

## ‘Unrestricted’ encroachment of land at Bathubasti, Ward No-19

### Revenue department remains oblivious of ‘takeover’



ROOPA LALL

PORT BLAIR, DEC 1/--/ Lack of encroachment eviction drives in Ward No-19, Bathubasti by the

Revenue department has resulted in rampant encroachment of vacant land. The vacant government land opposite TVS Showroom at Bathubasti

where Police use to dump seized vehicles are being encroached upon and still continuing. Most of the land in this area has been already encroached upon and now

the left out vacant roadside land is being encroached. Even the drains are being covered with slab and encroached as the Revenue department has failed to

conduct encroachment eviction drives in this area to free the land. One will be surprised to know encroachers are the same people who have encroached a sizable portion of vacant government land and constructed their houses. Now they are encroaching the left out vacant land adjacent to their homes thus blocking the unrestricted movement of vehicles. Nearby residents blame that first they encroached on the vacant land and constructed their houses. Thereafter, they have encroached the footpath and drains and are now encroaching upon the excess land in front of their houses, right up to the road. In order to cover up their encroachment, these people have planted trees and

*Due to lack of eviction drives, people who have already constructed houses by encroaching government land are continuing usurping of remaining areas*

covered the land with fencing with nets so that it looks like their own land. About eight to 10 families residing in the area have started usurping the excess land. Some of them have also turned the vacant land into personal car parking space by constructing sheds. If somebody dares to raise questions on them, they threaten them as if the land belongs to them. The construction of parking sheds and covering of land in front of the road with nets

has resulted in blocking of free movement of fire tenders and other vehicles in case of emergency. The street lights have been covered with trees as a result of which the entire area remained dark during night. Residents of the areas have requested the Deputy Commissioner (SA) to clear the encroachments of the land in front of their houses and develop the land into a park for kids so that further encroachment of government land can be prevented.

## Neurosurgeon telemedicine facility at PHC Campbell Bay

SUBRATA

CAMPBELL BAY, DEC 1/--/ The Administration has planned for regular telemedicine facilities by Doctors from AIIMS, Safdarjung Hospital and other Government, prominent private hospitals from Delhi. The doctors are from superspecialist backgrounds such as Cardiology, Gynaecology, Pediatrician, Dermatology, Neurology etc. There will be a regular telemedicine clinic at Campbell Bay. This Saturday, the clinic will be held at PHC Campbell Bay at 03.00 pm. Dr. Vivek Yadav, associate professor from Vardhman Medical College and Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi will be examining patients from neurosurgeon diseases such as Brain Tumours, Caesarean Section, Stork, lower backer, spinal cord disease etc.

## Awareness rally marks ‘World AIDS Day’ in ANI

PORT BLAIR, DEC 1/--/ To mark the observance of World AIDS Day, a rally was organized by the Andaman & Nicobar AIDS Control Society (ANACS) on Thursday. Mr. Keshav Chandra, Chief Secretary participated. Addressing the gathering, the Chief Secretary congratulated the participants of the rally for their participation in this awareness campaign. He said that since this disease depends on the lifestyle which one follows, people need to refrain from certain habits and behaviours. “Our behaviour should be in congruence with the prescribed behaviour. There are certain groups that are more prone to this disease because of their lifestyle and they must be made aware of that. We also need to help people living with HIV and give them the opportunity to live life like all of us. I hope that the positive numbers remain static and we should work to have zero new HIV cases”,



**“We should work to have zero new HIV cases in the islands”**

— Keshav Chandra

he said. Over 500 students from schools and colleges participated in the rally carrying banners and placards. The rally started from Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose Stadium to Clock Tower, Model School,

Bengali club, Co-operative Bank to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Auditorium, PBMC.

“Equalize”, is the theme to observe World AIDS Day 2022. “To keep everyone safe, to protect everyone’s health, we need to Equalize.” This World AIDS Day, UNAIDS is urging each of us to address the inequalities which are holding back progress in ending AIDS. The “Equalize” slogan is a call to action. At Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Auditorium, PBMC, Port Blair, prize

distribution function was organized. Mr. Nikhil Kumar, Commissioner-cum-Secretary (Health) was the chief guest and Mr. Arjun Sharma, Secretary (Health) was the guest of honour. Dr. Munni Singhania, DHS-Cum-Vice Chairperson, ANACS was also present. The Commissioner-cum-Secretary (Health) highlighted the global scenario of HIV and AIDS. He said that World AIDS Day is the first health day recognized globally which shows how dangerous it is for

mankind and it needs to be addressed. He said that we are lucky that the prevalence in A & N islands is low compared to the

National level and we should all work towards bringing the numbers down to zero. He appreciated the wonderful performance of

the folk troupe and suggested conducting more such programs at school and college level.

(Contd. on page-6)



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### Band concert by Naval band

PORT BLAIR, DEC 1/--/ As part of Navy day celebration, Indian Navy is organising a Band Concert at Marina Park (Port Blair) at 1715 hrs on 4th Dec 2022. Prior to the commencement of the concert, the naval ships will be illuminated off Netaji Subhashchandra Bose (Ross) Island with sunset. The administrative authorities and other local dignitaries will be gracing the event with their presence. The concert is open for all visitors.

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# Gujarat elections: Voters take gas cylinders to polling centres to protest against inflation

**AHMEDABAD, DEC 1 /--/** Cooking gas cylinders became a symbol of protest against price rise in Gujarat on Thursday as some voters carried them to polling stations during the first phase of the Assembly elections.

A member of the Maldhari community went to the polling station with a cow and a calf to highlight the plight of his cow-rearing community. Some voters were in celebratory mood -- a marriage party visited a polling centre in Botad

district with 'band-baja' before the wedding took place. A Congress leader and an Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) candidate rode bicycles to polling stations in Amreli and Rajkot cities, respectively.

Surar resident Jasmin Merchant reached a polling station in Varachha Road constituency with a gas cylinder on his shoulder. His "master" asked him to 'touch the feet' of a petrol tank and gas cylinder before leaving for the polling station, he said. "The gas

cylinder appeared in my dream at night and said it also wanted to cast vote, so I am taking it with me," Merchant told reporters in a sarcastic tone.

Congress MLA and former Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Pares Dhanani too carried a gas cylinder on a bicycle to a polling station in Amreli. "The 27 years of BJP rule has ruined Gujarat. Inflation has affected people badly. The prices of petrol and diesel have crossed Rs 100 while a gas

cylinder is available for Rs 1,100. How will the poor survive? My vote is to defeat inflation, slowdown, joblessness and end the corrupt and atrocious government of the BJP," Dhanani told reporters. His daughter, a first-time voter, also rode a bicycle with a tin of edible oil tied on the back to register protest against inflation. Dinesh Joshi, AAP's candidate from Rajkot West, also rode a bicycle to the polling station, carrying a gas cylinder and tin of edible

oil.

Junagadh city Congress president Amit Patel walked to the polling station with a gas cylinder on his shoulder, but was stopped by the police from carrying it further. Ranjit Mundhva, a member of the Maldhari community, landed at a polling station in Rajkot South constituency with a cow and a calf. He wanted to highlight the plight of the community, which traditionally rears cattle, due to the lumpy virus outbreak, he said. For

some residents of Dhasa village in Botad district, voting took precedence over wedding. The bridegroom and the marriage party went to the polling station accompanied by a band ahead of the wedding. Voting was held for 89 seats across 19 districts of Gujarat's south and Saurashtra-Kutch regions on Thursday. The second phase of polls will be held on December 5. Counting of votes will take place on December 8. (PTI)

## Modi's policies creating economic disparity, social hostility and political dictatorship, which will break country: Ramesh

**NAZARPUR, DEC 1 /--/** Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Thursday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's policies were creating economic disparity, social hostility and political dictatorship, which would break the country in future, and asserted that the sole purpose behind Rahul Gandhi-led Bharat Jodo Yatra was to ensure that it did not happen.

Ramesh, who is Congress's general secretary in-charge of its communication, publicity and media department, was speaking to reporters at Nazarpur in Ujjain district of Madhya Pradesh during the party's Bharat Jodo Yatra. "Because of Modi's policies of economic disparity, social hostility and political dictatorship, the country is going to break in future and the Bharat Jodo Yatra being taken out by Rahul Gandhi will ensure that it will not happen," he said. Answering a question about the reason behind Union civil aviation minister Jyotiraditya Scindia leaving the Congress in 2020, Ramesh said he quit the party just to become a central minister and to get back the 27, Safdarjung Road bungalow in the national capital. "There was no other motive behind it," he said in response to a query. Ramesh said the yatra will reach Delhi on December 24, where it will take a break of five days.

The break is essential as the vehicles and containers running with the yatra needed to be serviced for the onward journey, he said. After entering Rajasthan, a public rally will be held in Alwar town, he said. Speaking on the occasion, former Madhya Pradesh finance minister Tarun Bhanot said that in a short span of 15 months (till March 2020), the government led by his party in the state tried to fulfil various promises, including providing 100 units of electricity at Rs 100. The Kamal Nath-led Congress government in MP collapsed in March 2020 after 22 MLAs loyal to Scindia quit the grand old party along with him. Bhanot said the party's manifesto will be historic in 2023, when the state will witness Assembly polls. After resuming yatra in the morning, Gandhi and his entourage took a halt in Nazarpur village. It will resume at 3.30 PM from Ghatiya bus stand and reach Ghosla Fata Rupakhedi Jod in Ujjain district.

The yatra will stay overnight at Jhalara village in the district, party sources said. The foot march will cover a distance of 380 km in the politically crucial Malwa-Nimar region of western Madhya Pradesh within 12 days before entering Rajasthan on December 4, as per the itinerary announced by the party. The march led by Gandhi entered Madhya Pradesh on November 23 in Burhanpur district from neighbouring Maharashtra. It has completed more than half of its journey so far in Madhya Pradesh. The march led by Gandhi passed through Burhanpur, Khandwa, Khargone and Indore districts so far and is currently moving through Ujjain district.

While passing through Ujjain, Gandhi visited the famous Lord Mahakal temple, one of the 12 'jyotirling' sites in the country. Prior to that, he had also worshipped at Omkareshwar temple, another 'jyotirling' site in Khandwa district. (PTI)

## MCD polls: BJP's corruption allegations have no takers, AAP will secure 'landslide victory', claims Sisodia

**NEW DELHI, DEC 1 /--/** Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia on Thursday said clearing landfill sites, redevelopment of markets, regularisation of temporary employees and timely payment of salaries will be the top priorities of the AAP if it wins the civic body polls.

In an interview to PTI, Sisodia said resident welfare associations (RWAs) as "mini councillors" will be granted legal status. They will work like a form of 'Mohalla Sabha' the concept of which was obstructed by BJP-ruled municipal corporations, he said. He claimed that the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party is going to secure a "landslide victory" in the December 4 Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) polls, saying that the voters can see through the lies being peddled by the BJP. The deputy chief minister asserted that the BJP is nowhere in the contest, and said the saffron party leaders are indulging in releasing videos and levelling false allegations, but this "misinformation campaign" will not impact the voters in the December 4 elections.

Talking about the AAP's action plan to clear the three landfill sites in Delhi, the AAP leader said it has been prepared after a proper study in the last five-six

months. At the current pace and technology being used by the incumbent civic body, it will take decades to clear them, he said.

In October this year, a bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh



Manish Sisodia

Kumar Goel had noted that the quantity of legacy waste at the three dumpsites was 300 lakh metric tonnes. "We will focus on managing the solid waste right from the time it is picked up from the homes. Besides, a creative use of sanitation workers and paying them timely salaries is also a part of our roadmap to reduce the landfill sites. Experts say that solid waste is a goldmine and the government can earn a revenue from it," Sisodia said. The deputy CM also rejected the BJP's claims that the municipal corporations were deprived

of their due funds by the Delhi government and said that the civic bodies were given more money by the Kejriwal dispensation, as compared to what they were given before 2015. "The BJP leaders had said that they

would get funds from the Centre. Why didn't they do it? The reality is that enough funds were given to the BJP-ruled corporations but with the increase in funds, the level of corruption also increased," he alleged.

Reiterating Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's promise of empowering RWAs, he said that the resident welfare bodies will be given legal status of "mini councillors". Sisodia said that in 2015, the AAP government had done a pilot of 'Mohalla Sabha', but it was stuck up with the MCD. The "empowerment" of

RWAs and giving them the status of "mini councillors" will take forward the concept of 'Mohalla Sabha', he revealed.

On Tuesday, Kejriwal announced if the AAP wins MCD polls, RWAs will be "empowered" and granted status of "mini councillors". He had also said the idea behind this vision is to "make people the owners of Delhi". Listing out the top priorities of the AAP on Thursday, Sisodia said after coming to power in the MCD, the party will deploy technology and experts to find solutions to the mountain of garbage at three sites, redevelopment of markets, regularisation of temporary employees and timely payment of salaries.

He also alleged that the BJP did not grant licences to "illegal markets" in 70 municipal wards to operate, but the AAP will legalise all such markets after winning the elections. "Sanitation workers form the core of the waste management. Timely payment of salaries and redressal of their grievances are a key part of solving the garbage menace. We will ensure that employees get their salaries on the first day of every month after coming to power in the MCD. We will work on a war footing to regularise contractual employees," he added.

Asserting that BJP is

exactly what we intend to do at G-20," he said. Jaishankar said India's G20 Presidency was taking place at a very critical moment in international affairs and it was particularly vital that world leaders focus on the right issues, especially those that affect the more vulnerable sections of the world.

"G-20 is a diverse platform that seeks to forge common ground on key issues among prominent countries. Our endeavour is to make that consensus more relevant through a wider process of consultation," he said.

Jaishankar said harmonising various interests was something that has been deeply ingrained in India's history and culture. "We have long been a pluralistic and consultative society which has debated issues openly before we arrive at a decision. Since this is deeply ingrained in our DNA, we have never been insecure with diversity. Our essential unity is not only the basis for pluralism, but also a source of confidence for engaging the world," he said.

He said India will also shine the spotlight on Mission LiFE, with its associated, environmentally sustainable and responsible choices, at the level of individual lifestyles as well as national development. The G-20 University Connect event was also attended by UGC Chairman M Jagadesh Kumar, Amitabh Kant, the Sherpa for the G-20, Harsh Vardhan Shringla, India's Chief Coordinator for G-20 and P K Mishra, the Principal Secretary to the prime minister. (PTI)

nowhere in the contest, Sisodia claimed that there is "restlessness" in the saffron party after indications of defeat driven by their internal surveys. "It is also evident as the BJP has deployed top Union ministers and chief ministers of the party-ruled states for campaigning. Those leaders can themselves see how much garbage is lying on the roads. When the BJP leaders and Union ministers walk on roads and streets during campaigning, people caution them to be watchful so as not to soil themselves in the garbage," he claimed. When asked that the BJP has been relentlessly attacking the AAP over allegations of corruption and selling of party tickets, Sisodia said, "This misinformation campaign is not going to impact the voters. People themselves are wondering why instead of talking about their work in the MCD in 15 years, they are indulging in releasing videos and levelling false allegations."

Polling for the 250 wards of the MCD will be held on December 4. Results will be announced after counting of votes on December 7. In the last municipal polls, the AAP was trounced by the BJP. The Kejriwal-led party had managed to grab just 48 seats out of 270 while the BJP had secured victory in 181 seats. (PTI)

## Uddhav Thackeray-led Sena slams Rijiju's comments on collegium system, seeks his resignation

**MUMBAI, DEC 1 /--/** The Uddhav Thackeray-led faction of the Shiv Sena on Thursday said Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju has crossed the "Laxman Resha" by commenting on the collegium system of appointment of judges, and he should resign.

An editorial in the party mouthpiece 'Saamana' alleged that the Narendra Modi government wants to control all important institutions including the judiciary. "It wants people of its ideology in the judiciary and is trying to destroy democracy, Parliament and opposition leaders.

For this, the government wants its people in the high courts, Supreme Court and also among prosecutors," it said. Rijiju recently called as "opaque" the present Supreme Court collegium system through which judges are appointed.

"The basic fault with the present collegium system is that the judges are recommending those colleagues whom they know. Obviously, they would not recommend a judge they do not know," Rijiju had said. The Sena mouthpiece said it was clear that the law minister had crossed the line which meant he had started meddling in the judicial process.

"Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar was (once) the law minister of the country. The one who is occupying that post now has crossed the Laxman Resha. The law minister has no right to occupy the post. Like a python, the Centre has swallowed up all the institutions and now it wants to swallow up the judiciary too," the newspaper claimed. This is a matter which warrants the law minister's resignation, Saamana added.

The editorial further said that Rijiju apparently thinks that the prime minister should appoint the judges. "But Rijiju's suggestion is more dangerous.

The collegium process is, at least, the law of the land and it has to be followed," it noted. Rijiju cites instances of other countries where judges are appointed by the government, but can such judges act sternly against the government in the present "Modi-Shah regime", it asked.

A judge of the Allahabad High Court showed courage by passing a verdict against then prime minister Indira Gandhi, the editorial said, referring to the historic judgement of 1975 which held Gandhi guilty of electoral malpractices and disqualified her from holding a public office for six years. Can government-appointed judges show such courage, it asked.

The Supreme Court is currently hearing a petition about the appointments on the Election Commission and it has become clear that the government made appointments to the poll body as per its whims and fancies, it further noted. (PTI)



Chief Secretary, Mr. Keshav Chandra being presented a book published jointly by the Department of Environment of Forests and Zoological Survey of India titled 'Biodiversity Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park' by Dr. C. Sivaperuman , Officer In-charge, ANRC/ ZSI, Port Blair on Wednesday.

## Additional chance for UG & PG JNRM students to clear arrear papers

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 1 /--/** As approved by the Pondicherry University, it has been decided to grant two additional chances in the examination to be held for Nov/Dec' 2022 and April/May 2023 sessions to all the UG/PG students of JNRM admitted from the Academic Year 2006-07 to 2015-16 who could not complete the courses within the maximum duration prescribed in the respective regulations to enable them to appear for their arrear papers and successfully complete their degree.

In this regard, the concerned student have been advised to register their name with their respective HODs within three working days, so that the same can be forwarded to Pondicherry University for further course of action. The registering students have to pay a fee of Rs.3000/- as registration fee and Rs.1000/- as fee for each theory/practical paper.

## UG 1st year admission in MGCC

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 1 /--/** UG First Year admission for the academic year 2022-23 in Mahatma Gandhi Govt College, Mayabunder will be closed on 09/12/2022. If any seats are lying vacant in any of the course in Mahatma Gandhi Govt College that will be filled on 09/12/2022 on the basis of merit

## Additional changes for students of MGCC Mayabunder

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 1 /--/** The Pondicherry University has decided to grant two additional chances in the examinations to be held for November/December 2022 and April/May 2023 session to UG (Arts / B.com & Science) for the students who were admitted from the Academic Year 2006-2007 to 2015-16. The registering students have to pay a fee of Rs 3000/- as Registration fee and Rs.1000 as fee for each Theory/Practical paper. The students who would like to avail this opportunity may approach the Academic In charge, Admission & Examination wing of the college during working hours. Contact No.9679558544 / 9531894209.

## Exhibition-cum-sale of SHG products by NABARD

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 1 /--/** The National Bank for Agriculture & Rural Development (NABARD) has been supporting NGOs/Banks for promotion and credit linkage of SHGs and imparting livelihood training programmes. Many Self Help Groups are into livelihood activities, making various handicraft products, food processing etc.

In order to provide a platform for sale of their products, NABARD is organising an Exhibition-cum-Sale of SHG products at Marina Park area during 03 & 04 December 2022 (Saturday & Sunday). A street drama (Nukkad Natak) for popularising financial literacy and digital banking is also being organised on 03 December 2022 at 6.00 pm.

Ms Smitha R, IAS, Secretary (Social Welfare/ PBMC), A&N Administration would be inaugurating the event on 03 December 2022 at 5:00 pm at Marina Park.

## Agniveers: Defence ministry organises session with defence industry representatives

**NEW DELHI, DEC 1 /--/** An interaction session has been organised by the government with the Indian defence industry representatives to seek opportunities for gainful employment of Agniveers after their stint with the armed forces, officials said on Thursday. The session was organised by the defence ministry on November 30, under the Corporate Recruitment Plan of the companies. The session was chaired by Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane. Senior executives from major Indian defence industry houses including L&T, Adani Defence Ltd, Tata Advanced System Ltd, Ashok Leyland and others participated in the discussion, the ministry said in a statement. The interaction was held under the aegis of Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers to "seek opportunities for gainful employment of ex-Agniveers under the Corporate Recruitment Plan of the companies," it said. The defence secretary highlighted the endeavour of the government to "gainfully utilise the expertise of the Agniveers after their stint with the armed forces with an objective to employ highly dedicated and disciplined youth in various sectors engaged in nation building," the statement said.

The skills gained by the Agniveers during their engagement with the armed forces will help build a highly competent and professional workforce which will be readily available for fruitful and productive engagement by the industry, it said. The senior executives of the companies conveyed their "unstinted support and commitment in the endeavour and expressed their eagerness to deploy the ex-Agniveers once the first batch completes its term with the armed forces," the ministry said. They assured that "suitable provisions" shall be made in their recruitment policies for reservations for Agniveers based on the available skill sets, it said. Certain suggestions were also considered regarding bridging the skills learnt by Agniveers with the requirements of the industry, the statement said. The defence secretary, while acknowledging the encouraging response from the participants, urged the Indian defence manufacturers to act on their commitment and make policy announcements under the Corporate Recruitment plans at the earliest, the ministry said. (PTI)



# Workshop for JNRM students to generate awareness about impact of climate change



**PORT BLAIR, DEC 1/--/ CPR** Environmental Education Centre organised a workshop-cum-exposure visit on Science & Technology communication of best practices and awareness raising on climate change & biodiversity conservation in Andaman & Nicobar Islands in association with the National Council for Science and Technology Communication, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.

Workshop organised for students of JNRM on Tuesday. The workshop was conducted for college students to make them understand the impact of climate change issues on island biodiversity. Dr. S. Senthil Kumar, Chief

Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) was the chief guest on the occasion. He addressed climate change happening behind our lifestyle and choices. The electricity we use, the food we eat, the way we travel and the things we buy all contribute to a person's "carbon footprint", the amount of greenhouse gas emissions associated with an individual's activities. He urged the use of natural resources for sustainable use. Dr. H. K. Sharma, Principal, JNRM highlighted the issues of climate change.

Dr. K. Venkatesan, HOD, Home Science, JNRM welcomed the gathering. Dr. Avijit Roy, Deputy Director (Health), DHS talked about the Basic concept of Water Sanitation and Hygiene

(WaSH). Dr. PM. Mohan, Professor, Pondicherry University addressed on Impact of climate change on terrestrial and marine biodiversity: Andaman and Nicobar Islands perspective. Shri. A. Gopal, Project Officer, CPREEC, Port Blair proposed a vote of thanks and highlighted the biodiversity and climate change's impact on biodiversity as well as the mangrove ecosystem of ANI. At the end of the program, screened video clips on climate change and Dr. K. Venkatesan, HOD, Home Science, JNRM has given the valedictory address.

In the continuation of the program, an Exposure visit was organized for participants on 30.11.2022. The participants were taken to the Botanical Survey of

India's Herbarium and Zoological Survey of India's museum for observing the ex-situ conservation of biodiversity.

After that, they visited the prem Nagar coastal line for the purpose of understanding unmanaged plastics break down into microplastics and contribute to climate change indirectly by negatively affecting marine life.

The students visited the mangrove patch of Sippighat and the BSI's Botanical Garden, Nayashehar to understand the biodiversity conservation methods of in-situ and ex-situ conservation.



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## ASI celebrates Foundation Day befittingly

**PORT BLAIR, DEC 1/--/ The Andaman and Nicobar Regional Centre of Anthropological Survey of India** has celebrated its Foundation Day on Thursday. The inauguration was done by lighting the traditional lamp by Mr. M E Jadwet, a renowned personality of the Jadwet family of Nicobar Islands.

Mr. S Ramakrishnan, Assistant Director, India Tourism, Ministry of Tourism, Port Blair was the guest of honour and Mr. Ebrahim Jadwet, a family member of Jadwet family, Port Blair was present as special guest. On this occasion, all the dignitaries and staff members of Anthropological Survey of India paid their floral tribute to the Late Dr. Biraja Shankar Guha, the founder Director, Anthropological Survey of India. It is important to note here that this regional centre was established as first station at Port Blair in December 1951 as Andaman Nicobar Regional Station (which was renamed- Regional office in 1979 and renamed- Regional Centre in 1989). Thus Regional Station was established and housed at the Cellular Jail. The present building of this regional Centre was constructed in the year 2002 in front of the BSNL Office.

Dr. Nilanjan Khatua, Head of the Regional Centre delivered his welcome address and history of this centre since its establishment in the year 1951 and the research contribution made by this organization and also

emphasized the contribution of the first Director Late Dr B S Guha. Dr B S Guha was deeply committed to the development of the discipline of Anthropology in India. He was born on 15 August, 1894 and died in 1961 and Dr. B.S. Guha, the founder Director of ANSI (Department of Anthropology) first visited the island in 1948 along with S.S. sarkar. On the advice of the Chief commissioner to send a small party instead for a preliminary survey Dr. B S Guha embarked for Port Blair with Dr. Sarkar, a class I officer of his department and three scientific Assistants on February 17, 1948. The party stayed in the Islands till April 15th i.e. a period of one month and 23 days. During this time they visited the Onge settlements on the Bumila and Dugong Creeks of the North-eastern parts of the little Andamans. They made some observations on the Onge in Little Andaman and the great Andamanese.

Mr. M E Jadwet delivered his lecture about the history of the interaction with the Nicobarese and Jadwet Family and showed the visuals of those historical records of the 1950s and 1960s. Mr. Ramakrishnan delivered his speech by linking the role of tourism in Andaman and how the museum of AnSI played a great role to cater the

tourists by disseminating the information about the culture and tradition of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Dr. Sumitabha Chakraborty, Assistant Anthropologist introduced the august gatherings about Dr. Biraja Shankar Guha, the first and founder Director, of Anthropological Survey of India and his contribution in establishing the is Regional Centre in the year 1951. Mr. Sahri Gitu Yaikhom, Officer-in-charge of Zonal Anthropological Museum delivered his vote of thanks.



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*Advice is what we ask  
for when we already  
know the answer but  
wish we didn't*

**Erica Jong**

## Indo-Australia trade pact to signal new era of bilateral business

The free trade agreement between India and Australia will come into force from December 29, heralding the dawn of a whole new era for businesses and people of both the nations, which have already exchanged written notifications regarding the India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement, ECTA. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said in a tweet that India and Australia consolidate their long-standing partnership. Under the agreement, duties on 100 per cent tariff lines are to be eliminated by Australia. The total bilateral trade will cross 45 to 50 billion dollars in five years from existing 31 billion dollars. The ECTA, signed on April 2, would provide duty-free access to Indian exporters of over 6,000 broad sectors, including textiles, leather, furniture, jewellery and machinery in the Australian market. Labour-intensive sectors which would gain immensely include textiles and apparel, few agricultural and fish products, leather, footwear, furniture, sports goods, jewellery, machinery, and electrical goods. Key commodities exported to Australia are plain gold jewellery, studded jewellery and cut & polished diamonds. The main commodities imported from Australia are precious metals - gold and silver bars. India's gems and jewellery exports to Australia grew 21 per cent to USD 183.86 million during April-October 2022.

Both the countries have completed their domestic requirements to enable implementation of the ECTA. In a statement, Australian Minister for Trade and Tourism Don Farrell said, "The ECTA's two tariff cuts in quick succession intensify the up-front benefits of this agreement for our exporters". Under the pact, Australia is offering zero-duty access to India for about 96.4 per cent of exports (by value) from day one. This covers many products that currently attract 4-5 per cent customs duty in Australia. India's goods exports to Australia stood at USD 8.3 billion and imports from the country aggregated to USD 16.75 billion in 2021-22. From December 29, tariffs on 85 per cent of Australia's exports to India will be eliminated and high tariffs on a further 5 per cent of goods will be phased down. Entry into force of the agreement before the New Year delivers a double bonus of two tariff cuts in quick succession: one as the agreement comes into effect and a second on 1 January 2023. ECTA will save Australian exporters around USD 2 billion a year in tariffs, while consumers and businesses will save around USD 500 million in tariffs on imports of finished goods, and inputs to "our manufacturing sector". The tariff commitments provided by India in the agreement will open up access for Australia's exporters of products including critical minerals, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, lentils, seafood, sheepmeat, horticulture and wine. Australian service suppliers will benefit from full or partial access across more than 85 Indian services sectors and subsectors. Australian suppliers across 31 sectors and subsectors will be guaranteed the highest standard of treatment that India grants to any future free trade agreement partner. ECTA will also support tourism and workforce needs in regional Australia by making 1,000 work and holiday programme places available to young Indians, it said adding the pact maintains opportunities for Indian students graduating in Australia to undertake post-study work, with a bonus year of stay for high-performing STEM (science, technology, engineering, or mathematics) graduates. Both the countries are now progressing a comprehensive economic cooperation agreement to build on ECTA. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said that the agreement is the next step in elevating the relationship with India, the world's fastest growing large economy.

# Biden-Trump contest is likely in 2024 Presidential elections

## REFLEX ACTION

**Kalyani Shankar**

Will a potential Joe Biden versus Donald Trump presidential race happen in 2024 in the United States? It is the question after the two current and former presidents have thrown themselves in the presidential ring two years in advance.

Democrats and Republicans are already preparing for the 2024 presidential polls. Polls show that though Biden remains unpopular, he still enjoys more support than Trump. According to a recent Emerson College survey, the Democrats have held an edge of four percentage points. However, there are no cheers from the voters for a re-run of the Biden versus Trump match. According to recent polls, nearly 60% of Americans do not want Trump back in the White House. A Biden-Trump contest would also mean the chances of a woman president fading away. Trump announced his candidature on November 15 in Florida. Facing several court cases and investigations, the former President is keen to take up the White House challenge to protect against legal challenges. He showed his intention of a re-run right from when Biden defeated him in 2020. "To make America great and glorious again, I am announcing tonight my candidacy for president of the United States," Trump said at his Florida headquarters. His announcement has dashed the hopes of GOP leaders to find a fresh face. With his sustained support base and his "white supremacy" concept, Trump is confident of easy path to the White House.

The latest opinion polls indicate Trump remains the front-runner for the GOP nomination and other aspirants—in the single digits. The polls also showed that Trump received 55% of Republican registered voters' support. In contrast, his potential Republican rival De Santis got just

25%. De Santis won a second four-year term as governor this month with a solid political base and war chest behind him. President Biden celebrated his 80th birthday quietly on November 20. He is buoyant after the unexpected midterm poll results from this month, where Democrats held onto the Senate. Not deterred by his age, Biden said, "I have not made that formal decision, but it's my intention – my intention to run again. And we have time to make that decision," Biden told an MSNBC interview recently. There are other hopefuls in both parties. Come 2023, more aspirants might emerge, more might withdraw, and the competition will be tough.

Vice President Kamala Harris, aspiring to succeed Biden, is one of them. Biden might repeat his running mate, but Kamala has not revealed her plans. Biden's Secretary of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg, is yet another probable. He has overseen the passage of significant infrastructure investments. He would be the first openly gay President if elected. California Governor Gavin Newsom - has a massive campaign war chest and the backing of major Democratic donors. The governor entered a second term earlier this month. After emerging second to Hillary Clinton in the 2016 Democratic primary and second again to Joe Biden in 2020, Bernie Sanders has yet to rule out running again in 2024 if the field opens up. Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts

has become a leading political voice on economic and human rights issues. She did well in her 2020 presidential campaign. Some speculate that if Biden were to withdraw from the race, she might reconsider Trump's Vice president, Mike Pence, could be a potential challenger to his one-time boss Trump. He changed his loyalty after January 6, 2021, Capitol riots. Trump has clarified that Pence will not join him on the ticket again if he runs a third time.

The other probable face is Niky Halley-U.S. ambassador to the United Nations under President Trump. Though she called Trump her friend, following the January 6 Capitol riots, she delivered mixed messages on her support of Trump. She is likely to reveal her intention in early 2023. Republican Texas Governor Greg Abbott, 64, who won a third term this month, is another aspirant. He has pursued increasingly conservative policies, opposing COVID-19 vaccine and mask mandates during his second term. Representing Wyoming in the House of Representatives since 2017, Former Vice President Dick Cheney's daughter Liz Cheney is also a potential aspirant. Though it is customary in America that a potential presidential race begins two years in advance, the final picture emerges only after the primaries and the party conventions. With the election expenses increasing, candidates must sustain the momentum and build a massive campaign chest.

Biden can set the agenda on significant issues, like gun control, the economy, abortion, immigration, and climate change, if he wins. A Trump win would only mean going back to Trumpism. If neither contests, the chances of a fresh face becoming the next tenant of the White House is possible after 2024 presidential elections. (IPA)



Women purchasing woolen clothes on a cold winter morning in Srinagar

# Chinese supremo Xi Jinping facing biggest challenge in his tenure

## FOCUS

**Anjan Roy**

As protests against Covid lock-downs and harassment of ordinary people getting louder and widespread, it is turning into a call against the Chinese nation's supremo Xi Jinping. This is the unprecedented new trend in Chinese society.

China is facing waves of protests — something unseen and unthinkable until recently— over lock-downs of people across the country. The anti-Covid restrictions protests are now widening into expression general dissent against suppression of even workers' rights against low wages and bad working conditions. The latest death of ten persons in a locked room during the covid lockdown has fuelled the anger of the common people. In the midst of the protests by ordinary people what is ringing out is the call for freedom as it happened latest in the restive province of Xinjiang. Covid restrictions had prevented even a team of firefighters from attending a fire in a condominium. The delay and derelictions stemming mainly from restrictions on movements of people resulted in deaths of scores of residents trapped in the besieged housing complex. There were rising numbers of the injured. All utterly preventable but because of the continuing restrictions. Incensed residents and locals had gathered together and fought police dressed in hazmat suits. Several agencies had reported the insensitive ways in which the hassled people were treated by the security forces. In the midst of the protests, a man had emerged shouting slogans of freedom. He is reported to have shouted: "I would rather die than live without freedom."

On that point he was captured by a posse of hazmat clad security forces, trying to stop him. However, the local residents had struggled with the security and rescued him. The incidence is not isolated. Such cries for freedom are being heard from across the country in widespread protests. Personal griefs are making people overcome fear of official torture and actions against those protesting. One report stated that an automobile worker lost his father due to delay in medical interventions. The security forces stopped the man's relatives from coming into where he was staying and taking him to a hospital early five minutes away. He died in the process of taking him to the hospital after delay. His son had sought to inform the Chinese media in Beijing but without any takers. Even when knowing the risks, the bereaved son had gone to international media to light his case.

Children are paying heavy price. Delay in giving medical aid to afflicted children, sometime only months old, are moving fatal. No wonder that the parents and grandparents are proving fearless in venting their feelings. The cumulative impact of these incidences is that people are becoming more defiant and are bothering less about what might happen to them subsequently. Fear is being overcome. In a highly visible protest, workers of the

world's largest iPhone making factory had repeatedly clashed with the police and demanded lock-downs to be withdrawn. The factory owned by Taiwanese manufacturing giant, Foxconn, produced half of total production of the instruments. The situation had turned so ugly that the owners of the factory had offered \$1400 to each worker to leave the factory premises and cease protests. However, the olive branch has not been accepted and the workers are still occupying the factory and continuing their protests against the authorities clamping down restriction in the central Chinese city.

Videos have gone viral showing hazmat clad security forces beating down workers of the factory while the latter are seen bringing down the structures imposed for movements of people under Covid protocols. The workers have also protested against low wages and hostile working conditions in such factories across the country. The Foxconn protests are now becoming symbolic of the expression of dissatisfaction over the way people are being treated. In many cases, defying the censors, these videos of protest are going viral for much longer and in more surreptitious ways than was possible previously. So many other unrelated developments are fanning the fire. Chinese

football fans are watching the World Cup in not so distant Qatar. Innumerable fans are jeering their teams in packed stadiums in that country, not one wearing a face mask or keeping safe distances in between. They are not getting Covid immediately. So, one international agency quoted a Chinese, watching the games saying: "Aren't these people living in the same plant as the Chinese."

Even as the country is continuing with strict to stricter restrictions, the incidences of infections are rising. This week the fresh infections are reported to have crossed 40,000. The most damaging part of the recent protests is that the severe Covid restrictions carried the personal imprimatur of the Chinese president Xi Jinping. He had insisted on the strictest implementation of the restrictions including city wide clamp downs. He had insisted on zero-covid policy as the ultimate panacea. The irony is that only a week back, the Chinese President was widely shown on the Chinese TV meeting diverse groups of people, including heads of states and other leaders, without any face mask. He was freely mingling among the crowds of the high and mighty at state banquets and other events. Even his entourage was swirling around him and they as well without make or at safe distances from others. It is the ordinary Chinese in their own country who were the top risks, questions come up. Now that policy of Xi Jinping's zero covid policy is clearly seen ineffective as the rest of the world had crawled back into normalcy while China is still curfew bound. (IPA)

Conventional Crossword						
1		2	3		4	5
		8			9	
10					11	
		12		13		
				14		15
						16
17		18		19		20
				21		22
23	24		25		26	
27					28	
29					30	

- ACROSS**

  - 1 Make fast a vessel
  - 4 Starchy foodstuff
  - 8 Annoy
  - 9 Dry
  - 10 Tribe
  - 11 Backbone
  - 12 Fasting period
  - 14 Affliction
  - 15 Drink slowly
  - 17 Cry
  - 19 Forefront
  - 21 Dash
  - 23 Waste
  - 26 Satellite
  - 27 Tree
  - 28 Acceptance
  - 29 Copied
  - 30 Refuse
- DOWN**

  - 1 Long-tailed parrots
  - 2 Egg-shaped
  - 3 Replenish
  - 4 Undermine
  - 5 Zodiac sign
  - 6 Spirit
  - 7 Lyric poem
  - 11 Take by theft
  - 13 Of a new kind
  - 16 Abundant supply
  - 18 Very salty water
  - 20 Nominated
  - 22 Facial feature
  - 23 Mineral spring
  - 24 Fruit seed
  - 25 Was ahead

SUDOKU:3713								
6		2	8	1				
8	9				7	6		
7					3			
3	6					9		
	1		4			8		
	4					7		5
		2						9
	9	7					8	4
			3	1	2			7

Yesterday's Solution 3712								
5	7	8	3	4	1	9	6	2
4	6	3	2	9	7	8	5	1
9	1	2	5	8	6	3	4	7
3	2	5	6	7	4	1	9	8
1	9	6	8	3	5	2	7	4
8	4	7	1	2	9	6	3	5
2	5	9	4	6	8	7	1	3
7	3	1	9	5	2	4	8	6
6	8	4	7	1	3	5	2	9

Yesterday's Cross Word Solution 1721								
P	E	P		M	A	R	I	N
L		A	J	A	R		R	E
U		W		R	O	T	A	T
S	E	N	S	E	S	T		P
	W		U		E	J	E	C
S	E	V	E	N		E		O
C		A		A	T	T	E	S
A	S	S	U	R	E		A	R
L	E	E		E	N	D	S	
D	E	S	I	S	T		T	E

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Goalscorer Julian Alvarez is hugged by team-mate Enzo Fernandez. Argentina beat Poland 2-0

## 59.2 per cent turnout till 5 pm in first phase of Gujarat Assembly elections

**AHMEDABAD, DEC 1/--**/An average 59.24 per cent voter turn-out was recorded as of 5 pm on Thursday across 89 Assembly seats in the first phase of Gujarat elections, election officials said. While voting began at 8 in the morning and ended at 5 pm, the final turn-out would be higher as the process continued at the polling stations where voters had arrived before 5 pm and were standing in queues. The fate of 788 candidates will be decided in the first phase. Barring a few incidents, polling was largely peaceful across all 89 seats in south Gujarat and Saurashtra-Kutch regions which went to polls in the first phase. The voter turn-out figure was provisional as data from some polling stations had not been received and it also did not include postal ballots, the Election Commission said. Voting was halted in a few places due to malfunctioning of Electronic Voting Machines as well as control units and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPATs) but the faulty units were replaced and the process resumed, it added. Tapi district recorded the highest provisional voting turnout of 72.32 per cent. The tribal-dominated district comprises two Assembly constituencies of Vyara and Nizar. With 68.09 per cent turnout, Narmada district stood second. Bhavnagar in Saurashtra region recorded the lowest turnout of 51.34 per cent as of 5 pm. Apart from Narmada, four other districts recorded over 60 per cent voting turnout: Navsari (65.91 per cent), Dang (64.84 per cent), Valsad (62.46 per cent) and Gir Somnath (60.46 per cent). Polling

was largely peaceful barring a few incidents of scuffles between rival groups, the EC said. Locals protested at Dhrafa village in Jamjodhpur taluka of Jamnagar district as there were no separate polling booths for men and women. They threatened to boycott voting, claiming that separate booths were always set up in the past. In Junagadh, a ruckus broke out after police tried to stop a Congress leader who walked to the polling station carrying a gas cylinder on his

station instead of opting for a postal ballot." At least 33 ballot units, 29 control units and 69 VVPATs were replaced in the first three hours of polling at different stations due to malfunctioning, the office of Chief Electoral Officer said in a statement. "Around 0.1 per cent ballot units, 0.1 per cent control units and 0.3 per cent VVPATs have been replaced in three hours of voting. "Reserve machine sets are available in all districts with the zonal officer in-charge of that area. Wherever a small or big problem occurs, arrangements have been made to replace them in no time," it added. Former chief minister Vijay Rupani, state BJP chief C R Paatil, Rajya Sabha member Parimal Nathwani, BJP candidate from Jamnagar (North) Rivaba Jadeja, former Leader of Opposition Paresch Dhanani, state Aam Aadmi Party president Gopal Italia were among those who voted early. While Rivaba Jadeja voted in Rajkot, her husband and cricketer Ravindra Jadeja voted in Jamnagar. AAP's Italia questioned the slow turnout in the initial hours. "Voting is being deliberately slowed down in Katargam AC. @ECISVEEP If you have to work this way under the pressure of the BJP goons, then why are you holding elections? An average of 3.5 percent voting was done in the entire state but only 1.41 per cent in Katargam. Don't stoop so low to defeat a small child," he said in a tweet. Voting for the second phase will be held on December 5, and counting of votes on December 8. (PTI)



Former Chief Minister of Gujarat Vijay Rupani casting his vote

shoulder to protest against inflation. Such protest was seen in many other places too.

The EC tweeted the picture of 104-year old Ramjibhai who, it said, "participated in the festival of democracy by voting at the polling

### AT A GLANCE

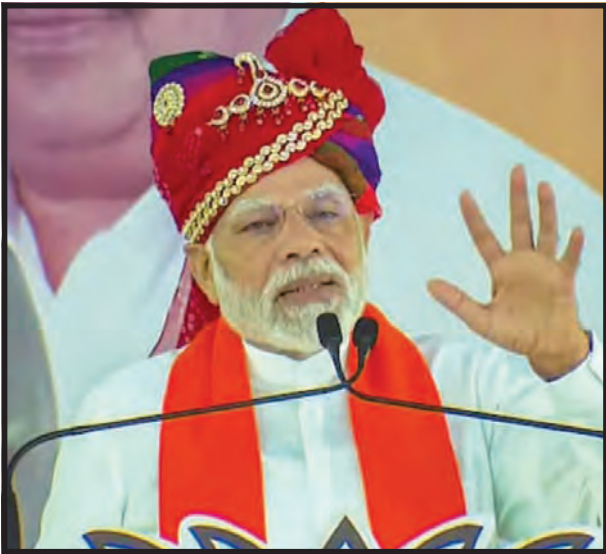
#### Kolkata International Book Fair from Jan 30

**KOLKATA, DEC 1/--**/The 46th edition of Kolkata International Book Fair will be held from January 30 to February 12, 2023, and Spain will be the focal theme country, organisers said. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will inaugurate the book fair on January 30 at the Central Park in Salt Lake, Publishers and Booksellers Guild, organisers of the book fair, announced at a news conference here on Wednesday.

The book fair logo was unveiled during the event. Ambassador of Spain in India, Jos Maraa Ridao Dom nguez, Publishers and Booksellers Guild general secretary Tridib Chatterjee and other dignitaries were present on the occasion. This will be for the second time that Spain will be focal theme country in the Kolkata International Book Fair. It was earlier the focal theme country in the 2006 book fair, said Chatterjee. (PTI)

**AHMEDABAD, DEC 1/--**/In a whirlwind campaign tour in his home state Gujarat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday took part in a more than 30-km-long roadshow here and addressed three rallies while asking people to teach a lesson to the Congress in the Assembly elections following its "Ravan" jibe for him. Addressing a rally at Kalol in Panchmahal district, Modi said he respected Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, but it was the opposition party's "high command" which compelled Kharge to use such jibes. Voting for the first phase of Gujarat Assembly elections in 89 seats was held on Thursday, while that in the remaining 93 seats including 16 of Ahmedabad city will take place on December 5. Kharge, at a rally in Ahmedabad city on Monday, had said the prime minister asks people to vote "looking at his face" in all elections. "Are you 100-headed like Ravan," he had

said. On Thursday, Modi said, "I respect Kharge ji, but he has to follow orders of the party high command. He was compelled to say that Modi has 100 heads like (demon king) Ravan." "But the Congress did not realise that Gujarat is the land of Ram Bhakts. Those who never believed in the existence of Lord Ram, have now brought in Ravan from Ramayana just to abuse me," the PM said. Congress leaders never apologise over such insults but think it is their right to use abusive language for the country's prime minister, he added. "For them, that family is everything. They will do anything to make the family happy. There is a competition among Congress leaders as to who will use the most abusive and most toxic slurs for Modi," he said, apparently referring to the Gandhi family. "There is only one way to teach them a lesson. Vote for the BJP on December 5 by pushing a button near lotus," Modi said. At a rally at Bodeli town in Chhota Udepur



district, the PM said despite the Congress' 'Garibi Hatao' slogan, poverty actually increased under its rule.

"For decades, Congress has been saying only one thing - Garibi Hatao (eliminate poverty)...The only thing they did was to raise slogans, make promises and misguide people. That was the reason why poverty actually increased during its

regime," Modi said. The poor, tribals and Other Backward Class (OBC) communities were not given priority in education, health and industrial sector by Congress governments, he said. The opposition party also did not support a tribal woman becoming the country's President, and hence it fielded a candidate against Droupadi Murmu in the presidential election

earlier this year, Modi claimed. Speaking at his last rally in Himmatnagar town in Sabarkantha district, he asked people not to repeat the "mistake" committed after Independence. "This election is not just about forming a government here for five years. The country has completed 75 years of Independence. You must keep in mind where India will be 25 years from now. This election is all about making a government which would strengthen the foundation of the country for the next 25 years," Modi

said. "Everyone says that India would have been moving in a different direction had Sardar Patel been the country's first prime minister. We have already begun the course correction and have put the country in the right direction with so much hard work.

Therefore, we cannot afford to commit the same mistake that was committed at the time of India's Independence," he added. In the evening, Modi took part in a more than 30-km-long roadshow in Ahmedabad

city, starting from Naroda village. A large number of people standing on both sides of the route greeted the PM during the roadshow which began around 5.20 pm. Standing in a specially-designed vehicle, the prime minister waved at the crowd.

The roadshow was to pass through the eastern part of Ahmedabad and end at IOC circle in the Chandkheda area on the city's western side, covering 13 constituencies in Ahmedabad city as well as Gandhinagar-South. (PTI)

## Modi conducts 30-km long roadshow in Ahmedabad, holds rallies, asks Gujarat voters to punish Cong after 'Ravan' jibe

### Govt launches DigiYatra for passengers at 3 airports; Scindia says data stored in encrypted format

**NEW DELHI, DEC 1/--**/The government on Thursday launched DigiYatra which will provide a seamless entry and embarkation process for air passengers at the airports in the national capital, Bangalore and Varanasi. After launching DigiYatra, which is based on facial recognition technology, at the airport in Delhi, Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said data shared by the passengers will be stored in an encrypted format and in a decentralised manner. DigiYatra will be launched at four more airports - Hyderabad, Pune, Vijayawada and Kolkata -- by March next year. Later, DigiYatra will be rapidly rolled out across all other airports, Scindia said at a briefing here. The airlines that operate in these three airports -- Delhi, Bangalore and Varanasi -- are fundamentally onboard, he said with respect to DigiYatra. It will be available for passengers taking domestic flights. At present, Air India, Vistara and IndiGo are part of DigiYatra. A SpiceJet official said the airline will join the DigiYatra initiative soon. "We are working on the implementation of DigiYatra," a Go First spokesperson said. There was no immediate comment from Akasa Air. DigiYatra app is available on Android and iOS platforms. Currently at

the Delhi airport, DigiYatra will be available for passengers taking domestic flights from Terminal 3 (T3). Amid concerns in certain quarters about data theft and privacy issues, Scindia said the data shared for DigiYatra will be stored in an encrypted format in a decentralised manner. "First, we thought of a centralised system that would house all the data but then issues of privacy, data theft, rightfully came up. So, we moved to a decentralised system which would house the passenger information.. on the mobile phones of every single passenger," the minister said. The secured, encrypted information on a passenger's phone can be provided to the airport from which he or she is flying out, 24 hours before the journey. "We have moved to a decentralised system and your data is going to be in an encrypted format and it is going to be residing only in your (passenger) mobile phone... 24 hours after your travel, that data is mandatorily going to be purged from the servers at that airport. The data you upload gets completely wiped out in 24 hours even though it is protected by blockchain technology," the minister said. For availing the service, a passenger has to register their details on DigiYatra app using Aadhaar-based validation and a self image capture. (PTI)

## Satyendar Jain met money laundering case co-accused, family members in Tihar: Inquiry committee report

**NEW DELHI, DEC 1/--**/An inquiry found that jailed Delhi minister Satyendar Jain met with co-accused in a money laundering case as well as family members in Tihar Jail where he "misused" his position to receive VIP treatment, official sources said on Thursday. In its report, the inquiry committee formed by Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena also claimed "collusion" between Jain and then Director-General (Prisons) Sandeep Goel over "VIP treatment" to the minister in jail. No immediate reaction was available from the AAP or Goel on the findings of the report. Jain, arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in connection with a money laundering case on May 31, was being provided with various services in the jail by five inmates and other prison staff, a copy of the report revealed. Two of the inmates -- Rinku who was seen in a purported video giving a massage to Jain in his cell and Manish who provided fruits and outside food to Jain -- are accused under the POCSO Act for raping minors, it said. According to the report, Rinku told the committee

members that he had no training in massage or physiotherapy and worked as a supplier of mare for 'Ghuchchadi' ceremonies in weddings. Saxena formed the enquiry committee comprising the principal secretaries of



Home, Law and Vigilance departments after the ED claimed in a city court that Jain was being provided with "special facilities" inside Tihar Jail. The committee has also recommended "departmental proceedings" against Goel for "extending VIP treatment" to Jain. Goel was transferred after

jailed conman Suresh Chandrashekar accused him of taking money. Tihar Jail Superintendent Ajit Kumar has been suspended. "...in violation of prison rules, Jain frequently held court in his room with co-accused in the money

laundering case in which he was arrested. These co-accused included Vaibhav Jain and Ankush Jain, apart from Sanjay Gupta and Raman Bhuraria, who are accused in other cases filed by the ED," said the report. The committee also found that Jain's wife and other family members "frequently"

met him at "restricted places" in jail in "blatant violation" of the rules and with the "collusion" of senior prison officials, including Goel and Kumar. The report cited eight meetings Jain had with his wife and other family members at Tihar from September 16 to October 13.

It was also claimed in the report that Goel met Jain in his cell for about 50 minutes on October 6 while Kumar met the minister for 15 minutes on September 12. Jail officials also "pressurised" inmates to provide "special services" to Jain, the report said citing their statements. The minister allegedly used the jail account cards of other inmates to buy fruits, food and other items of personal use. The cards were recharged by the warden and other inmates, the committee claimed in the report.

Several purported videos of Jain meeting visitors and the jail superintendent, eating fruits and vegetables and getting massages in his prison cell have gone viral, giving ammunition to the BJP to attack the AAP. It has also demanded Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal sack Jain from his post. (PTI)

### Awareness rally marks 'World AIDS Day' in ANI

From page-1

He said that as this disease does not have treatment or cure more focus should be on the awareness of prevention measures. He also appreciated ANACS for conducting this event and this should not stop here for just one day but should continue throughout the year. The Secretary (Health) also appreciated the folk performance with messages on HIV & AIDS. He said that these kinds of programs can be a good way to disseminate information and create awareness among the youths. Earlier, the DHS-cum-Vice Chairperson, ANACS welcomed the guests and the gathering and highlighted this year's theme Equalize. She said that as the theme highlights, we need to ensure that comprehensive HIV & AIDS treatment and services should be available by

all. The event was conducted under the guidance and leadership of Dr. MunniSinghania, DHS-Cum Vice Chairperson, ANACS.

Fusion performance of folk dance, nukkadnatak with awareness messages was done by BalakrishnaNritya Academy and Dance Nritya Academy which was very impressive and liked by all. Awareness videos on HIV & AIDS were also played for the Participants. The Commissioner-cum-Secretary (Health) also distributed the prizes to the winners of Inter College RRC Quiz Competition winners, Inter Youth Club RRC Quiz Competition winners, State Level Quiz Competition winners and inter school painting competition. The programme was concluded with a vote of thanks offered by DD (IEC), ANACS.



East Pak debacle in 1971 a 'military failure', says Pak foreign minister

KARACHI, DEC 1 --/ Pakistan's foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has termed the East Pakistan debacle in 1971 a "military failure," in a veiled jibe at the former Army chief Gen



Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari

Qamar Javed Bajwa, who termed it a "political failure." Bilawal made these comments at the Nishtar Park rally, which was organised to mark the 55th Foundation Day of his Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). On the occasion, the PPP chairman revisited the history of his party and recounted the achievements of its founder, his grandfather, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. "When Zulfikar Ali Bhutto took over the government, the people were broken and had lost all hope," he was quoted as saying by the Dawn newspaper. "But he rebuilt the nation, restored the confidence of the people, and finally brought our 90,000 troops back home who had been made prisoners of war due to military failure'. Those 90,000 soldiers were reunited with their families. And that all was made possible due to politics of hope... of unity... and inclusion," he added.

Days before his retirement on November 29, Gen Bajwa termed the East Pakistan debacle a "political failure," and complained that the sacrifices of the troops were never properly acknowledged. He rejected the commonly held notion that 92,000 soldiers surrendered in the 1971 war and claimed that there were just 34,000 combatants, while the others were part of different government departments. While addressing a Defence and Martyrs Ceremony at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi last week, Bajwa said: "I want to correct the record. First of all, the fall of East Pakistan was not a military but a political failure. The number of fighting soldiers was not 92,000, it was rather only 34,000, the rest were from various government departments."

Gen Bajwa, 61, retired on November 29 after getting a three-year extension in 2019 by the then Prime Minister Imran Khan, who turned out to be the biggest critic of the Pakistan Army. The East Pakistan debacle in 1971 saw Pakistan suffering a humiliating defeat to India. It saw East Pakistan secede to form a new country called Bangladesh. (PTI)

Former US Prez Bill Clinton tests positive for Covid-19

WASHINGTON, DEC 1 --/ Former US President Bill Clinton said he has tested positive for Covid-19, but acknowledged that his symptoms were mild, as he exhorted people to get vaccinated.



It is the latest health scare for Clinton, the 42nd US President, who was hospitalised in October 2021 for a urinary tract infection that spread to his bloodstream. "I've tested positive for Covid. I've had mild symptoms, but I'm doing fine overall and keeping myself busy at home," Clinton tweeted on Wednesday. "I'm grateful to be vaccinated and boosted, which has kept my case mild, and I urge everyone to do the same, especially as we move into the winter months," he added Clinton, 76, has served two presidential terms between 1993-2001. He also supported his wife Hillary's unsuccessful presidential campaign against Donald Trump in 2016.

US President Joe Biden tested positive for Covid-19 for the second time in July this year, in what was described as a "rebound" infection by his doctor. In March, former US President Barack Obama also tested positive for the virus. According to the latest data from Johns Hopkins University, the US has reported nearly 98.6 million Covid-19 cases and more than a million deaths since the pandemic broke out almost three years ago. (PTI)

Taliban silence Voice of America broadcasts in Afghan

WASHINGTON, DEC 1 --/The Voice of America said Wednesday that Taliban authorities have banned FM radio broadcasts from VOA and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Afghanistan, starting Thursday. VOA said Taliban authorities cited "complaints they have received about programming content" without providing specifics. VOA and RFE are funded by the U.S. government, though they claim editorial independence. The Taliban overran Afghanistan in August 2021 as American and NATO forces were in the final weeks of their pullout from the country after 20 years of war. Despite initially promising a more moderate rule, they have restricted rights and freedoms and widely implemented their harsh interpretation of Islamic law, or Sharia. Abdul Qahar Balkhi, the spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told The Associated Press Thursday that Afghanistan has press laws and any network found "repeatedly contravening" these laws will have their privilege of working in the country taken away. "VOA and Azadi Radio (Radio Liberty) failed to adhere to these laws, were found as repeat offenders, failed to show professionalism and were therefore shut down," he said.

The advocacy group Reporters Without Borders said recently that Afghanistan has lost 40 per cent of its media outlets and 60 per cent of its journalists since the Taliban takeover. (AP)

China building Army outpost near LAC is another disturbing sign: Congressman Krishnamoorthi

WASHINGTON, DEC 1 --/China building a military post near the Line of Actual Control with India is a disturbing sign of Chinese aggression with its neighbours, a top Indian American lawmaker said on Wednesday, following the appearance of a media report in this regard.

Politico on Wednesday reported that China had built a military outpost near its disputed border with India. It cited new satellite imagery as showing the outpost, a move that signals Beijing's intentions for a long-term deployment at the global flashpoint. "The pictures, obtained by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies' China Power project and shared with NatSec Daily, show the People's Liberation Army constructed a headquarters and garrison to house troops at Pangong Tso, a remote lake that stretches across the Line of Actual Control between the two countries," Politico reported. "The report of a new People's Liberation Army outpost near the Line of Actual Control between Indian and the People's Republic of China is another disturbing sign of Beijing's growing regional aggression, reinforcing the need for the United States to reaffirm and strengthen joint efforts with India and other security partners," Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi said.

As the Chinese Communist Party's domestic repression, brutal persecution of Uyghurs, and online misinformation efforts continue to escalate, so too do the signs of its growing international military aggression stretching from India to the Taiwan Strait, he said. "In the face of these belligerent ambitions, it is imperative that the United States maintains and expands our security and intelligence cooperation with allies and partners to send the clear messages that the United States stands with India, Taiwan, and democracies across the region in the face of the Chinese Communist Party's rising aggression," Krishnamoorthi said in a statement. (PTI)

Looking forward to supporting India's G20 Presidency: White House

WASHINGTON, DEC 1 --/The US is looking forward to supporting India's G-20 presidency next year on a range of issues, including addressing the current food and energy security challenges, the White House has said.

India formally assumes the G20 Presidency from December 1. India was handed over the presidency of the influential bloc at the end of the two-day G-20 summit in Bali, hosted by Indonesia last month. "We look forward to supporting India's G20 presidency next year on a range of issues, including addressing current food and energy security challenges while continuing our efforts to build a resilient global economy," White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters at her daily news conference on Wednesday. "As you've seen, the President has attended has been participating in the G20 in his tenure here. Don't have anything specific to announce or any any specifics or announcements on travel," she said, when asked about the US President Joe Biden's trip to India next year. The next G20



Leaders' Summit at the level of Heads of State/ Government is scheduled to be held on September 9 and 10 in New Delhi. The G20 or Group of 20 is an intergovernmental forum of the world's major developed and developing economies. It comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India,

Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, the US and the European Union (EU). Together, they account for over 80 per cent of the global Gross Domestic Product, 75 per cent of international trade and two-thirds of the world population. (PTI)

Vivekananda Yoga University launches PhD programme



WASHINGTON, NOV 30 --/ Vivekananda Yoga University, the first institution of higher studies in Yoga outside of India, on Wednesday announced the launch of a Ph.D. programme.

The first batch of 10 Doctoral (Ph.D.) students from the US, Canada, Qatar, France, and India have enrolled for Fall 2022, the university said in a press release. VaYU has introduced a separate MS-PhD for students committed to attaining the highest degree in the US. These mark fresh vistas of opportunity for VaYU

specifically but to the spread of Yoga education in general. "This is a path-defining moment as VaYU students will fast-track the journey of taking yoga education and research to impact every corner of the world," said Prof. Sree N. Sreenath, president of Vivekananda Yoga University (VaYU). The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), the agency that accredits Stanford University, the University of Southern California, and the University of California, has already cleared VaYU to move on to

the final phase of accreditation, and the process should complete by next year, the press release said.

Prof. Murali Venkatrao, vice chairman of the VaYU Board of Trustees and VP of Academics at VaYU, said that graduate programmes at VaYU were founded on scientific methodology and were evidence-based.

"VaYU successfully graduated its first Online M.S. (Yoga) batch in June 2022. With our unique online curriculum and world-class faculty, we serve the seeker and the Yoga buff alike," he said. (PTI)

India will resume work in at least 20 stalled projects in Afghan: Taliban

KABUL, DEC 1 --/The Taliban dispensation in Afghanistan has said that India will resume work in at least 20 stalled projects in several provinces across the war-torn country.

In June, India re-established its diplomatic presence in Kabul by deploying a "technical team" in its embassy in the Afghan capital. India withdrew its officials from the embassy after the Taliban seized power in August 2021, following concerns over their security. In August, Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry said India's diplomatic presence in the country would result in the completion of "unfinished projects" that New Delhi had initiated and the commencement of new ones. On Tuesday, Afghanistan's Ministry of Urban Development and Housing (MUDH) said the Indian charg d'affaires, Bharat Kumar, expressed interest in the improvement of relations and the resumption of stalled projects in the country, according to news portal Tolo News. Kumar made the remarks during a meeting with the Minister of Urban Development and Housing, Hamdullah Nomani, it said.

According to the MUDH, it is expected that India will resume work on at least 20 projects in several provinces of the country. "Projects they were implementing

during the former government but were delayed due political changes or other issues --- they are now interested in resuming these projects," Tolo News quoted Mohammad Kamal Afghan, a spokesman for the MUDH as saying. Economists said the move will facilitate job opportunities and boost development in the country. "The resumption of these projects can also create job opportunities for the people and it can promote people's income and drive Afghanistan out of political isolation," Darya Khan Baheer, an economist was quoted as saying in the report. "The restart of these projects will decrease the level of poverty and unemployment," said Nazkamir Ziarmal, another economist.

India has not recognised the new regime in Afghanistan and has been pitching for the formation of a truly inclusive government in Kabul, besides insisting that Afghan soil must not be used for any terrorist activities against any country. New Delhi has been pitching for providing unimpeded humanitarian aid to Afghanistan to address the unfolding humanitarian crisis in the country.

India extended humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people and it has already dispatched several shipments of humanitarian assistance consisting of

Biden hosts Macron amid friction over US climate law

WASHINGTON, DEC 1 --/Presidents Joe Biden and Emmanuel Macron are celebrating the longstanding US-French relationship but these are friends with differences.

The French president is using his visit to Washington to sharply criticize aspects of the US president's signature climate law as a bad deal for Europe. Biden is set to honour Macron with the first state dinner of his presidency on Thursday evening. First, the two leaders will sit down in the Oval Office for morning talks that officials from both sides said were expected to largely center on the leaders' efforts to stay united in their response to Russia's war in Ukraine and to coordinate their approach to an increasingly assertive China. But ahead of Thursday's meeting, Macron made clear that he and other European leaders remain deeply concerned about the incentives in a sweeping new climate-related law that favour American-made climate technology, including electric vehicles. Macron on



Wednesday criticised the legislation, known as the Inflation Reduction Act, during a luncheon with US lawmakers and again during a speech at the French embassy.

The French president said that while the Biden administration's efforts to curb climate change should be applauded, the subsidies would be an enormous setback for European companies. "The choices that have been made ... are choices that will fragment the West," Macron said at the French embassy. He added that the legislation "creates such differences between the United States of America and Europe that all those who work in many companies (in the US), they will just think, We don't make investments any more on the other side of the Atlantic." Separately, at the luncheon with members of Congress from both parties, along with business leaders and diplomats, Macron said that major industrial nations need to do more to address climate change and promote biodiversity. He criticized a deal reached at a recent climate summit in Egypt in which the United States and other wealthy nations agreed to help pay for the damage that an overheating world is inflicting on poor countries. The deal includes few details on how it will be paid for, and Macron said a more comprehensive approach is needed "not just a new fund we decided which will not be funded and even if it is funded, it will not be rightly allocated. ? Speaking after his prepared remarks and without cameras present, Macron took aim at the Inflation Reduction Act, calling the subsidies harmful to French companies and others in Europe, according to a person in the closed-door meeting. The person requested anonymity to discuss the private comments from Macron.

The European Union has expressed concern that tax credits in the climate law, including those aimed at encouraging Americans to buy electric vehicles, would discriminate against European producers and break World Trade Organization rules. Germany's Economy Minister Robert Habeck reiterated on Wednesday that he believes parts of the law aren't compatible with the WTO. "I believe that this view is largely shared by those countries that are committed to a multilateral trading order," he told reporters in Berlin. "The Americans know that we see it that way and the European Commission will have told them this too."

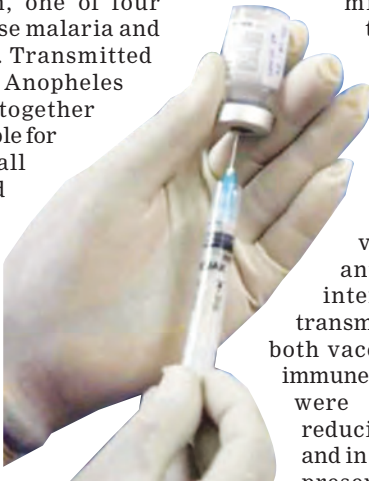
Macron had planned to make his case to US officials against the subsidies, underscoring that it's crucial for "Europe, like the US, to come out stronger ... not weaker" as the world emerges from the tumult of the pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine, according to a senior French government official who briefed reporters on the condition of anonymity to preview the private talks. Biden administration officials have countered that the legislation goes a long way in helping the US to meet global goals to curb climate change. White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre on Wednesday made the case that the legislation will also provide new opportunities for French companies and others in Europe. "There's a number of provisions that will contribute to the growth of clean energy sector globally," Jean-Pierre told reporters. (AP)

Russian FM: US, NATO directly involved in Ukraine conflict

MOSCOW, DEC 1 --/Russia's foreign minister on Thursday accused the West of becoming directly involved in the conflict in Ukraine by supplying it with weapons and training its soldiers. Sergey Lavrov also said that Russia's strikes on Ukrainian energy facilities and other key infrastructure that have left millions without power, heating and water were intended to weaken Ukraine's military potential and derail the shipments of Western weapons. "You shouldn't say that the US and NATO aren't taking part in this war, you are directly participating in it," Lavrov said in a video call with reporters. "And not just by providing weapons but also by training personnel. You are training their military on your territory, on the territories of Britain, Germany, Italy and other countries." He said that the barrage of Russian missile strikes was intended to "knock out energy facilities that allow you to keep pumping deadly weapons into Ukraine in order to kill the Russians." "The infrastructure that is targeted by those attacks is used to ensure the combat potential of the Ukrainian armed forces and the nationalist battalions," Lavrov said.

helps the parasites move through the body and invade the liver.

The team immunised another group of mice with a vaccine targeting a protein that helps parasites reproduce in a mosquito's midgut. The immunised mice were then challenged with the parasite causing infection and vaccine induced antibodies were tested to interrupt malaria transmission. The study found both vaccines induced a potent immune response in the mice and were highly effective in reducing infection in the host and in the mosquito vector. The presence of protective antibodies during transmission of parasites to healthy mosquitoes dramatically reduced the parasite load in



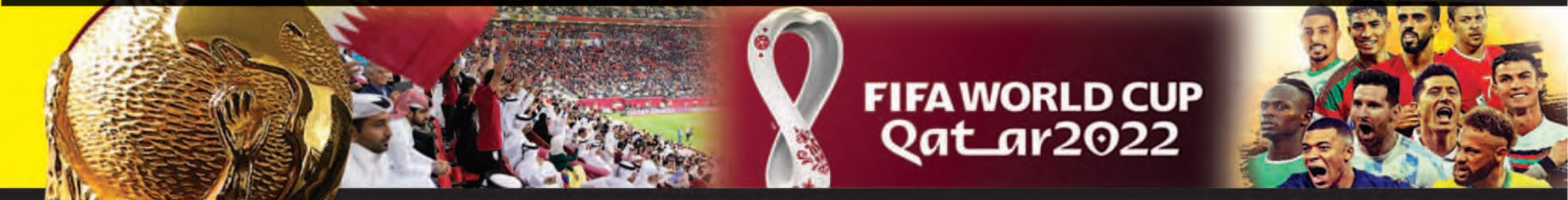
New mRNA vaccines highly effective in reducing malaria infection, transmission: Study

WASHINGTON, DEC 1 --/Scientists have developed two mRNA vaccine candidates that were highly effective in reducing both malaria infection and transmission in animal studies.

The team from George Washington University, US, also found that the two vaccines induced a powerful immune response regardless of whether they were given individually or in combination. The mRNA vaccines work by introducing a piece of messenger RNA -- RNA that is necessary for protein production -- which corresponds to a viral protein. "Malaria elimination will not happen overnight but such vaccines could potentially banish malaria from many parts of the world," said Nirbhay Kumar, a professor at the George Washington University Milken Institute School of Public Health. "The mRNA vaccine technology can really be a game changer. We saw how successful this technology was in terms of fighting COVID and for this study we adapted it and used it to develop tools to combat malaria,"

Kumar said in a statement. The study, published on Thursday in the journal npj Vaccines, focused on the parasite Plasmodium falciparum, one of four parasite species that cause malaria and the deadliest to humans. Transmitted through the bite of the Anopheles mosquito, P. falciparum together with P. vivax are responsible for more than 90 per cent of all malaria cases globally, and 95 per cent of all malaria deaths, the researchers said. Most cases and deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa but half the world's population is at risk of contracting this deadly disease, they said. The researchers developed two mRNA vaccines to disrupt different parts of the parasite's life cycle. They immunised one group of mice with a mRNA vaccine targeting a protein that





# Argentina, Poland progress to World Cup last 16; Mexico, Saudi Arabia bow out



**TODAY'S MATCH**  
**GROUP H:** South Korea vs Portugal - 8:30 PM IST  
**GROUP H:** Ghana vs Uruguay - 8:30 PM IST  
**GROUP G:** Cameroon vs Brazil - 12:30 AM IST  
**GROUP G:** Serbia vs Switzerland - 12:30 AM IST

(Left to right) Poland's Robert Lewandowski, left, interacts with Argentina's Lionel Messi at the end of the World Cup group C soccer match between Poland and Argentina at the Stadium 974 in Doha, Qatar, Wednesday,. Alexis Mac Allister celebrates with his teammates after scoring Argentina's opening goal against Poland at the Stadium 974 in Doha, Qatar

### GAME NOTES

#### Ronaldo misses Portugal training ahead of South Korea clash in FIFA World Cup

DOHA, DEC 1 /--/ Cristiano Ronaldo did not train with his Portugal team-mates on Wednesday ahead of their final World Cup group game against South Korea. The Portuguese striker, 37, was doing "specific recovery work" according to a source from the Portuguese football federation. Ronaldo, without a club since leaving Manchester United during the tournament, scored a penalty in his country's opening win over Ghana. Portugal beat Uruguay 2-0 in their second match to qualify for the last 16, with Ronaldo appearing to claim a goal but he did not touch the ball and it was awarded to team-mate Bruno Fernandes. A point against South Korea on Friday would be enough to guarantee them top spot, while they could also lose and stay first if Ghana drop points or win but don't make up a three-goal deficit. In part of Portugal's training session witnessed by AFP, 21-year-old Benfica striker Goncalo Ramos joined 10 of the regular starters in a training drill, in Ronaldo's absence. (AFP)

#### Real Madrid, Barcelona refuse to attend LaLiga's 'illegal' Dubai meeting

MADRID, DEC 1 /--/ Barcelona and Real Madrid on Wednesday united in their opposition to attending a La Liga meeting scheduled to be held in Dubai, deeming the gathering "illegal". The Spanish top flight's general assembly is planned for Dubai on December 7 but will now take place without the country's two storied clubs. Real "will not send any representative to Dubai" while the Catalan club also said they "will not attend" in statements issued simultaneously on Wednesday. Madrid said it was "illegal" to summon the clubs "more than 5,000km from the headquarters of La Liga" and that it was "completely inappropriate and deeply inconsistent for La Liga to carry out such financial expenditure". Barca insisted the meeting "could take place at the headquarters of La Liga". (AFP)

#### Ashok Malhotra, Jatin Paranjape named in new Cricket Advisory Committee

NEW DELHI, DEC 1 /--/ Former India players and national selectors Ashok Malhotra and Jatin Paranjape will join Sulakshana Naik in the three-member Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC) which will be entrusted with the duty of picking the new selection panel later this month. Malhotra replaced former India seamer Madan Lal and Paranjape came in place of Rudra Pratap Singh, who has joined Mumbai Indians as a talent scout. Only former women's international Naik remained from the last committee. "Malhotra has represented India in seven Tests and 20 ODIs and recently served as the President of the Indian Cricketers' Association. Paranjape has played four ODIs for India and was part of the senior men's selection Committee," BCCI secretary Jay Shah was quoted as saying in a press release. (PTI)

## Diego Maradona would be 'super happy': Lionel Messi



DOHA, DEC 1 /--/ Lionel Messi believes Diego Maradona would be "super happy" after he led Argentina into the World Cup last 16 on Wednesday thanks to a 2-0 win over Poland. Messi became his country's most capped player at the tournament with a 22nd appearance surpassing his legendary compatriot who died just over two years ago. "I learned it recently, I didn't know it. It's a pleasure to be able to continue to achieve these kinds of records. I think Diego would be super happy for me, because he always showed me a lot of affection, he was always happy when things went well for me," said Messi. Despite missing a penalty — his 31st career failure from the spot — the Argentina captain said he was "happy" with this "big match". "We achieved our first objective, which was to get out of the group after starting the way we did (a shock 2-1 loss against Saudi Arabia)," said Messi. "I was really frustrated to have missed the penalty,

because I knew that a goal could change the whole match, that it makes you play in a different way. But I think that from the penalty I missed, the team came out stronger." Messi, who still needs a World Cup winner's medal to cement his legacy as one of the sport's greatest players, believes Argentina are moving up through the gears at precisely the right time. "After the first goal, everything went our way. We started doing again what we had been trying to do since the start of the World Cup, but which we hadn't been able to achieve for various reasons. "Having been able to do it today, it gives us confidence for the future." Next up for Argentina is a last-16 clash against Australia on Saturday. "We know that now everything will be very difficult. That whoever the opponent, it will be complicated. We have seen recently, at our own expense, that any opponent can play a good game and win." (AFP)

DOHA, DEC 1 /--/ Lionel Messi had a penalty saved but Argentina still advanced to the last 16 of the World Cup as Group C winners after a 2-0 victory over Poland on Wednesday. Poland also went through as runners-up although a 2-1 win for Mexico over Saudi Arabia in the group's other game meant Czeslaw Michniewicz's side advanced only on goal difference. Alexis Mac Allister's 46th-minute goal settled Argentina's nerves after a tense first half, before Julian Alvarez doubled their lead just over 20 minutes later. Argentina had been unable to find a way past Wojciech Szczesny in an opening 45 minutes in which the Poland goalkeeper saved his second penalty of the tournament. Szczesny was adjudged to have fouled Messi while stretching to reach a cross, but he dived to his left to beat away the resulting spot-kick. It was the 31st penalty Messi had failed to convert in his career. Poland offered little attacking threat, with star striker Robert Lewandowski virtually anonymous throughout. Instead it was left to Szczesny to take centre stage for the Poles, denying Messi with two crucial early stops. First Messi wriggled clear of a pack of defenders before producing a shot that flew straight at the keeper. Then he found space to charge into the Polish box down the left, forcing Szczesny to make a save at his near post. Argentina continued to create the better chances in the first half and Marcos Acuna flashed

a shot wide after Alvarez had also gone close to breaking the deadlock. Szczesny had to scramble to stop Angel di Maria scoring direct from a corner, before the goalkeeper was again called into action to deny Alvarez. Szczesny outdid himself when he dived to his left to stop Messi's penalty in the 39th minute. He still had more to do before the half-time whistle, punching away a shot from Alvarez before saving the follow-up from Rodrigo de Paul. There was nothing he could do when Mac Allister broke the deadlock less than a minute after the interval. Nahuel Molina charged down the right, then cut the ball back for Mac Allister to drill just beyond Szczesny's reach. The goal forced Poland to show some belated attacking ambition and Kamil Glik headed just wide from a free-kick almost immediately after the restart. Argentina continued to go in search of more goals and Alvarez scored their second after combining well with Enzo Fernandez. Fernandez, making his first start for Argentina, picked out his team-mate, who held off a defender before lashing the ball past Szczesny. Poland were still walking a tightrope with yellow cards potentially crucial to their chances of reaching the last 16. Grzegorz Krychowiak went into the book in the 83rd minute but a late goal for Saudi Arabia against Mexico saw the Poles safely through on goal difference. (AFP)

#### At Half-time, Morocco 2-1 Canada; Croatia 0-0 Belgium

DOHA : Hakim Ziyech opened the scoring for Morocco, pouncing on goalkeeping mistake to put Morocco ahead against Canada early in the first half. Morocco doubled their lead against Canada, thanks to a strike from Youssef En Nesyri. Canada then pulled one back through an own goal to make it 1-2. Croatia, meanwhile, were denied a penalty after VAR intervention. A player was marginally found offside in the build-up for the penalty call. At half-time, Morocco lead Canda 2-1 while the score is 0-0 between Croatia and Belgium.

## Thousands in Bangladesh capital cheer Argentina's decisive win over Poland in Qatar World Cup

DHAKA, DEC 1 /--/ As Argentina claimed its decisive 2-0 World Cup victory over Poland, thousands of fans were erupting in celebration on a grassy field in Bangladesh early Thursday. From young children to retirees, many clad in blue and white or waving Argentinian flags, the throng stood for nearly the entire match as they watched on giant screens in the main square of the capital's Dhaka University. The Latin football powerhouse -- and star forward Lionel Messi -- have a huge fanbase in the South Asian country, where cricket is king but football is building a devoted following. A volunteer told AFP that about 12,000 people could comfortably watch on three massive LED screens set up on campus. Freshman Tawfif Imran said he had come with friends to watch his favourite player, Messi, play in his final World Cup. "When I was young, my father used to tell me Argentina is a great team. But when I

grew up and finally started understanding football, I became a big fan of Messi," he told AFP during the half-time break. "I hope we will win, he (Messi) deserves it," he added. Earlier, after Messi missed a penalty shot, the cheering crowd fell silent. But when Alexis Mac Allister scored the first goal, the campus erupted with the sound of blasting vuvuzelas and firecrackers. Another Argentina fan, Shamsul Arefin, said it was his third day watching World Cup matches on the giant screens. "God willing, we will go through to the final and eventually win (the World Cup)," he said. The cacophony reached a fever pitch when Julian Alvarez scored the team's second goal at the 67-minute mark, the sound of revving motorbikes filling the air alongside the cheers. The field was a scene of pure joy as the referee's final whistle confirmed Argentina had made it to the knockout round. Bangladeshi fans of

Brazil, who often get into debates that range from amicable to violent with their Argentina-loving counterparts, also came to the game -- but to support their rivals. "I am a Brazil fan. But my Argentina-fan friends brought me here today. They thanked me with this garland. I'm hoping for a Brazil-Argentina confrontation in the semifinals," said businessman Rashidul Islam. Food and beverage hawkers and cycle-rickshaw pullers were also enjoying the match while taking advantage of the crowds. Humayun Kabir, a garment peddler, told AFP his sales of team jerseys had been through the roof this World Cup. "I'm making more money than any other season," he said with a wide smile, explaining how local fans wanted to feel part of the excitement. Argentina play Australia in the round of 16 on Sunday. "We will definitely come and cheer for Messi," Humaira Tasneem, a Dhaka University university student, said. (AFP)



Bangladeshi fans react as they watch match between Poland and Argentina on a big screen in Dhaka