace Bumrah in the main squad was reported by PTI last month. Mohammed Siraj and Shardul Thakur have been named as backups and will travel to Australia shortly. The tournament will be held from October 16 to November 13. Bumrah has been ruled out of competitive cricket for an indefinite period due to stress related injury on his back. Shami had last played in T20 Internationals during the last edition of the ICC T20 World Cup in the UAE. (PTI)

Rajasthan CM reviews preparations for National Jamboree to be held in Pali

JAIPUR, OCT 14 /--/ Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Thursday reviewed the preparations for the National Scout Guide Jamboree to be held in Pali next year. Gehlot said that this Jamboree of international level would be the biggest ever event of scouts and guides in the state. He said the state has got the opportunity to host this Jamboree after 67 years and the government will leave no stone unturned for its successful conduct. The event will be organized by the Rajasthan State Bharat Scouts and Guides from January 4 to 10, 2023 in Rohat, Pali. Gehlot said that such events develop qualities like art and skill, service spirit and discipline, social harmony and the spirit of mutual brotherhood. He said the state government has organised Rajiv Gandhi Rural Olympic games with the same spirit. (PTI)

ICC to promote gender equality in tie-up with UNICEF

DUBAI, OCT 14 /--/ The International Cricket Council has entered into a partnership with UNICEF to empower women and girls and promote inclusion and gender equality through cricket. The partnership will be activated in the upcoming T20 World Cup in Australia where all 16 nations will hold 'Cricket 4 Good Coaching Clinics' with up to 40 school children taking part in each one. The players will introduce the children to 'Cricket 4 Good', a cricket development curriculum as the participants will also learn more about gender equity and get to meet their cricketing heroes. "I am so proud, as the dad of a daughter, to BeAChampion for girls and support the partnership between the ICC and UNICEF to promote gender equity through cricket," Aussie captain Aaron Finch said. The programme will be available free on the ICC and UNICEF websites, delivering an eight-week lesson plan on the fundamentals of batting, bowling and fielding. (PTI)

T20 World Cup: More than 600,000 tickets sold for the ICC event

DUBAI, OCT 14 /--/ More than 600,000 tickets have been sold for the T20 World Cup in Australia, officials said Friday, hailing big demand for a host of sell-out blockbuster games. The global showpiece starts on Sunday at the preliminary stage, before the big guns join in from 22 October. Seven Australian cities are hosting. Australia's opening match as defending champions against New Zealand, a repeat of last year's final, will be played before a capacity crowd at the Sydney Cricket Ground. The India-Pakistan fixture the following night is also a sell-out with more than 90,000 fans set to jam the Melbourne Cricket Ground after additional standing-room tickets were snapped up within 10 minutes. Only a small number of tickets remain for the event's opening match-day, which pits Sri Lanka against Namibia before UAE face the Netherlands at the 36,000-capacity Kardinia Park Stadium in Geelong. "We're delighted that we're set to see big crowds for both the opening match of the event in Geelong this Sunday and the first weekend of the Super 12 stage in a week's time," said ICC T20 World Cup chief Michelle Enright. "It's going to be fantastic to see full stadiums for cricket in October." (AFP)

Europa League: Arsenal beat Bodo/Glimt as Scott McTominay rescues Manchester United

PARIS, OCT 14 /--/ Arsenal maintained their perfect start to the Europa League as Bukayo Saka's goal clinched a 1-0 win at Bodo/Glimt, while Manchester United left it late to beat Omonia Nicosia.

Saka struck midway through the first half in Norway to give the Gunners a third win in as many outings in Group A. "I'm really happy with the win against a team that has won the last 14 games here at home," Arsenal coach Mikel Arteta told BT Sport. "We were expecting a really tough night here and we made a lot of changes again but I'm delighted to find a way to win." Arsenal are two points clear of PSV Eindhoven, who thrashed FC Zurich 5-0. Bodo/Glimt have four points from four matches.

Scott McTominay spared United's blushes with a 93rd-minute goal in a 1-0 win over Cypriots Omonia at Old Trafford. Omonia goalkeeper Francis Uzoho pulled off a string of fine saves to frustrate a wasteful United before the Scotland midfielder fired home in stoppage time. "You have to be patient sometimes. Their goalkeeper was a different class but we created enough chances and deserved to score in the end,"



Arsenal's Bukayo Saka and Manchester United's Scott McTominay

McTominay told BT Sport. "It's a massive goal because we need to win the group." Erik ten Hag's team stayed three points behind Group E leaders Real Sociedad, who beat 10-man Sheriff Tiraspol 3-0 to record a fourth successive win. La Real are guaranteed to advance. They host United on November 3 in a clash likely to determine which team goes directly into the last 16. Each of the eight group runners-up will face a team that drops down from the Champions League, in a knockout round play-off in February. Real Betis dropped their first points of the competition after a 1-1 draw at home to Roma in Group C as they missed the chance to secure a last-16 spot. Sergio Canales put Betis ahead on 34 minutes but Andrea Belotti equalised for Roma, who remain third in the section behind Ludogorets. The Bulgarians won 2-0 at home to HJK Helsinki. Freiburg eased to a fourth consecutive victory in Group G, piling further misery on Nantes with a 4-0 win away to the French Cup holders. Fenerbahce and Rennes both ensured they will progress from Group B. Fenerbahce won 2-1 at AEK Larnaca, while Rennes defeated Dynamo Kyiv 1-0 in Krakow. Belgium's Union Saint-

Gilloise must wait to make sure of a place in the last 16 despite coming from two goals down in a thrilling 3-3 draw against Braga. Union Berlin revived their hopes in Group D as Robin Knoche's 89th-minute penalty gave the surprise Bundesliga leaders a 1-0 victory over Malmo. All four teams in Group F are level on five points. Lazio drew 2-2 at home to Sturm Graz while Feyenoord were held by the same scoreline by Midtjylland. Ferencvaros are three points clear in Group H after beating Red Star Belgrade 2-1. Trabzonspor hammered Monaco 4-0 to climb above the Ligue 1 side into second.

Villarreal qualified for the last 16 of the Europa Conference League as winners of Group C. Senegalese midfielder Nicolas Jackson scored the only goal in their 1-0 win at Austria Vienna. West Ham advanced from Group B following a 2-1 win over Anderlecht courtesy of goals from Said Benrahma and Jarrod Bowen. The Hammers need just a point from their final two games to wrap up top spot. Istanbul Basaksehir and Djurgarden will also continue their European adventure in the new year. (AFP)